



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ام المؤمنین عائشہ رضی اللہ عنہا نے ایک کبوتر کو آزاد کرنے کے لیے خریدنا پتھر تیز کے بالوں نے کہا کہ ہم بچ سکتے ہیں مگر ان ولا ہمارے ساتھ ہوگی۔ ام المؤمنین نے اس کا ذکر رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم سے کیا تو آپ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ اس شر کا کوئی خیر نہیں ہے، وہ لا مایہی اسی کے ساتھ قائم ہوتی ہے جو آزاد کرے۔
(بخاری: حدیث نمبر 6753)
Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

CJP Yahaya Afridi appreciates KP Govt's budgetary allocation for justice sector

Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahaya Afridi appreciated the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for making the highest budgetary allocation for the justice sector, which reflects KP government's commitment to strengthening judicial infrastructure, public facilitation and access to justice across the province.



National Assembly, Save the Children sign MoU to strengthen child rights cooperation

The National Assembly Secretariat and Save the Children International on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at Parliament House, Islamabad. The agreement aims to promote evidence-based parliamentary engagement and advance initiatives including the Children's Citizens Internship Programme, digital protection of children and other measures focused on the promotion and protection of child rights in Pakistan.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Rabi-ul-Awwal 13, Friday, August 28, 2026



www.dailyspokesman.net



@daily_spokesman



Daily Spokesman Vol: 20, Issue: 128

Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Farewell call on

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan H.E. Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki pays a farewell call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday.



Photo: PID

PM praises Saudi Arabia's steadfast support to Pakistan, role in regional peace

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reaffirmed deep appreciation for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's steadfast support and generous assistance to Pakistan, and its pivotal role in promoting peace and stability in the region.

The prime minister said this as

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki paid a farewell call on him at the PM House here, after completion of his official tenure in Pakistan.

He congratulated the Saudi ambassador on the successful completion of his official assignment.

He lauded the outgoing

ambassador for his outstanding contribution towards further strengthening the deep-rooted fraternal and strategic ties between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Prime Minister Shehbaz conveyed his warmest regards and best wishes for the health and well-being of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques

King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia.

Ambassador Al-Malki expressed his profound gratitude to the prime minister and the Government of Pakistan for the warmth, cooperation, and hospitality extended to him

throughout his assignment.

He described his stay in Pakistan as a deeply memorable and rewarding experience, and reaffirmed his personal commitment to the continued strengthening of Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relations.

The prime minister wished the ambassador continued success in his future endeavours.

Capt. Retd. Mahmood given additional charge as Federal Health Secretary

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Capt. (Retd.) Muhammad Mahmood, a BS-21 officer of the Pakistan Administrative Service and currently Secretary of Housing and Works, has been assigned additional charge as Secretary, National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination Division for three months or until a regular

appointment, under Section 10 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973.

The decision follows Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's directive to suspend Health Secretary Muhammad Aslam Ghauri, a BS-22 Secretariat Group officer. Ghauri has been placed under suspension for 120 days under Rule 5 of the Civil Servants (Efficiency and Discipline) Rules 2020.

The action came after an emergency meeting on the fire at PIMS hospital nursery that killed newborn children. The PM expressed deep grief, termed the incident "deeply heart-breaking," and ordered strict action, directing Ghauri to leave the meeting.

A high-level inquiry committee, headed by former Interior Secretary Shahid Khan, has begun investigating the tragedy.

Nawaz Sharif Nominates Iftikhar Ali Gillani for AJK Prime Ministership



Abdul Majeed Tahir.

LAHORE/MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President and former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has nominated Barrister Syed Iftikhar Ali Gillani as the party's candidate for election as Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

Nawaz Sharif has directed Barrister Gillani to formally submit his nomination papers for the AJK prime ministerial election. The decision reflects the PML-N leadership's confidence in Gillani and represents a significant step toward establishing the new leadership of the AJK government.

Field Marshal Asim Munir's Iran visit had no US link, Pakistan says

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday dismissed as baseless reports linking Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir's recent visit to Iran with the United States, saying the trip was aimed at advancing Pakistan's mediation efforts and promoting a peaceful resolution to regional tensions.

Speaking at the weekly press briefing, Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Hussain Andrabi said that Field Marshal Asim Munir visited Iran on August 24 and held detailed discussions with Iranian officials on reducing tensions in the region and finding solutions to the crisis through dialogue.



He, however, rejected claims that the Field Marshal visited Tehran as an envoy for the US President, clarifying that the visit was

undertaken strictly within Pakistan's independent capacity as a mediator.

