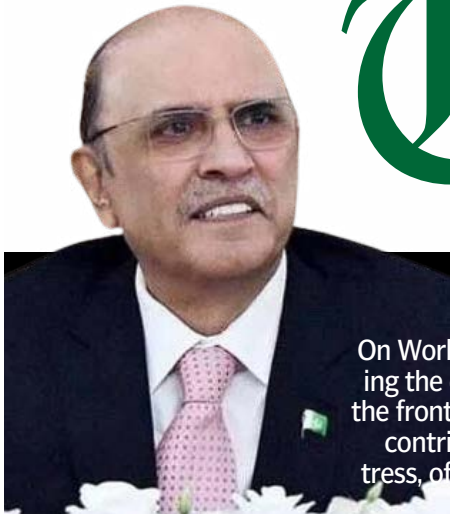




Daily

The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول
بہرے محمد بن من نے بیان کیا، انہوں نے کہا
کہ مجھ سے میرے والد نے بیان کیا، انہوں
نے کہا ہم سے سعید بن ابی سعید نے بیان کیا
اور ان سے ابو ہریرہ رضی اللہ عنہ نے بیان کیا
کہ میں نے رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم سے
سنا، نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ
پہنچے کہ اس کی دوزخ میں فراتی ہو اور اس
کی عمر واری جائے تو وہ جلا کر کھا کرے۔
(بخاری: حدیث نمبر 5985)
Barkat Rice Mills
(Pvt) Limited

World Humanitarian Day

On World Humanitarian Day, Pakistan joins the international community in honouring the courage, selflessness and dedication of humanitarian workers who serve on the frontlines during natural disasters, emergencies and crises. Their swift response, contribution to relief and rehabilitation and commitment to helping people in distress, often in difficult and dangerous conditions, deserve our deepest appreciation.



Tahir Andrabi takes charge as President of UN Conference on Disarmament

Pakistan's Additional Secretary for Disarmament and International Security, Tahir Hussain Andrabi, has assumed charge as President of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament. In a message posted on X, Andrabi described Pakistan's assumption of the presidency as an honour and reaffirmed his commitment to advancing meaningful and substantive consultations among all participating delegations.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Rabi-ul-Awwal 5, Wednesday, August 19, 2026

www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily_spokesman



Daily Spokesman Vol: 20, Issue: 120 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Meeting on Energy

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of Cabinet Committee on Energy on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

PM Shehbaz approves key amendments to National Electricity Plan, backs integrated energy plan 2027-2060

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday approved key amendments to the National Electricity Plan 2023-2027 and a High-Level Design Report for the Integrated Energy Plan 2027-2060 while chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Energy at the Prime Minister's House.

The Committee directed that further consultations be held with

the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and NEPRA before implementing the amendments to the National Electricity Plan.

PM Shehbaz reiterated the government's commitment to energy sector reforms, ensuring affordable and sustainable power supply, and reducing circular debt through structural and policy-level interventions.

The Power Division presented proposed amendments covering integrated energy planning,

enhancement of power generation, supply of renewable energy to remote areas, cross-border electricity trade, expansion of the transmission network, tariff design, electricity conservation, system and marketing operations, risk identification, and administrative matters.

The amendments also focus on improving local capacity for fuels and technology, along with research, development and digitization in the power sector.

The Committee also approved the High-Level Design Report for the Integrated Energy Plan 2027-2060. Officials briefed that the plan will involve stakeholders beyond federal and provincial governments to ensure energy security and economic competitiveness.

Under this long-term plan, a strategy will be developed to provide electricity to industrial and domestic consumers at reasonable rates, while promoting

low-carbon, environment- and climate-friendly power generation.

Separately, the Power Division briefed the Committee on the circular debt position in the power sector for FY 2025-2026, while the Petroleum Division presented a report on circular debt in the gas sector for the same period.

The meeting was attended by federal ministers, senior officials of Power and Petroleum Divisions, and other concerned authorities.

DPM/FM for further expansion of Pak-France cooperation



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq, Tuesday, emphasized to further expand Pakistan-France bilateral cooperation.

The DPM/FM received French Ambassador Nicolas Galey for a farewell call. Dar

further stressed the importance of sustained high-level exchanges, dialogue and engagement on bilateral and

regional matters of mutual interest, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

The DPM/FM congratulated Ambassador Galey on completion of his assignment and appreciated his contribution to further strengthening Pakistan-France relations.

Ambassador Galey thanked the DPM/FM and the Government of Pakistan for the support extended to him during his tenure.

PM appoints Syed Ali Raza as Legal Adviser Public Affair Unit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has appointed Syed Ali Raza as Legal Adviser, Public Affairs Unit, at the Prime Minister's Office.

His appointment is made on pro-bono/honorary basis with immediate effect and until further orders, a notification of the PM Office (Public) said.

Previously, Syed Ali Raza had served as legal adviser in the Chief Minister Office Punjab.



Raza had been graduated from the National University of Singapore and Stanford University.

India Backing BLA Terrorists to Fuel Terrorism in Balochistan: Tariq Fazal

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry told the Senate that India was providing resources and support to BLA terrorists operating as proxies in Balochistan. He said Pakistan would continue confronting and eliminating terrorists threatening the country's peace and security.

Responding to points of order, the minister said the government and secu-

urity forces did not seek operations in Balochistan but could not remain indifferent when terrorists targeted citizens and security personnel. He paid tribute to security forces and police personnel sacrificing their lives in the fight against terrorism.

Dr Tariq Fazal said eliminating terrorists from Pakistani soil was the state's fundamental responsibility.

On the health of the PTI founder, he assured the Senate that the government would implement the Supreme Court's

decision in letter and spirit. He said matters concerning his release and other relief were before the courts and could only be decided through the judicial process.

The minister also urged the opposition to respect judicial decisions consistently and said it had a constitutional right to peaceful protest. However, he cautioned against violence and agitation, stressing that political issues should be resolved through democratic and constitutional means.

PM directs timely completion of Hajj 2027 arrangements

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the ministry of religious affairs to ensure effective and comprehensive arrangements for Pakistani pilgrims and provide them with the best possible facilities during Hajj 2027.

He was talking to Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousaf who called on him at the Prime Minister House.

During the meeting, the federal minister apprised the prime minister of the progress made regarding arrangements and preparations for the upcoming Hajj. He also briefed him on the affairs of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the steps being taken by the ministry.

The prime minister instructed the relevant authorities to complete all necessary measures well in time to facilitate Pakistani pilgrims and ensure a smooth and comfortable Hajj experience.

Tarar Calls for Political Consensus to Ensure Continuity of Counter-Terrorism Policies

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar has called for political consensus to ensure continuity of national policies, particularly those related to counter-terrorism and security. Addressing a capacity-building workshop for parliamentarians, he said Pakistan had sacrificed around 90,000 lives in the war against terrorism and stressed that terrorism had no colour, race or religion.

Tarar said the National Action Plan had significantly reduced terrorism by 2017 through coordinated efforts of federal and provincial governments, armed forces and other institutions. He maintained that subsequent policy changes weakened those gains, underscoring the need for political consensus on national security matters.

He highlighted the importance of countering misinformation and strengthening



Pakistan's narrative through responsible media, legislation and modern digital communication systems. He said the government was developing AI-based media monitoring and offering technological assistance to provinces.

The minister also stressed Balochistan's development and praised initiatives supporting the province. He called for national agreement on continuing successful policies of successive governments, citing Rescue 1122 and the Benazir Income Support Programme as examples.

He said Pakistan's long-term progress required policies based on national interest rather than changing political governments, with all political forces working together for security, development and stability.

Ahsan Iqbal Highlights Economic Recovery, Urges Youth to Help Build \$1 Trillion Economy

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal has urged Pakistan's youth to use their skills, energy and ambition to help achieve the country's development goals and transform Pakistan into a \$1 trillion economy by 2035 under the URAAN Pakistan initiative.

Addressing the closing ceremony of the URAAN Youth Professional Develop-

ment and Career Fellowship and Overseas Summer Scholars Programme-2026, he said youth were Pakistan's greatest asset and should play a central role in national development.

Ahsan Iqbal said difficult economic decisions had helped stabilise the economy, with inflation declining from 38 percent to 7 percent and the policy rate falling from 23.5 percent to 11.5 percent over two years.

He also highlighted the stock market's rise from around 80,000 to over 180,000

points and Pakistan's return to a B-category sovereign rating in 2026.

He stressed that economic stabilisation was only the beginning and Pakistan now needed sustained growth. The minister urged young people to pursue knowledge, innovation and excellence, drawing on Allama Iqbal's vision of youth as "Shaheen".

He called for the patriotic spirit displayed on Independence Day to become a year-round commitment to national progress.

2,778 new water filtration plants planned in nine Punjab districts

 **Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday reviewed progress on water filtration plant projects across the province and directed authorities to expedite their completion to ensure access to clean drinking water.

Presiding over the sixth consecutive meeting on the provision of clean water, the chief minister reviewed detailed progress on projects in Bahawalnagar, Bahawalpur, Rajanpur, Talagang, Attock, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Rahim Yar Khan and Chakwal.

A report presented at the meeting said 2,778 new water filtration plants were being established in nine districts. The chief minister also expressed satisfaction over the water bottling projects in Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur, Khushab and Dera Ghazi Khan.

Officials briefed the meeting that each water bottling point was supplying 2,500 bottles of drinking water to the public daily, while each bottling plant had the capacity to



provide 5,000 litres of clean water per hour. Small dams were also being

constructed in the Potohar region.