"The visit was part of Pakistan's ongoing diplomatic efforts," the spokesperson said, adding that Islamabad remained in contact with brotherly countries to help de-escalate tensions and address the crisis in the Middle East.

Andrabi said Pakistan had continued to play a sincere and constructive role in reducing differences between the US and Iran and would maintain diplomatic efforts aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement and lasting regional stability.

He added that Pakistan's efforts were also aimed at facilitating the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, while the Iranian leadership had appreciated Islamabad's role.

Pakistan, Kuwait reaffirm commitment to stronger defence ties



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation from Kuwait, led by Defence Minister H. H. Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Saleem Al-Sabah and accompanied by Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces of Kuwait Lieutenant General Khalid Darj Saad Al-Shriaan, called on Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

The meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, regional security and bilateral defence cooperation.

Both sides reaffirmed their

commitment to enhancing institutional ties and expanding mutually beneficial defence collaboration between the two countries.

The Kuwaiti delegation appreciated the professionalism, operational excellence and valuable contributions of the Pakistan Armed Forces towards regional peace and stability.

The engagement reaffirmed the resolve of Pakistan and Kuwait to further consolidate their historic and brotherly relations into a strong, enduring and mutually beneficial defence partnership, contributing to regional security and stability.

PM directs strict action over PIMS tragic incident

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Wednesday, while chairing an emergency meeting on the fire incident at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), expressed his resentment and directed strict action.

During the meeting, the prime minister suspended Secretary Health, Aslam Ghouri and directed him to leave the meeting. PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister also expressed his heartfelt condolences to the parents of the newborn who died in the tragic fire at the PIMS hospital

nursery and prayed for grant of patience to the bereaved families.

The prime minister termed the incident as 'deeply heart-breaking' and said the government shared the grief of the bereaved parents.

Earlier, the prime minister had directed immediate suspension and removal of the federal health secretary from his office.

In the meanwhile a high-level committee began an investigation into the incident. Former interior secretary Shahid Khan would head the committee while while Establishment Secretary Dr. Barrister Nabeel Awan would be among its other members.

Passport Services to Be Introduced at Gujranwala NADRA Mega Centre

Bureau Report

GUJRANWALA: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the 24/7 NADRA Mega Centre in Gujranwala and announced that passport services would soon be introduced there, enabling citizens to access both identity and passport facilities under one roof.

During the visit, Naqvi reviewed the centre's operations, inspected service counters and interacted with citizens to assess their experience. Many visitors expressed satisfaction with the efficient arrangements, short waiting times and quick processing of their applications.

The minister also reviewed the information desk and

directed officials to provide visitors with complete guidance and assistance regarding available services and procedures. He took immediate notice of complaints raised by citizens and ordered relevant authorities to resolve service-related issues promptly.

Naqvi emphasized that public services should be made more convenient and citizens should not have to make repeated visits for routine documentation. He said improved systems would save people's time and reduce unnecessary delays.

The upcoming passport facility is expected to further expand one-window public service delivery at the Gujranwala NADRA Mega Centre.

Punjab, Xinjiang agree to expand cooperation in agriculture, technology

 Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif met Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee and Communist Party secretary, and Political Commissar of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), He Zhongyou, during her visit to China on Thursday.

CM Punjab thanked He Zhongyou for the warm welcome and appreciated his “visionary leadership”. She also congratulated him on the 150th anniversary of the Communist Party of China and on the completion of 75 years of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations.

The meeting focused on expanding economic cooperation between Punjab and Xinjiang, particularly in agriculture, industry, technology and infrastructure. The two sides also discussed cooperation in healthcare, business and economic affairs, as well as people-to-people exchange programmes.

The chief minister proposed cooperation in water-efficient farming, drip irrigation and the use of high-quality seeds to improve crop yields in water-stressed areas. She said Punjab was keen to benefit from China's experience in using modern scientific methods to address water shortages in drought-



prone and arid regions.

CM Punjab said Punjab had the distinction of being Pakistan's “food basket” and that effective measures and improved governance were helping address poverty and deprivation.

She proposed launching pilot projects in different parts of Punjab, in collaboration with China, for the conservation of water resources.

The chief minister said renewable energy was among the provincial government's priorities and that tech-

nical education was being promoted in Punjab's educational institutions.

She also appreciated He Zhongyou's initiative to host the sixth international media tour in Urumqi and discussed the possibility of providing online technical assistance to Pakistani students.

Children hospital Activities resumes

ISLAMABAD: People and media persons gathered outside the gate of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) Hospital in the Federal Capital. The hospital resumes its routine operation after fire incident at maternity ward on Wednesday.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

PIMS Tragedy, Safdar Abbasi and Naheed Khan express grief over deaths of 14 innocent children

 News Desk

RAWALPINDI: President of Pakistan Peoples Party Workers Dr. Safdar Abbasi and Political Assistant to Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Naheed Khan have expressed deep grief and sorrow over the tragic incident at PIMS Hospital Islamabad that claimed the lives of 14 innocent children.