Under Cluster-I, 570 of the 702 water filtration plants planned in Rajanpur and Rahim Yar Khan had been completed. The project also includes 95 reverse osmosis (RO) plants and 52 ultrafiltration (UF) plants in areas where groundwater is saline.

Under Cluster-V, 902 of 1,180 filtration plants had been completed in Talagang, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attock, Murree and Chakwal. The project also includes 231 RO plants in saline-water areas of the six districts.

In Cluster-XIV, 749 of 892 sites in Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar had been completed. The government plans to install 130 RO plants, 64 UF plants and multimedia filtration (MF) plants in saline-water areas of the two districts.

Officials further reported that 368 of 482 sites had been completed in Chishtian, Minchinabad, Haroonabad and Fort Abbas, while 351 of 410 sites had been completed in Bahawalpur, Yazman, Ahmedpur East and Hasilpur.

Rain water accumulated

RAWALPINDI: A view of rain water accumulated in front of a Government Boys School at Milat Colony after the heavy rain in morning hours in the city.



Photo: Online

Makkah Pact Historic Step Towards Collective Defence and Regional Stability: Masood Khan

 **Bureau Report**

ISLAMABAD: Former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, China and the United Nations and former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Masood Khan has described the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye as a historic development towards collective defence and regional stability.

In an interview with an Azerbai-



jani news agency, he said Muslim countries had long aspired to establish a collective security mechanism, while the pact represented a practical step towards that objective.

He said the agreement was defensive in nature and was not directed against any particular country, including Iran, the United States or Israel.

Masood Khan noted that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia's 2025 Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement provided

the foundation for expanding the mechanism, with Türkiye joining this year. He said countries including Egypt, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain could potentially join in the future.

He stressed that the pact should strengthen deterrence without triggering an arms race. Alongside defence cooperation, he called for diplomacy, conflict prevention, de-escalation and peaceful resolution of regional disputes to ensure lasting stability.

Multan Commissioner Orders Crackdown on Illegal Petroleum Activities

 **Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: Commissioner Multan Division Aamir Karim Khan has ordered an intensified crackdown against illegal decanting, unauthorized petrol pumps and LPG filling points, illegal movement of LPG containers, sale of Iranian oil and adulteration of petroleum products.

Chairing a review meeting attended by Deputy Commissioners, Civil Defence, OGRA and other relevant officials, the Commissioner directed authorities to ensure arrests of accused persons instead of merely registering FIRs and to take strict action against repeat offenders. He said cases must be pursued to their logical conclusion under the law.

He directed officials to render key machinery at illegal petrol pumps and decanting points unusable, while improving procedures for confisca-



tion, destruction and auction of equipment.

The Commissioner also ordered identification of illegal LPG decanting points in rural and remote areas through Union Council Secretaries

and Patwaris. He called for regular testing of Iranian oil and suspected adulterated petroleum products to detect illegal mixing.

He stressed stronger coordination among departments, regular moni-

toring of sensitive locations and monthly review meetings. District authorities were also directed to compile tehsil-wise data on legal and illegal petrol pumps for effective monitoring.

AJK BISE Mirpur Announces Matriculation Examination 2026 Results

 **Bureau Report**

MIRPUR: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (AJK BISE), Mirpur, has announced the position holders of the Matriculation (Secondary School Certificate) First Annual Examination 2026.



The results were uploaded on the Board's official website at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday. Controller Examinations Schools Waqas Ahmed said the timely preparation and announcement of results, despite widespread internet disruptions across Azad Jammu and Kashmir, reflected the effective leadership and supervision of AJK BISE Mirpur Chairman Professor Nazar Hussain Chaudhry.

He appreciated the Chairman's efforts in ensuring the completion of all examination-related processes and timely declaration of results.

Students can check their results through the Board's official website. Those living in areas without internet facilities can obtain result information through the Board's helplines: 05827960071, 05827960070, 05827960049, 05827960042-135 and 05827960038.

Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan to Announce Muslim Conference's Future Political Strategy on Youm-e-Neela Butt

 **Abdul Majeed Tahir**



RAWALPINDI: President of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan will announce the party's future political strategy at a major public gathering on August 23, marking Youm-e-Neela Butt.

Youm-e-Neela Butt commemorates the beginning of the armed struggle for the liberation of Kashmir. On August

23, 1947, Mujahid-e-Awwal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, then 23, initiated the armed phase of the Kashmir liberation movement at Neela Butt in Tehsil Dhirkot, District Bagh.

The struggle continued for around 18 months and contributed to the liberation of the territory comprising present-day Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The Muslim Conference holds a public gathering at Neela Butt every year to commemorate the historic event and reaffirm its commitment to the Kashmir freedom movement.

This year's gathering is expected to have added political significance, as Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan will outline the party's future political direction and priorities following the recent Azad Jammu and Kashmir general elections.

President Suspends Federal Ombudsman Decision on Appeal by Social Activist

 **Bureau Report**

NAWABSHAH: President of Pakistan has accepted an appeal filed by social activist Anwar Adil Khanzada against a decision of the Federal Ombudsman concerning a complaint against Pakistan Railways, suspending the impugned decision for 60 days.

According to details, the President admitted appeal No. 419/WM/2026 and directed the Secretary of the Federal Ombudsman and Secretary Pakistan Railways to submit complete and verified records within seven days. Khanzada had challenged the Ombudsman's finding in case WMS-ONL/29824/26, alleging contradictions in the record and questioning the transparency of the proceedings.

He pointed out discrepancies regarding the dates of submission and receipt of the department's report and alleged that the Senior Advisor/Regional Head of the Federal Ombudsman's Hyderabad office had improperly supported Pakistan Railways.

Khanzada said he had filed the complaint in the public interest regarding the leasing of railway land to Town Committee Daur for a public park. He alleged that despite a formal request for additional land, Pakistan Railways had not taken action for five months.

He also raised concerns about the handling of complainants at the Hyderabad regional office and demanded transparent proceedings, equal treatment of citizens and departmental representatives, and action against the concerned official.

Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi's Ongoing Alumni Series Features Hilarious Play "English Only"



 **Bureau Report**

KARACHI: The Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, as part of its ongoing Alumni Series, presented the entertaining comedy-drama "English Only." The seventh production of the School of Visual and Performing Arts (SOVAPA) Alumni Series was warmly received by the audience, who greatly appreciated the performances of the cast. Written by American playwright Sanaz Toosi, the play was adapted and directed by Awab Farhat. The cast featured Farhan Alam, Kiran Amin, Nafes Qamar, Sanobar Ahmed and Awab Farhat, who delivered impressive performances and demonstrated remarkable artistic talent. "English Only" was presented in both Urdu and English and had a duration of 90 minutes. Set in a lively TOEFL classroom, the play follows students from diverse backgrounds as they struggle to learn a new language and build their confidence. The play portrays the challenges faced by students in overcoming language barriers, dealing with self-confidence issues and expressing themselves effectively. Through humorous misunderstandings and emotional moments, the play highlights the values of friendship, communication and embracing one's individuality. "English Only" beautifully explores the courage to learn, express oneself and find one's own voice. The audience showed great interest throughout the performance and highly appreciated the outstanding performances by the cast.

Islamabad
30° – 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 4:02 am
Zohr 12:12 pm
Asr 4:56 pm
Maghrib 6:51 pm
Isha 8:21 pm

EMERGENCY

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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

IIUI Clarifies
Vice Presidents'
Selection
Process

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) has rejected media reports concerning the selection and appointment process of its Vice Presidents, describing some claims as incomplete and distorted. The university stated that the entire process was conducted fairly and transparently in accordance with the IIUI Ordinance-1985 and procedures approved by its Board of Governors.

IIUI clarified that the Islamabad High Court has not issued any adverse order or finding against the university regarding the appointments. It said that the court's issuance of a notice or request for clarification during the initial hearing is part of the normal judicial process and should not be portrayed as a finding of illegality or procedural misconduct.

The university also alleged that reports failed to provide relevant background and that its spokesperson was not contacted for verification or comment before publication. IIUI reaffirmed its commitment to transparency and institutional integrity and said it reserves its legal rights, including action under defamation laws, against those responsible for allegedly damaging its reputation.

Open Kacheris
provide citizens
direct access to
police, says
DPO Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: District Police Officer (DPO) Attock Captain (Retd.) Ali Bin Tariq has said that the purpose of open kacheris (Hazro) is to provide citizens with an opportunity to directly contact the police, listen to their problems and ensure their timely resolution. He said

the police were committed to providing the public with the best possible police services.

He expressed these views while listening to the problems of citizens during an open kacheri held under his supervision. The DPO listened to the complaints of the applicants and issued necessary directions to the concerned



officers for their prompt resolution.

Meanwhile, DPO Attock Captain (Retd.) Ali Bin Tariq visited Rangoo Police Station, Attock Khurd Police Station and various police check posts. He reviewed the law-and-order situation and security arrangements and inspected the under-construction building of Attock Khurd Police Station. He directed the concerned officials to pay special attention to the

pace of construction work and ensure its timely completion.

The DPO also directed police officers to take effective measures to ensure the protection of the lives and property of citizens.

Later, DPO Attock met the families of martyred police personnel from Tehsil Hazro, including Constable Wathiq Khan, Constable Zahid Ali and Constable Muhammad Sohail.

He paid tribute to the invaluable sacrifices rendered by the martyrs and said that the martyrs were the pride of Attock Police and a precious asset of the nation.

He said that the police could never forget their martyrs. "Providing every possible assistance to the families of our martyrs is our duty, and all possible measures will be taken for their welfare," he added.

Illuminations

ISLAMABAD: An illuminated view of Jamia Masjid Chistiya decorated with colorful lights in connection with Eid Milad un Nabi (SAW) in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

MicroCerts, Pakistan-China
Institute Partner for Chinese
Language Certifications

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: MicroCerts, Pakistan's national digital skills certification platform and a subsidiary of AXI Systems (SOE), has signed an MoU with the Pakistan-China Institute (PCI) to launch HSK-aligned Chinese language certifications. Under the partnership, PCI will provide expert academic review of four certification modules developed by MicroCerts before their nationwide rollout.

The modules cover HSK 1 (Foundation Mandarin), HSK 2 (Elementary Mandarin), HSK 3 (Intermediate Mandarin) and HSK 4 (Upper-Intermediate Mandarin), offering Pakistani learners structured and standards-aligned Mandarin credentials. The certifications are particularly aimed at students and scholarship



aspirants planning to study in China, as well as professionals seeking opportunities in CPEC projects and other China-related sectors.

The MoU was signed in

Islamabad by MicroCerts CEO Imran Bhatti and PCI Executive Director Mustafa Hyder Sayed. The collaboration aims to ensure academic quality, relevance and align-

ment with HSK requirements while expanding digital access to Chinese language learning and strengthening educational and professional ties between Pakistan and China.

SECP Approves Public Offering of Naya
Nazimabad Apartment REIT

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has approved the Offer for Sale prospectus of Naya Nazimabad Apartments REIT (NNAR) for listing on the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), marking another step toward expanding regulated investment opportunities in the real estate sector.

The offering comprises 44.06 million units, representing 15 percent of the REIT scheme's total units. The offer will be conducted through the book-building mechanism, with 75 percent of units allocated to institutional investors and high-net-worth individuals, while 25 percent will be offered to retail investors.

NNAR is a closed-end Develop-



mental REIT established under the Real Estate Investment Trust Regulations, 2022. It is developing acquired property into commercial, retail and residential units, with returns for unit

holders generated through the sale of completed projects.

The offering is the 13th public offering approved by the SECP in 2026, highlighting continued activity

in Pakistan's primary capital market. The regulator said businesses from sectors including manufacturing, technology, energy, food, agriculture and real estate are increasingly using the stock market to raise growth capital.

Pakistan currently has 29 registered REIT schemes, six of which are listed on PSX. Following the NNAR listing, the number of listed REITs will rise to seven.

SECP Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu said a strong primary market could channel savings into productive investment and provide businesses with alternative sources of long-term financing. He said the SECP was working to reduce capital-raising costs and time while improving transparency and investor participation.

Russia-Pakistan High-Level
Meeting in Islamabad

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Albert P. Khorev of Russia met with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Mohammad Ishaq Dar. During the meeting, both sides discussed current regional developments and welcomed the positive momentum in Russia-Pakistan relations. They underscored the importance of sustained high-level exchanges to maintain dialogue and trust. The two leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation across key areas of mutual interest.

AKUH Receives Third
Consecutive International
Platinum Award for Heart
Attack Care

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) has received its third consecutive Platinum Performance Achievement Award from the American College of Cardiology (ACC), recognising its consistent delivery of evidence-based and guideline-directed care to heart attack patients.

The award is based on AKUH's participation in the ACC Chest Pain-MI Registry, which enables hospitals to assess their cardiac care against internationally established clinical standards and identify areas for improvement. The registry supports a structured approach to heart attack treatment, from timely diagnosis and intervention to follow-up care.

AKU Health System Pakistan CEO Dr Farhat Abbas said the recognition reflected the hospital's commitment to safe, high-quality and patient-centred cardiac care. He added that clinical teams continuously use data to improve treatment and patient outcomes.

Dr Javed Majid Tai, Director Cath Lab and Site Director of the National Cardiovascular Data Registry at AKUH, said continuous measurement helped ensure more consistent care. Dr Farhala Baloch, Assistant Professor of Cardiology, highlighted the importance of understanding changing heart disease patterns, particularly concerns about heart attacks among younger adults.

The award underscores AKUH's commitment to international standards and continuous improvement in cardiac care.

Safe City "Mera Pyara"
Reunites Missing Woman with
Family After 10 Years

News Desk

LAHORE: The Punjab Safe Cities Authority's Virtual Center for Child Safety (Mera Pyara) has successfully reunited Sharifan Bibi, a speech and hearing-impaired woman, with her family after she had been missing for nearly 10 years.

According to the Authority's spokesperson, Sharifan Bibi went missing from Lari Adda, Multan, while visiting her mother. Due to her condition, she was unable to communicate her identity or provide information about her family. She was later rescued in Karachi and shifted to an Edhi home.

The Mera Pyara team obtained her biometric details in Karachi and coordinated with Jhang Police and local residents to trace her family. The efforts eventually led to her reunion with her three daughters and son.

The Authority said modern biometric technology, police coordination and public cooperation played a key role in the successful reunion. Citizens can report missing or abandoned persons through Emergency Helpline 15 (press 3) or 0309-0000015.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almass Ayoub Sabir**
Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**
Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**
Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**
Bureau Chief Karachi: **Khurram Jaffrani**
(jaffrani@adpluse.pk)
Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**
(afrazalishah@gmail.com)
Head Office: AIMS Building, Street No. 4, H-8/1, Islamabad.
spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
Phone: +92 51 2227123,
WhatsApp +92 346 5008408
Karachi office: A111, Block C, Gulsha-e-Jamal, PRECHS,
Karachi Phone:021-33399390
Email: spokesmankarachi@gmail.com
Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.
spokesmanlahore@gmail.com
Daily The Spokesman available only on annual subscription

Humanitarian Values Must Guide Our Collective Future

World Humanitarian Day is an important reminder that compassion, solidarity and respect for human dignity must remain at the heart of our response to crises. Observed on August 19, the day honours humanitarian workers who have sacrificed their lives while serving people affected by conflict, disasters and other emergencies. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on our collective responsibility toward the vulnerable.

Pakistan has a long tradition of humanitarian service. Its contribution to United Nations peacekeeping missions, its support for people affected by regional crises and its decades-long hosting of millions of Afghan refugees demonstrate a commitment to helping those in need. These contributions reflect a spirit of hospitality and compassion that has become an important part of the country's national character.

However, humanitarian responsibility must begin at home. A society cannot claim to uphold human dignity while vulnerable citizens remain excluded from opportunities, essential services and protection. The government's emphasis on protecting marginalized communities, persons with disabilities, women and children is therefore important and should remain a sustained national priority.

The real test of humanitarian policy lies not merely in announcements but in effective implementation. Welfare centres, protection facilities and training institutions can make a meaningful difference only when they are accessible, adequately resourced and professionally managed. Vulnerable people need practical support that enables them to live independently and participate fully in society.

Women's empowerment must also remain central to this effort. Ensuring equal opportunities in education, employment and economic activity is not simply a matter of social justice; it is essential for national development. Similarly, protecting children and empowering young people can help create a more inclusive and resilient society.

Humanitarianism must also extend beyond moments of major disaster. Poverty, displacement, disability, discrimination and lack of access to basic services can create humanitarian challenges every day. Addressing these issues requires coordinated efforts involving government institutions, civil society, humanitarian organizations and communities.

Pakistan's commitment to humanitarian principles should consequently be translated into stronger institutions, effective social protection and equal access to opportunities. The dignity of every individual must remain the foundation of public policy, regardless of social or economic status.

On World Humanitarian Day, the country should not only honour humanitarian workers who have made the ultimate sacrifice but also renew its commitment to building a society where compassion is reflected in action. In times of crisis and peace alike, protecting vulnerable people is both a moral responsibility and a measure of national progress. A stronger Pakistan will be one where no citizen is left without dignity, protection or hope.

Do Not Just Build Walls, Build Character

Human history bears witness to the fact that the security and strength of nations do not depend solely on tall buildings, strong fortresses, advanced technology, or powerful weapons. True protection comes from the people who use these resources with integrity, wisdom, responsibility, and character. A well-known historical anecdote tells us that when the ancient Chinese wanted to live a secure life, they built the Great Wall of China. They believed that its enormous height would make it impossible for an enemy to climb over it. Yet, according to the story, during the first hundred years after its construction, China was attacked three times. Each time, the attackers did not destroy the wall or attempt to climb over it. Instead, they bribed the gatekeepers and entered through the gates. The Chinese had concentrated on building the wall but had forgotten to strengthen the character of its guards. The real lesson of this story is not about the strength of the wall; it is about the weakness of the gatekeeper. Even a small gate can become a powerful barrier when its guard is honest, responsible, and vigilant. Conversely, even the highest wall cannot protect a nation if those responsible for guarding it are corrupt or careless.

This principle is equally relevant to our national, educational, and social life today. We have built many walls for the protection of our society, but

the important question is: What kind of people are guarding those walls? We have established educational institutions, constructed impressive buildings, founded universities, adopted modern technology, and created countless sources of information. Yet if these achievements fail to develop honesty, responsibility, tolerance, respect, truthfulness, and a spirit of service in human beings, then our progress remains incomplete. The truth is that the construction of human beings must come before every other form of construction. Buildings are constructed afterward; character must be developed first. Institutions become strong afterward; people must first become strong. Nations progress when their citizens possess not only knowledge but also character.

This is precisely what our students need today. They need more than textbook knowledge; they need character formation. A student may obtain a prestigious degree, but if he considers lying, cheating, violating the rights of others, or avoiding responsibility acceptable, his education cannot produce the results society expects. The purpose of education is not merely to obtain a job or pass an examination. It is also to make a person a better human being. A truly educated person respects parents, values teachers,

obeys the law, tolerates differences of opinion, protects the rights of the weak, and uses knowledge for the betterment of society. If our educational institutions produce degrees without producing character, then we must reconsider our educational priorities.