They demanded an immediate,



transparent, comprehensive and impartial investigation into the inci-

dent, with all relevant aspects thoroughly examined.

In their joint statement, they said the tragedy at PIMS Hospital was deeply heartbreaking and had left every sensitive heart in grief.

The loss of innocent lives is an unbearable tragedy for the bereaved parents and their families. They said the pain and suffering of the grieving families cannot be expressed in words. They prayed that Allah Almighty

grant the departed children the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous and give their parents and families patience and strength to bear this immense loss. Safdar Abbasi and Naheed Khan further demanded that all aspects of the incident be investigated and that, if any negligence, carelessness or dereliction of duty is established, those responsible must face strict legal action without discrimination.

CM Maryam Nawaz expresses deep grief over death of 14 newborns in PIMS fire

 Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of 14 newborn babies in a fire at PIMS Hospital. The chief minister conveyed her sympathies to the bereaved parents and said the loss of innocent lives was an extremely painful and tragic incident. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed the commissioner and deputy commissioner to ensure the availability and functionality of firefighting equipment in all hospitals.

She stressed that all necessary safety measures must be ensured to prevent such tragic incidents.

“Kashmir Banega Pakistan” Is Not Partition of Kashmir: Sardar Atiq

 City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Sardar Atiq Ahmed Khan, President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former PM of AJK, stressed the need to distinguish between “Kashmir Banega Pakistan” and the partition of Kashmir. Addressing Muslim Conference leaders at Mujahid Manzil, he said the party's historic position since the 19 July 1947 resolution is that the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir — AJK, Gilgit-Baltistan, Valley, Jammu and Ladakh — is an indivisible entity whose people should decide their future through self-determination, with the aspiration to accede to Pakistan. He defined “partition of Kashmir” as accepting permanent division along the Line of Control or any other basis, which he said would compromise the Kashmiris' struggle, UN resolutions, and sacrifices. Sardar Atiq warned that treating the current division as permanent amounts to yielding to Indian and Western pressure. He urged party workers to communicate this distinction clearly in domestic and international discourse to uphold the Muslim Conference's stance against any division of the State.



Bangladesh's Entry into Makkah Pact Could Bolster Regional Security: Masood Khan

 News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Masood Khan, former Ambassador of Pakistan to the US, China and UN, and ex-President AJK, said Bangladesh's potential participation in the Makkah Pact could strengthen regional security and strategic space for countries seeking to protect sovereignty.

In an interview, he called the Pact an open, defensive arrangement not directed against any specific state, aimed at collective deterrence. He noted Pakistan and Bangladesh share historic and cultural bonds and common interests in peace, stability, and preventing regional hegemony.

Masood Khan said Bangladesh shares interests with Pakistan, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia on protecting Muslim communities, opposing Islamophobia, and supporting Palestinian rights. He added Bangladesh is seeking greater strategic autonomy and mechanisms to safeguard borders and economic interests, while keeping a pragmatic relationship with India.

He said Iran's inclusion remains unlikely for now due to regional tensions, but possible later if confidence with Gulf states improves. He urged India not to view Bangladesh's engagement as hostility, stressing the Pact can help Muslim and South Asian states achieve stability.



Subsidised Roti Crisis Deepens in Attock as Naanbais Refuse to Sell at Rs. 17

 Raaza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Residents of Attock city are facing serious difficulties as the sale of the Rs.17 subsidised roti has remained suspended for the past several days due to unresolved differences between the district administration and naanbais (tandoor owners).

Talking to this correspondent, several naanbais said the flour being supplied by the administration at the government-fixed rate was of extremely poor quality and, according to them, was not fit for human consumption. They said they were ready to resume the sale of subsidised roti if the administration restored the quality of flour previously being supplied.

The naanbais further said that the current price of flour had made it impossible for them to sell roti for Rs.17. They maintained that if the administration allowed them to sell roti at Rs.20, they would be willing to resume sales at the revised rate. Public circles have strongly urged Member National Assembly Sheikh Aftab Ahmad and Chairman District Health Committee Attock Malik Hamid Akbar Khan to take up the issue with Deputy Commissioner Attock Dr. Mudassir Ahmed Shah and ensure that the matter is resolved without further delay.

Social figures warned that if the crisis was not addressed immediately, they would be compelled to hold protests and demonstrations.