In this regard, the family has fundamental importance. A child learns his earliest lessons not from textbooks but from home. He observes his parents' behavior, listens to their words, and is deeply influenced by their actions. When

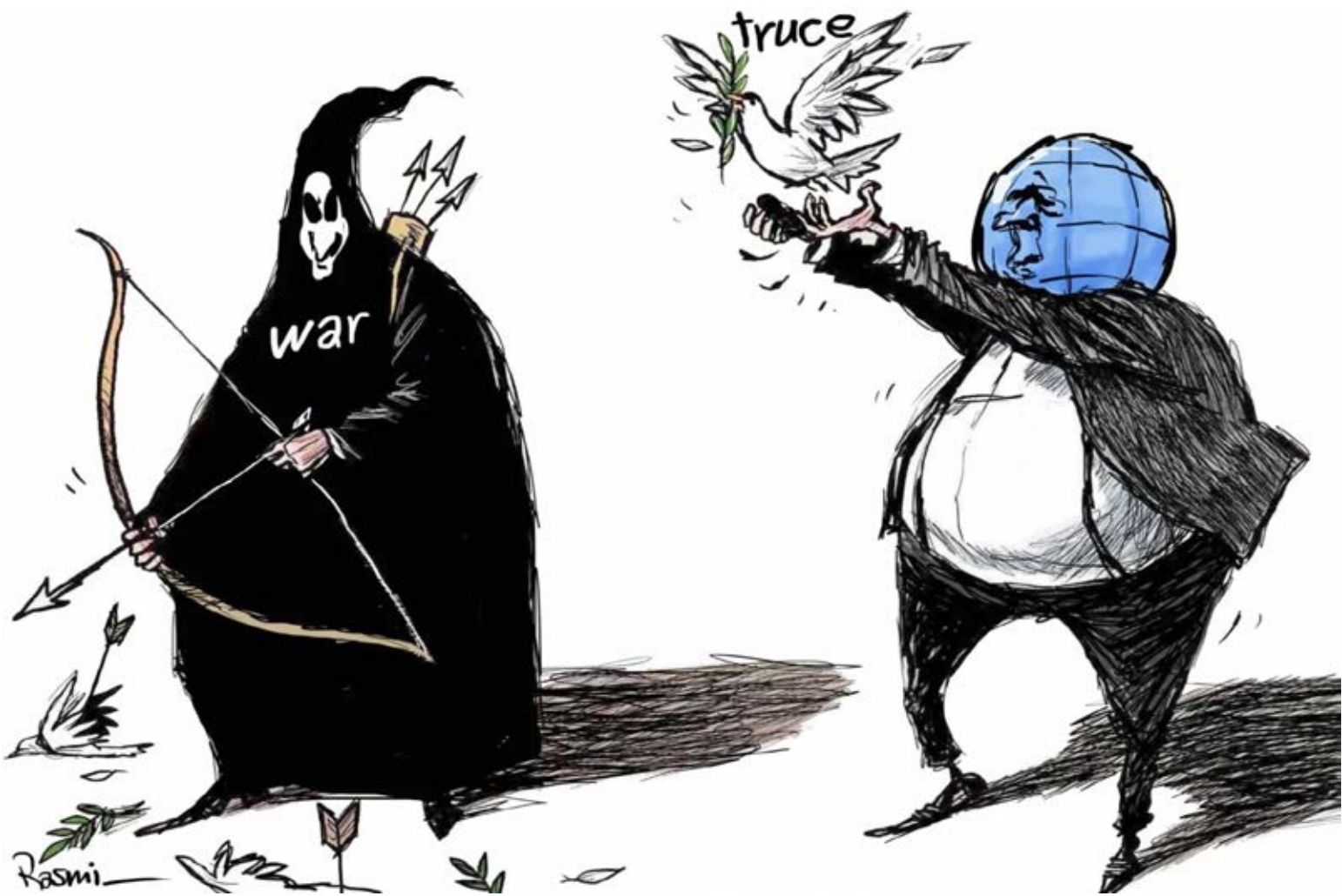
a home provides an environment of truthfulness, love, respect, discipline, and responsibility, these qualities gradually become part of the child's personality. Conversely, when lying, disrespect, hatred, intolerance, and irresponsible behavior become common in the home, they can leave lasting impressions on the child's character. This is why a conscious mother and a responsible father are, in reality, the first educators of a nation. Undermining the role of the mother or considering domestic upbringing insignificant means weakening one of the fundamental pillars of social development.

After the family, education is the most important institution for shaping human personality, and the teacher holds a central position in this process. A teacher is not merely a person who delivers

lessons from a textbook; a teacher is a guide who contributes to the intellectual and moral development of generations. A good teacher does not merely tell students what to study; he teaches them how to distinguish right from wrong, how to tolerate disagreement, how to ask meaningful questions, and how to use knowledge responsibly. Unfortunately, when teachers lose respect in society, when their efforts are ignored, and when their position is undermined before students, the damage is not limited to the teacher. The entire generation suffers. A society that diminishes the dignity of its teachers ultimately weakens the very spirit of education.

Similarly, scholars, researchers, intellectuals, and thought leaders play a vital role in maintaining the intellectual stability of a society. Nations need leaders who guide people on the basis of reason, research, knowledge, and insight rather than emotion and prejudice. When scholars are constantly viewed with suspicion, their intellectual contributions are ignored, or their character is attacked merely because of disagreement, a vacuum of intellectual leadership emerges. This vacuum is then filled by rumors, superficial information, irresponsible social media content, and emotional slogans. As a result, young people may begin to follow individuals who possess digital popularity rather than genuine knowledge, wisdom, or moral authority.

Continued on Page 7



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

App-Based Attendance in Sindh: A New Burden for teacher

The Sindh government has launched a facial recognition attendance system called FRAMES (Facial Recognition Attendance Monitoring and Evaluation System) on a pilot basis from August 17, 2026, to make attendance monitoring of teachers and non-teaching staff more transparent and effective. Initially, the system has been introduced in six districts—Karachi East, Hyderabad, Naushahro Feroze, Jacobabad, Ghotki, and Umerkot—where the attendance of approximately 49,565 teaching and non-teaching staff members is being monitored. Following a successful pilot phase, the government plans to gradually expand the system to other districts of Sindh. The use of modern technology to monitor teachers' attendance can be a positive step toward greater transparency and administrative efficiency. However, the success of any technology-based system depends on how effectively it works according to ground realities, available facilities, and the needs of its users. If the new system creates inconvenience instead of providing ease, its performance and implementation mechanism must be seriously reviewed.

In these districts, complaints regarding technical and administrative problems with app-based attendance are emerging from teachers on social media, in print media, and on electronic media. In some places, teachers are facing difficulties logging into the app; in others, the server is busy or fails to respond. There are also complaints about location verification, while in some cases attendance does not appear to be updated even after it has been submitted. Weak internet connectivity and poor mobile signals are further complicating the situation. As a result, teachers are spending valuable time dealing with attendance-related problems

after reaching school and are becoming unnecessarily anxious about their attendance because of technical glitches in the app.

The fundamental question is: Why is a teacher in school? The teacher's primary responsibility is to teach students, train and guide them, prepare lessons, manage the classroom, and focus on the educational needs of children. Ensuring attendance is certainly important, but the attendance system should be designed in a way that does not interfere with the teaching process. If teachers begin spending their time dealing with mobile phones, internet connectivity, location verification, and server-related problems, the direct impact will eventually be felt in classrooms and on students' learning.

The reality is that many schools in Sindh are located far from urban centres, in rural areas and remote regions. Internet speed, mobile signals, and electricity supplies are not equally available in all these areas. If online attendance is made mandatory in such an environment, the government also has a responsibility to provide alternative arrangements. A lack of network connectivity or a server failure should not automatically be treated as teacher negligence. The purpose of an attendance system should not be to punish teachers or keep them under constant surveillance; rather, it should ensure regularity and administrative transparency in schools. If a system creates fear instead of confidence, it is natural for questions to be raised about it. Teachers should feel that technology is being used to make their work easier, not to create a better source of stress.

A daily solution would be for the Sindh government to conduct a comprehensive technical review of the app and the new facial recognition system, identify its weaknesses, and make the system more effective. Before implementing such a system on a large scale, it should be tested through pilot projects

in urban, rural, and remote areas. The problems identified during these trials should be addressed before full-scale implementation. At the same time, every district should have a dedicated help desk or responsible technical team capable of resolving teachers' complaints promptly.

Rejecting technology is not the solution. Many developed countries around the world are benefiting from modern technology in education as well as in other government systems. Digital attendance, online records, and automated data management can play an important role in improving administrative transparency. However, a successful digital system does not come into existence merely by developing an app or software. It also requires reliable servers, dependable internet connectivity, technical support, trained personnel, and an effective mechanism for the immediate resolution of complaints.

It can be argued that an app or facial recognition system can be beneficial to education if it saves teachers' time, makes attendance records transparent, and simplifies administrative procedures. But if the same technology keeps teachers occupied with server failures, location verification, login problems, and other technical difficulties, its direct impact will ultimately be felt in children's education. This cannot be acceptable under any circumstances.

Therefore, the Sindh government should improve the attendance system on the basis of practical experience, teachers' feedback, and ground realities rather than turning the issue into a matter of prestige. Technology should be used to strengthen education, not to create unnecessary difficulties for teachers. After all, a teacher's time is ultimately an investment in the future of students. The slogan "A Literate Sindh, a Progressive Sindh" can become a reality only when teachers are provided with a conducive environment to teach and children are given the opportunity to learn.

Teacher, Educational Researcher & Columnist

The Illusion of Security: How a Fragmented Middle East Could Escalate Local Crises

I have never been very optimistic about the decentralization of the security framework. Currently, the Middle East and particularly the Gulf region is transforming from its long-time reliance on the U. S. for its security to regional powers. It means that in a multi-polar world, the petrodollar framework under which Gulf states had to deal in dollars, and the U. S. would provide them security, is not enough to ensure the security of Gulf States, and owing to that, the Gulf is diversifying its security umbrella. September

2025, the Saudi-Pakistan Mutual Defense Agreement came after Sept 9th Israel's airstrikes on Doha, Qatar, to target a residential complex hosting Hamas leadership. While being under a formal U. S. security guarantee and host of the largest American military facility in the Middle East, the Al-Udeid Airbase, the U. S. was unable to protect Qatar from Israel, a U. S. long-standing ally in the Middle East. This event exposed the security arrangements in the Middle East and vulnerability of Gulf States. On May 15th, 2026, India and the UAE signed a defense pact, although it does not carry any mutual obligation, and it has been clarified that it does not pose any framework of collective security; it is solely focused on advancing their

maritime security, technology, training, and industrial collaboration. This development highlights the transforming nature of the security shell of the Middle East. It also hints that fragmentation in South Asia is also affecting arrangements in the Middle East; the India-UAE pact

came after the Saudi-Pakistan mutual defense agreement, although of a different nature, its purpose is the same: enhancing and ensuring security. Additionally, the very recent Mecca joint defense agreement was signed on Friday, August 7, 2026, among

the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Turkey. This pact includes parties that have prominent standing in their respective sphere such as Saudi Arabia, a leading economic power in the Middle East; Pakistan, the sole nuclear power Muslim state; and Turkey, the second-largest military power in NATO. This pact carries a framework of collective security, which means that an attack on one will be considered an attack on all and seems like an extension of the Saudi-Pakistan mutual defense agreement in September 2025.

Although these pacts enhance deterrence and security of the parties involved, if we look at the military statistics of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Turkey, collectively

Continued on Page 7

SEE Global Economic Forum brings entrepreneurs, academia and investors together

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The U. S. Embassy in Islamabad, in collaboration with the Association of Private Sector Universities of Pakistan (APSUP), organized the SEE Global Economic – Entrepreneurship & Investment Readiness Forum, bringing together around 150 entrepreneurs, startup founders, academics, incubation centre directors and innovation ecosystem leaders.

The forum was held at the U. S. Educational Foundation in Pakistan

Auditorium and aimed to strengthen entrepreneurship, innovation, investment readiness and international market access for Pakistani businesses.

U. S. Embassy Director of Public Engagement Heidi Smith delivered the welcome remarks, followed by an Entrepreneurship and Trade Spotlight highlighting U. S.-Pakistan commercial engagement and available resources for Pakistani companies seeking access to the U. S. market.

Chairman Punjab Higher Education Commission Professor Iqar formally

opened the event and stressed the importance of promoting entrepreneurship and innovation within Pakistan's higher education sector.

During the forum, Prof. Dr. Sumaira Rehman, Rector of Superior University, discussed university-industry collaboration and emphasized entrepreneurship as a means of empowering young people and transforming innovative ideas into sustainable economic opportunities. Air Vice Marshal Dr. Rizwan Riaz, Pro Rector NUST, shared insights into research commercialization.



The event's keynote address was delivered virtually by American entrepreneur and angel investor Scott Fox, who provided practical guidance on entering the U. S. market, building investor-ready ventures, strengthening corporate governance and accessing international capital and investor networks.

Heidi Smith highlighted the

strength of the U. S. entrepreneurship and venture capital ecosystem and said Pakistani entrepreneurs and researchers possessed significant talent and potential. She emphasized the importance of connecting them with international investors and innovation networks to enhance their global competitiveness.

The forum concluded with a

networking reception hosted by the U. S. Embassy, where entrepreneurs, academics, investors and ecosystem partners discussed opportunities for future collaboration. The organizers said such engagements could help strengthen university-industry linkages, promote innovation and create new pathways for Pakistani startups to access global markets and investment.



Bilal Adil, Chairman & CEO of the Paragon Group of Companies, receives the prestigious Excellence Award from the Governor of Istanbul, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to business and the textile industry.

Young Cricketer Arham Mehfooz shines with outstanding all-round performance, named Man of the Match

News Desk

KARACHI: Sixteen-year-old cricketer Arham Mehfooz delivered an outstanding all-round performance at the Independence Day Inter-House Cricket Tournament held on August 15 as part of the Independence Day celebrations, earning the Man of the Match award.

Arham Mehfooz has been receiving regular cricket training at Moin Khan Cricket Academy for the past year. Representing Abdul Razzaq House in the tournament, Arham produced an

impressive performance in all three departments of the game — bowling, wicket keeping and batting.

The opposition posted a challenging total of 176 runs in 15 overs. Arham responded brilliantly with the ball, conceding only 6 runs in his two overs and taking 2 important wickets.

He then continued his excellent performance behind the stumps as wicketkeeper, taking 4 catches during the match.



Arham's most impressive contribution came with the bat. Opening the innings, he played a confident.

Sirajuddin Aziz Signs Publishing Agreement for Memoirs Wings of Destiny

City Desk

KARACHI: Banking Ombudsman Sirajuddin Aziz and Lightstone Publishers Managing Director Ameena Saiyid have signed an agreement for the publication of Aziz's professional autobiography, Wings of Destiny: A Banker's Professional Autobiography Carved by Destiny and Colleagues.

The agreement was signed at a ceremony held at a local hotel in Karachi. Speaking on the occasion, Sirajuddin Aziz shared insights into his professional journey, including how he entered the banking profession instead of pursuing careers as a bureaucrat



or chartered accountant.

Aziz clarified that the memoir focuses on his banking

career and does not cover his current role as Banking Ombudsman. Reflecting on

his professional philosophy, he said banking was not simply about money or numbers but fundamentally about people and relationships.

Publisher Ameena Saiyid said Wings of Destiny traces Aziz's journey from a missionary school to the senior ranks of international banking. She said the book goes beyond professional achievements and highlights the values, experiences and relationships that shaped his successful career.

The memoir is expected to offer readers a personal account of Aziz's experiences and the people who influenced his journey in the banking profession.



PAL Launches Urdu Translation of Ho Chi Minh's 'Prison Diary' in Islamabad Ceremony



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL), under the National Heritage & Culture Division, organized a ceremony to launch the Urdu translation of 'Prison Diary', the poetic work of Ho Chi Minh, revolutionary leader and founder of modern Vietnam.

Held at the Sheikh Ayaz Conference Hall, PAL Islamabad, the event

was attended by diplomatic representatives of ASEAN countries including Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, Cuba, Indonesia, and Myanmar, along with writers, intellectuals and literary figures. The ceremony was moderated by Dr. Hamza Hassan Sheikh.

Chairperson PAL Prof. Dr. Najiba Arif welcomed guests and said _Prison Diary_ is an expression of freedom, hope, courage and determination. She noted the Urdu transla-

tion was done under an MoU between PAL and Vietnam, marking a milestone in literary cooperation. She also reaffirmed PAL's resolve to strengthen ties with ASEAN countries. Dr. Arif led Fatiha for Haleem Qureshi, who passed away at PAL a day earlier.

Speakers Prof. Munir Fayyaz and former Ambassador Salahuddin Chaudhry discussed Ho Chi Minh's life and poetry, while session chair Imdad Akash called him a symbol

of resistance.

Vietnamese representative Phan Anh Toan thanked PAL, calling the Urdu and English translations important for Pakistan-Vietnam literary ties.

The Urdu translation was done by Kausar Khanum and revised by Najma Saqib. The event concluded with gift exchanges and a visit to a Vietnamese cultural and book exhibition.

11 Prominent Pakistani Companies Set to Participate in Automechanika Frankfurt 2026

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Automechanika Frankfurt, the world's leading trade fair for the automotive aftermarket and service industry, will take place from 08-12 September 2026 in Frankfurt, Germany. The event will bring together the international automotive industry and showcase the latest developments, technologies, and solutions across the automotive value chain.

The 2026 edition will focus on innovation, transformation, sustainability, digitalisation, and training and recruitment. A key highlight will be the new HighTech4Mobility forum, dedicated to innovations and solutions for software-defined vehicles and the future of mobility.

More than 4,400 exhibitors from over 80 countries will present their latest



products and technologies. Key themes will include artificial intelligence, electromobility, digitalisation, autonomous driving, and sustainable mobility, offering opportunities for international business networking and knowledge exchange.

Pakistan will have a strong presence at the fair, with 11 prominent Pakistani auto parts companies participating under the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP). The participating companies are Adamjee Engineering, A-One Tech-

niques, Darson Industries, Get Machanic, M A Nawaz and Brothers, Nafees, Rastgar Engineering, Solehre Brother Industries, Thermosole Industries, Top Gear Auto Parts and Top Notch Rubber.

Their participation will enable Pakistani companies to showcase their capabilities, connect with international buyers, explore new markets, and develop business partnerships, while highlighting Pakistan's potential in the global automotive components and aftermarket sector.

 Bull & Bears

PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
177,955.50	180,502.44
Day's High	Day's Low
180,602.44	177,866.04
Index Value	Change
34,766,119,922	-2546.94
Percentage	Time
-1.41%	18 Aug, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,728.04	+7.74
Percentage	Time
+0.072%	18 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
53,362.74	-97.04
Percentage	Time
-0.18%	18 Aug, 1:55 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
67,460.73	-1,759.52
Percentage	Time
-2.54%	18 Aug, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	194.61	198.25
Bahrain Dinar	735.25	745.35
Canadian Dollar	198.17	202.70
China Yuan	38.15	38.90
Danish Krone	42.75	43.35
Euro	320.98	324.79
Hong Kong Dollar	34.97	35.97
Indian Rupee	2.60	3.20
Japanese Yen	1.7339	1.8337
Kuwaiti Dinar	883.94	894.50
Malaysian Ringgit	68.00	68.85
NewZealand \$	162.60	165.78
Norwegians Krone	28.15	28.50
Omani Riyal	719.80	730.35
Qatari Riyal	74.98	75.85
Saudi Riyal	74.05	74.70
Singapore Dollar	216.01	224.04
Swedish Korona	28.40	28.90
Swiss Franc	343.16	347.93
Thai Bhat	8.75	9.40
U.A.E Dirham	76.15	77.15
UK Pound Sterling	375.27	380.94
US Dollar	278.00	278.65

Positive Results of Government's Economic Policies Becoming Visible

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan Business Forum Sindh President and Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association Chairman Malik Khuda Bakhsh has praised the government's economic policies, saying signs of economic stability are becoming visible and restoring confidence among businesses and the public. He said reforms under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir have strengthened economic, administrative and national security conditions. However, he stressed the need for fundamental fiscal and administrative reforms.

He called for clearer distribution of tax, expenditure and resource responsibilities between federal and provincial governments under the new NFC framework. He urged a simple, transparent and business-friendly tax system supported by integrated digital records. He also advocated consultation with traders and industrialists to broaden the tax base.

Daraz Pakistan Launches Licensed E-Pharmacy

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Daraz Pakistan has launched a licensed, pharmacist-supervised e-pharmacy, offering customers convenient access to authentic over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and healthcare products nationwide. The service initially features more than 450 products from over 20 pharmaceutical and healthcare brands, including Haleon, Getz Pharma, Abbott, AGP, Nature's Bounty, Route2Health and Searle. Products include DRAP-registered OTC medicines, vitamins, supplements and other healthcare essentials, with delivery available within one to three days in Daraz-served cities.

Google Opens Pakistan Office, Marking Milestone in Digital Transformation

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday unveiled the foundation plaque of Google's Pakistan office, describing its establishment as a significant milestone in the country's digital transformation and a new chapter in Pakistan-Google

cooperation.

Speaking at the Prime Minister's Office, the premier said Google's presence in Pakistan offered vast opportunities for collaboration in technology, governance, education and the digital economy. He said Pakistan's young population could play a vital role in transforming the country's economic future through modern

technology and digital skills.

Google Vice President Wilson L. White, during his first visit to Pakistan, said the company had been investing in and supporting Pakistan for more than a decade. He said Google had contributed over Rs3.9 trillion to economic activity involving Pakistani businesses and households during the past ten years, supporting more than 960,000 jobs.

White said Google would support Pakistan's ambition to become a \$30 billion IT export hub by investing in people, manufacturing and export-related infrastructure, and local busi-

nesses. He noted that more than one million Pakistanis had already benefited from Google career certificate programmes.

He also announced that Google Gemini subscriptions would be offered free to Pakistani students for one year, with a formal announcement expected later.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the development, saying the government would continue empowering youth through modern technology and skills. US Charge d'Affaires Natalie Baker also congratulated Pakistan on the occasion.



New Raja Bazaar

RAWALPINDI: People walks at pedestrian-friendly zone of Model Raja Bazaar.



Photo: Online

NBP and All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association Talks Successful, Direct Pension Payment Assured

Commerce Desk

RAWALPINDI: An important meeting between the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and the All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association (APRPA) was held to discuss the timely payment of pensions and resolve issues faced by railway pensioners. NBP assured that, from the current month, railway pensioners' pensions would be credited directly through the NBP Main Disbursing Branch, Lahore.

According to APRPA Secretary General Aurang Zeb Tanoli, the meeting was held at the NBP Head Office, Lahore, where the complaint regarding delays in pension payments and other related matters were discussed in detail. Representing NBP, Muhammad Akbar Ashraf, SVP/REO Central Region Lahore; Muhammad Adeel, VP/Operations NBP Main Branch; Muhammad Iqbal, OG-II/In-charge Salary & Pension; and Syed Fahim Alam, VP/RSM/RHQ Lahore OP Department attended the meeting. The APRPA delegation comprised Secretary General Aurang Zeb Tanoli, Vice President Muhammad Maqsood, Secretary Press & Information



Mian Sohail Anwar, and Assistant Secretary Coordination Tariq Mehmood. All matters were discussed in a cordial and positive atmosphere. It was also mutually agreed that a letter would be sent to the concerned authorities requesting that the complaint under reference be

cancelled and withdrawn. On the occasion, Muhammad Akbar Ashraf, SVP/REO Central Region Lahore, appreciated the positive, constructive and cooperative approach of all participants, particularly the APRPA delegation, and thanked them for their participation.

ABHI Bank posts record half-year profit of Rs1.502 billion

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: ABHI Bank has reported a profit after tax of Rs1.502 billion for the six months ended June 30, 2026, surpassing its full-year 2025 profit of Rs1.019 billion and marking a significant improvement from Rs200.2 million recorded during the corresponding period last year.

The strong performance was supported by balance sheet expansion, increased earning assets, deposit mobilization, improved recoveries and continued focus on

risk management and operational efficiency. The bank's total assets crossed the Rs100 billion mark, reaching Rs101.55 billion by June 30, up around 32% from Rs76.80 billion at the end of 2025.

Gross advances rose to Rs50.07 billion from Rs38.16 billion, while deposits increased by approximately 25% to Rs86.19 billion from Rs69.09 billion. Revenue also grew substantially, reaching Rs10.52 billion during the first half of 2026 compared with Rs5.84 billion in the same period last year, reflecting an

80.1% year-on-year increase.

Shareholders' equity improved to Rs3.11 billion from negative Rs397 million at year-end 2025, supported by strong profitability and Rs2 billion recognized as Advance Against Issuance of Shares.

The bank also continued investments in technology, digital capabilities, infrastructure and human resources. Its half-year financial statements received an unmodified audit opinion from independent auditors Baker Tilly Mehmood Idrees Qamar.

FBR, ICAP Hold Seminar on Income Tax Return Filing for Tax Year 2026

Commerce Desk

PESHAWAR: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), in collaboration with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP), organized an informative seminar on filing income tax returns for Tax Year 2026 at the ICAP Peshawar Office.

The seminar was conducted by the FBR Domain Team, which provided participants with a detailed briefing on the latest requirements, changes and online procedures related to income tax return filing. The session also covered practical aspects of completing and submitting returns.

A large number of char-

tered accountants and tax practitioners from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in the event. Participants actively engaged with FBR officials, raising practical questions and seeking clarification on various aspects of the return filing process.

The seminar was widely appreciated by participants and provided an important platform for strengthening professional knowledge and understanding of the latest tax developments. The initiative also reflected the importance of continued cooperation between FBR and professional bodies to facilitate taxpayers and improve compliance with tax regulations.

Federal Government Urged to Clarify Hybrid Taxation, Auto Policy 2026-31



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Sindh Government Spokesperson Sukhdev Hemnani has urged the federal government to promptly notify the Auto Policy 2026-31 and establish a clear transitional framework for hybrid, plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles following the expiry of the previous policy.

Hemnani said the Auto

Industry Development and Export Policy 2021-26 expired on June 30, 2026, along with concessional sales-tax rates for qualifying locally manufactured hybrid vehicles. He stressed that any changes in incentives should be accompanied by clear eligibility criteria, timely decisions and adequate notice to consumers and investors.

He said transitional support should be time-bound and linked to fuel efficiency, local manufacturing, technology transfer, employment and domestic component development. Given Pakistan's dependence on imported petroleum, he called for coordination between taxation, industrial policy and clean-mobility planning.

CCP to Hold Open Hearing on Real Estate Sector Competition Concerns

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) will hold an open hearing on August 27 to examine competition concerns and deceptive practices in the real estate sector.

The hearing will focus particularly on false or misleading claims, hidden charges and misrepresentation of project approvals, which can significantly affect consumers' investment decisions. The CCP has invited consumers, investors, developers, builders, real estate professionals, industry associations and other stakeholders to share their

experiences and concerns.

The Commission said transparent and accurate information was essential for protecting consumers and ensuring fair competition, particularly when individuals invest substantial amounts in property projects.

Under Section 10 of the Competition Act, 2010, deceptive marketing practices involving false or misleading information that may harm consumers or competing businesses are prohibited. The CCP has previously taken enforcement action and conducted inquiries into deceptive marketing practices in the real estate sector.

Azerbaijan-Pakistan Ties Reach Historic Highs During Ambassador Khazar Farhadov’s Five-Year Tenure



Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The five-year tenure of Azerbaijan’s Ambassador Khazar Farhadov, spanning 2021 to 2026, has witnessed an unprecedented deepening of relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan across political, military, economic, and cultural spheres. What was once a modest bilateral relationship rooted primarily in shared religious and cultural affinity has, over this period, transformed into a robust, multi-dimensional strategic partnership that now touches nearly every sector of governance and public life.

Political and Diplomatic Institutionalization

At the political level, Azerbaijan and Pakistan achieved remarkable diplomatic momentum during this period. A total of seven mutual visits by heads of state and government took place, generating substantive discussions and executive directives that were subsequently implemented by both governments. These exchanges were complemented by six mutual visits at the level of parliament speakers, reflecting an unusually high frequency of inter-parliamentary engagement for two countries separated by considerable geographic distance.

Perhaps most notably, this period saw the first-ever official visit of a Pakistani provincial Chief Minister to Azerbaijan, when Punjab’s top executive traveled to Baku, extending bilateral ties directly into regional economic hubs rather than confining cooperation to the federal level alone. This kind of subnational diplomacy signals a maturing relationship that

reaches beyond capital-to-capital exchanges.

On the institutional side, two rounds of political consultations were conducted between the two countries’ Ministries of Foreign Affairs, alongside two sessions of the Joint Intergovernmental Commission — the primary mechanism through which economic and technical cooperation between the two states is coordinated and monitored.

A Historic Strategic Partnership in Defense

Defense and military cooperation have emerged as perhaps the most striking dimension of the Azerbaijan-Pakistan relationship over the past five years, evolving from routine cooperation into what officials on both sides now describe as a historic strategic partnership. This transformation has been underpinned by defense contracts worth hundreds of millions of US dollars, sustained joint combat training, and frequent exchanges among the top leadership of both countries’ armed forces.

Between 2021 and 2026, numerous official and working visits were conducted at the highest levels of military leadership, including Defense Ministers, Chiefs of Army Staff and Defense Forces, Chiefs of General Staff, and commanders of the Air Force and Navy from both nations.

Joint military exercises formed a central pillar of this cooperation. In 2021, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, and Turkey conducted “Three Brothers,” the first-ever trilateral special forces drills among the three countries, held in Baku. This was followed in 2025 by “Eternal Brotherhood-IV,” a multilateral tactical

exercise that expanded participation to include Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan alongside the original three partners. Pakistan hosted “Indus Shield Alpha” exercises in both 2023 and 2024 with active Azerbaijani participation, before Azerbaijan reciprocated by hosting “Indus Shield Alpha” on its own soil for the first time in October 2025.

Symbolic military exchanges also flourished. Azerbaijan’s Commando and Military Band units marched in Pakistan’s National Day Parades in 2022, 2024, and 2025, while a contingent of Pakistani Armed Forces personnel marched in the parade marking the fifth anniversary of Azerbaijan’s Victory Day in Baku in November 2025 — an occasion further highlighted by a live aerial display from Pakistani JF-17 Thunder fighter jets.

In a landmark achievement for defense production cooperation, Azerbaijan finalized an official procurement contract for JF-17 Thunder fighter jets, subsequently inducting the aircraft into its military arsenal — marking one of the most significant defense industry milestones in the bilateral relationship’s history. Military contingents from Azerbaijan, Pakistan, and Turkey also jointly participated in trilateral discussions and the Baku Victory Day parade, underscoring the three-way character much of this cooperation has taken on.

Trade, Economy, and Investment Growth

Economic ties between the two countries have expanded just as dramatically. Bilateral trade volume witnessed a historic increase, rising from a modest USD 11 million to hundreds of

millions of dollars, with growth driven particularly by trade in military industry products alongside strategic commodities such as LNG, urea, and sugar.

A major turning point came in 2024, when Azerbaijan’s Head of State announced a USD 2 billion investment package targeting commercially viable sectors of the Pakistani economy. Since that announcement, active operations have been launched through SOCAR, Azerbaijan’s state energy company, with the groundbreaking ceremony for the “White Oil Pipeline” construction project expected to take place in the coming months.

These commercial ties have been reinforced by crucial legal frameworks, including the signing of a Preferential Trade Agreement and a Transit Trade Agreement, which together provide the regulatory foundation for expanded commerce. New trade institutions have also taken root: the Azerbaijan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry was established in Islamabad, while the Azerbaijan Trade House opened its doors in Lahore.

Growing People-to-People Connections

Beyond government and military channels, the relationship has been strengthened by a significant expansion in people-to-people ties. After nearly three decades without such connectivity, direct flights between Baku and the Pakistani cities of Islamabad and Lahore resumed, with 11 weekly flights now operated jointly by AZAL, PIA, and Airblue.

This renewed connectivity, combined with Azerbaijan’s ASAN online visa system, has

driven a substantial increase in Pakistani travelers to Azerbaijan, reaching approximately 92,000 in 2025 and projected to reach 100,000 by the end of 2026 based on current growth trends.

Azerbaijan has also exported elements of its public service governance model to Pakistan, facilitating the construction and implementation of an “ASAN Service Center” in Islamabad, modeled directly on Azerbaijan’s own state service delivery system. Meanwhile, new sister-city agreements were signed between Baku and Islamabad, and between Nakhchivan and Lahore, complementing the long-standing Ganja-Multan sister-city relationship that dates back to 1996.

Deepening Academic and Cultural Bridges

Educational and cultural cooperation has expanded substantially over the five-year period. Operational roadmaps and formal agreements were activated between leading universities and think tanks on both sides, including Azerbaijan’s National Academy of Sciences (ANAS), Baku State University, ADA University, and AzTU, alongside Pakistani institutions such as Quaid-i-Azam University, the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), the Institute of Regional Studies (IRSD), the Muslim Institute, NUML, NUST, GC University Lahore, and IQRA National University.

The number of Pakistani students studying in Azerbaijan surged twenty-fold during this period, growing from just 100 to 2,000 students — a striking indicator of deepening educational ties. New cultural and linguistic institutions were also established,



including the Heydar Aliyev Auditorium at NUST, the Azerbaijan Language and Culture Center at NUML, and a joint Azerbaijan-Urdu Science Center at GC University Lahore. Additionally, an Azerbaijan Studies Center was established at the National Library of Pakistan, while the Nizami Ganjavi Corner at the National Book Foundation of Pakistan underwent full renovation.

Language education has flowed in both directions: Urdu is now actively taught at Baku State University, while a dedicated Pakistan Center was established at the Azerbaijan University of Languages.

Elevated Trilateral Cooperation with Türkiye

The Azerbaijan-Pakistan relationship has increasingly taken on a trilateral character through expanded cooperation with Türkiye. High-level formats for this trilateral partnership were elevated from the level of Foreign Ministers and Parliament Speakers to that of national leaders. During this five-year period, the leaders of the three

countries held three trilateral summits — in Astana, Lachin, and Baku — while parliament speakers of the three nations conducted three separate trilateral meetings of their own.

A Comprehensive Legal Architecture

Underpinning this wide-ranging cooperation, nearly 40 official documents — including agreements, treaties, and memoranda of understanding — were signed between Azerbaijan and Pakistan during Ambassador Farhadov’s tenure, governing cooperation across economy, trade, investment, military and defense industry, culture, education, tourism, sister-city relations, law, justice, and public service delivery.

Taken together, these developments illustrate a relationship that has moved decisively beyond symbolic gestures of solidarity toward substantive, institutionalized cooperation across nearly every domain of statecraft — positioning Azerbaijan and Pakistan as increasingly close strategic partners heading into the years ahead.

Do Not Just Build Walls, Build Character

Continued from Page 4

The digital age has made this challenge even more complex. Young people today have access to information from around the world within seconds. Social media has created countless opportunities for expression, communication, and participation. At the same time, however, it has also increased the possibility of spreading misinformation, hate speech, rumors, and superficial ideas. In such circumstances, it is not enough to teach young people how to use the

internet. They must also learn how to identify reliable information, distinguish facts from propaganda, understand the difference between news and misinformation, disagree without turning differences into hatred, and exercise freedom of expression responsibly. No matter how strong the walls of the digital world may be, if the gatekeepers our young people are intellectually and morally weak, harmful influences can easily pass through those gates.

An important point is that weakening a civilization does

not always require destroying its physical buildings or institutions. Weakening its values, family structure, educational system, and intellectual leadership can also undermine its collective future. Some writings attribute to an Orientalist the idea that a nation can be weakened by targeting its family, education, and leadership. While the historical authenticity of such an attribution should be independently verified, the underlying idea deserves serious reflection: nations are strengthened not merely by their mate-

rial resources but by their values, education, and human character.

Therefore, we should not ask only how high our walls are; we must also ask how strong the people guarding them are. Our true gatekeeper is our character. The family is our first wall, education our second, and intellectual and moral leadership our third. If families are strengthened through love and proper upbringing, if teachers perform their responsibilities with dignity and commitment, and if scholars and intellectuals guide society with research, integrity,

and wisdom, then the younger generation can stand on solid foundations.

We must strive to make our students not merely successful but also principled, conscious, responsible, and morally strong. They must understand that a degree may demonstrate academic achievement, but character is the true measure of a person’s worth. A nation may possess excellent universities, advanced technology, modern institutions, and impressive infrastructure, but if humanity, honesty, and responsibility

become weak, the entire structure of progress can become hollow from within.

Ultimately, the question is this: If the conscious and responsible mother becomes weak, if the sincere teacher loses respect, if scholars, researchers, and intellectuals lose credibility, and if there is no effective system left to teach young people the difference between truth and falsehood, knowledge and ignorance, freedom and responsibility then who will guide the next generation?

We must answer this ques-

tion today. We should certainly build strong walls, but before building them, we must build strong gatekeepers. We should certainly establish institutions, but before establishing them, we must build human beings. For strong nations are not ultimately created by strong walls or magnificent buildings; they are created by people of strong character, sound values, knowledge, integrity, and a deep sense of responsibility.

The writer is senior analyst and he can be reached at sirasij786@gmail.com

The Illusion of Security: How a Fragmented Middle East Could Escalate Local Crises

Continued from Page 4

they hold 1,100 air combat and fighter aircraft. Additionally, the collective naval power and ballistic missile arsenals of the Mecca Joint Defense Agreement members present a formidable combination of surface dominance, indigenous missile technology, and strategic deterrence. But on the other hand, it compels other states to go for arrangements of the same nature to protect their interests and balance the leverage of their adversaries. Maybe in the near future we will witness a defense agreement among Israel, India, and the UAE to balance the Mecca

Joint Defense Agreement.

So, why be skeptical and not too optimistic about this decentralization of security framework?

Once the region is under one security umbrella, until and unless the security provider is fulfilling its commitments as the U. S. did for a long time, there is no need for regional arrangements; but once the provider fails to fulfill its commitment, as the U. S. failed to protect Qatar from Israel. Moreover, Iran’s successful strikes on U. S. installations in the Middle East exposed U. S. regional deterrence; that’s why Gulf states are

diversifying their security partners. This diversification of security partners can easily transform a bilateral crisis into a regional one, owing to a collective obligation on states involved in an agreement to protect their allies.

India and Pakistan are historical rivals and share a history of animosity from multiple major wars to temporary escalations. These two countries are locked into this pattern when we look back at their history. And one thing is very visible: nuclear deterrence after 1998 onwards is playing a vital role in preventing both states from engaging in major war, as the

cost of major war will outweigh its benefit. Let’s suppose India and Pakistan are in crisis, as they have a historical pattern of bilateral crises. India attacked Pakistan and violated its sovereignty, as they did in Feb 2019 and May 2025, while being part of the Mecca joint defense agreement; this could bring its allies to fulfill their commitment to secure Pakistan. And if India is in a similar agreement, this could bring its allies too into this crisis. The same is for the Middle East, looking to Saudi Arabia and Iran. So, in this way, a local crisis can easily be transformed into a regional crisis. This will have

far-flung effects.

Historical events have proved that decentralization of the security framework has yielded devastation. As the Congress of Vienna in 1815 was convened for post-Napoleonic war settlement, and congress established the balance of power in Europe, and under this arrangement there was no major war for the next 100 years, except for the Crimean War in 1854 and Franko-Prussian war 1870. During this whole time period, Great Britain supported weak states against strong ones in order to preserve the balance of power. But with the unification of Germany

in 1871, Germany became a powerful and unmatched country on the European continent. Even several powerful countries together cannot match the power of Germany, and with this, the framework of the balance of power gradually started losing its function. Eventually, the balance of power led to decentralization and ended up with two blocks: The Triple Entente and the Central Powers. The Balkan crisis, which started between Austria and Serbia with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, brought their allies, Germany and Russia, into it. In this way, the obliga-

tion to protect allies transformed a local crisis into World War, which was unprecedented in its devastation. Additionally, the League of Nations, which was in its beginning based on collective security owing to multiple reasons such as the U. S. wasn’t its member, and had framework enforcement issues. This declined states’ confidence in the institution, and ended up with two blocs, the Allies and the Axis, and resulted in WW2, which was again a devastation of unprecedented nature.

The writer is a student of International Relations at the University of Peshawar.

Meeting with Speaker GB

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani In a meeting with Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly, Imran Nadeem Shigri, at Parliament House, on Tuesday.



Photo: Online

Speaker GB Assembly Meets Chairman Senate

Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Imran Nadeem Shigri called on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani at Parliament House and discussed the country's political situation, regional developments, the newly elected GB Assembly and challenges facing the region.

Chairman Senate congratulated Shigri on his election as Speaker and conveyed his best wishes to him and the newly elected assembly members. He said the people of Gilgit-Baltistan had placed their trust in the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which, he added, believed in

public service, democratic values and people-centered politics.

Gilani assured that the Senate would extend all possible support for the development, prosperity and welfare of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan. He highlighted the Senate's constitutional role in strengthening coordination, harmony and cooperation among the federating units.

During the meeting, Speaker Shigri briefed the Chairman Senate on key issues and challenges confronting Gilgit-Baltistan. Gilani assured him of continued cooperation to address these issues, accelerate development and improve the well-being of the region's people.

PM Directs Skills Training to Expand Youth, Women's Employment Opportunities

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed authorities to focus on equipping young people, particularly women, with market-relevant skills to help them access emerging employment opportunities.

Chairing a review meeting on the implementation of the National Youth Employment



Policy, the prime minister stressed creating dignified jobs for youth across Pakistan, with special attention to Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said reforms in NAVTTC and SMEDA were aimed at aligning workforce skills with domestic and international market demands.

The prime minister directed that monthly meetings be held to review progress on the

policy and called for stronger coordination among ministries and institutions. He also ordered an awareness campaign to inform young people about employment and training opportunities available under the policy.

The meeting was informed that NAVTTC was providing international certifications and language training to facilitate overseas employment,

while youth were being trained according to market requirements. The Digital Youth Hub is also providing information on domestic and international job opportunities through a single platform.

Youth Development Cells are being established in educational institutions to provide career counselling, guidance and information on skills-development opportunities.

Govt to challenge SC order on Imran Khan's treatment, says law minister

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar said the government has reviewed the court order concerning the treatment of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and is considering approaching the Supreme Court for a review.

Speaking about the court proceedings related to the PTI founder's case, Tarar said consultations had been held on other aspects of the order. He said the government would approach the Supreme Court to seek a review of the decision.

Tarar raised questions about



whether the Supreme Court's order regarding treatment would apply to all prisoners. "There are many prisoners in jails who have health problems," the minister said. He noted that convicted prisoners requiring medical treatment are provided care at government hospitals.

The law minister questioned whether the directions contained in the court order regarding Imran Khan's treatment would also be applicable to other prisoners facing health-related issues. He said the government would examine the matter and take the appropriate legal course regarding the court's order.

SC Order on Imran Khan's Treatment Offers 'Ray of Hope': Salman Akram Raja

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PTI Secretary-General Salman Akram Raja has welcomed the Supreme Court's decision to shift PTI founder Imran Khan to Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad for medical treatment, describing the order as a "ray of hope."

Speaking to the media, Salman Akram Raja said questions remained regarding Imran Khan's reported health problems, particularly his high blood pressure and the formation of a blood clot in his eye. He said the Supreme Court had directed the formation of a panel of specialist doctors at Shifa International Hospital to examine the PTI founder and had also allowed Dr Uzma Khan access as part of the medical process.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi said the judiciary was the "last hope" for Pakistan's people and expressed optimism that the court order would be implemented. He warned against attempts to create unrest, disrupt the situation around the hospital or politicise the matter, saying those involved would not represent PTI.

Meanwhile, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said the Supreme Court's decision had reassured PTI that judicial processes were functioning. He stressed that decisions regarding Imran Khan would be taken by the courts and that political leaders could secure relief only through the judicial process.

ISPR Rejects India's 'Bollywood-Style' Narrative on Operation Sindoor

ISLAMABAD: The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) has rejected what it described as India's "Bollywood-style" documentary on Operation Sindoor, accusing New Delhi of using dramatic and selective narratives to portray its military campaign as a success and distort the events of Marka-i-Haq.

According to ISPR, the documentary contains factual contradictions, emotionally charged narration and cinematic reconstruction aimed at rewriting the operational outcome. It particularly questioned the documentary's account of the Pahalgam incident and India's claims regarding the success of its military operations.

The military's media wing rejected India's claim of "100 per cent mission success," saying it was inconsistent with operational records and battlefield realities. It maintained that Pakistan successfully thwarted Indian aggression and subsequently conducted Operation Bunyanum Marsoos



against military targets.

ISPR also highlighted what it called contradictions in India's account of the cessation of hostilities, noting that the conflict ended through communication between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) and an agreed cessation of military action.

The statement said cinematic portrayals could not change the chronology of events or erase battlefield realities. Pakistan, it added, remained committed to regional peace and stability while maintaining its readiness to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has criticised the party was now calling for Imran Khan to be shifted from prison to a hospital, despite previously portraying him as an "invincible" and "iron man." He said, "Perhaps a bigger U-turn of irony is not possible."

In a post on X, the defence minister said one of the "innumerable founders" of PTI had received what he described as extraordinary relief from the judiciary. Asif said the way the entire party celebrated the verdict reflected its strong desire to see its leader released from jail. He recalled that PTI leaders had previously demanded that political oppo-

nents be imprisoned and face difficult conditions in jail.

According to the defence minister, the party was now calling for Imran Khan to be shifted from prison to a hospital, despite previously portraying him as an "invincible" and "iron man." He said, "Perhaps a bigger U-turn of irony is not possible."

The defence minister maintained that there was no objection to providing Imran Khan with immediate, effective and comprehensive medical facilities, noting that prisoners had previously received treatment in hospitals. However, he urged PTI to address what he described as contradictions in its political narrative before celebrating the court's verdict.

New York City Council hosts event to celebrate Pakistan Independence Day



NEW YORK: Pakistan's Independence Day was celebrated for the first time at the iconic New York City Hall, marking an unprecedented milestone in the history of Pakistan-US community relations in the United States.

The event was jointly organised by New York City Council Speaker Julie Menin and Council Member Linda Lee, in collaboration with the American Pakistani Advocacy Group (APAG).

In his remarks, Consul General for Pakistan in New York Aamer Ahmed Atozai commended APAG and the participating parliamentarians for their efforts in bringing the celebration to City Hall and for their affection and enduring commitment to Pakistan. He termed the occasion a proud and memorable moment for the Pakistani American community. New York City Council hosts

event to celebrate Pakistan Independence Day

A large number of Pakistani Americans, elected representatives, parliamentarians and media persons attended the event.

Speaker Julie Menin praised the Pakistani American community for its valuable contributions to the progress and development of New York City, as well as its strong commitment to both Pakistan and the United States.

Other parliamentarians also lauded the community for its perseverance, hard work and dedication, highlighting its important role as a bridge between Pakistan and the United States.

The historic celebration underscored the growing recognition and positive contributions of the Pakistani American community to the civic, economic and social fabric of New York City.