Citizens also appealed to the Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Punjab Food Minister and Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz to take immediate notice of the situation and order strict action against whoever was found responsible for the crisis.



Hospital Tragedy Highlights Fire-Safety Failures and Lack of Accountability: Naveed Khan

 Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: Editor of Daily The Spokesman Naveed Ahmad Khan has expressed deep sorrow over the deaths of newborn babies in a hospital fire, saying the tragedy has exposed serious weaknesses in fire safety, emergency preparedness and institutional accountability.

In a video message, Khan said the loss of newborn lives was particularly heartbreaking, as some victims reportedly died before they had even experienced life outside the hospital. He criticized the official response, saying that while press conferences, photo sessions and expressions of sympathy were common

after such incidents, meaningful accountability was still lacking.

Khan questioned what he described as double standards in the enforcement of responsibility, arguing that authorities often act swiftly against ordinary citizens while those responsible for institutional failures are not held accountable.

Highlighting the historical role of Civil Defence, he recalled that the institution was established to protect the public and was responsible for inspecting buildings, checking firefighting arrangements, examining emergency exits and ensuring compliance with safety requirements. He said the weakening of such institutions had contributed to

declining public-safety standards.

Recalling a visit to Gujrat in 1997, Khan said he had seen buckets of sand placed outside an open-air cinema on the instructions of Civil Defence officials as a basic firefighting precaution. He stressed that modern hospitals, however, require comprehensive fire-safety systems, trained emergency teams, proper equipment and clearly defined evacuation procedures.

Khan also raised questions about the capacity of the affected children's hospital. He said authorities were aware that patients from Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and surrounding areas were placing

additional pressure on the facility. Instead of allowing overcrowding to become a continuing problem, he argued, the government should have expanded the hospital or developed specialized paediatric facilities in other regions.

He cited the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission's network of cancer hospitals and treatment centres as an example of decentralizing specialized healthcare so patients would not have to depend on a single facility.

Expressing anguish over the reported deaths, Khan said approximately 30 babies were believed to have been present in the affected ward, with 14 deaths officially reported, while some



parents claimed the actual toll could be higher. He said grieving families had demanded the

release and proper identification of their children's bodies.

He further said some surviving

children were reportedly rescued by individuals who broke through the rear wall to reach them, raising serious questions about the hospital's emergency response arrangements.

Khan said demands for the resignation of the concerned minister should not simply result in lower-level officials being made scapegoats. He stressed that genuine accountability must extend to those holding political and administrative responsibility.

He concluded with prayers for the victims and their families and called for meaningful reforms in hospital safety, emergency preparedness and institutional accountability to prevent similar tragedies in the future.



Islamabad

30° – 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	4:10 am
Zohr	12:10 pm
Asr	4:48 pm
Maghrib	6:40 pm
Isha	8:08 pm

EMERGENCY

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

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

Ayaz assumes office of acting President



ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has assumed the office of Acting President.

Ayaz Sadiq has assumed the responsibilities of the Acting President as the President of Pakistan is currently on leave to visit the Republic of Austria from 27 to 31 August 2026.

Meanwhile, the Chairman Senate has also proceeded abroad on an official visit, said a news release issued here by the National Assembly Secretariat.

In view of the absence of both the President and the Chairman Senate, Ayaz Sadiq will perform the functions of the President until the return of the President or the Chairman Senate to Pakistan.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq will continue to discharge his responsibilities as Acting President in accordance with the constitutional provisions governing the performance of the functions of the President during such an absence.

Baba Bulleh Shah's Teachings Promote Love, Peace and Tolerance

Bureau Report

KASUR: Secretary/Chief Administrator Auqaf Punjab Dr. Ehsan Bhutta said Hazrat Baba Bulleh Shah (RA) holds a distinguished place among the great Sufi figures of the subcontinent. His teachings emphasize divine love, remembrance of Allah, compassion, humility, brotherhood, tolerance and service to humanity. He said Baba Bulleh Shah's poetry strongly opposed hatred, prejudice and social divisions, making his message highly relevant in today's world.

Dr. Bhutta expressed these views while attending the inaugural ceremony of the 269th annual Urs of Hazrat Baba Bulleh Shah (RA) in Kasur. He visited the shrine, performed Chaddar Poshi and offered Fateha, praying for Pakistan's security, peace, stability, progress and prosperity.

He emphasized the importance of promoting Baba Bulleh Shah's message, particularly among young people, saying his teachings encourage mutual respect, humility, tolerance and love for humanity.

Dr. Bhutta said the Punjab government, under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's "Magnificent Punjab"

vision, is undertaking measures to restore, beautify and modernize shrines and religious heritage sites. He noted that Rs.650 million has been allocated for upgrading Baba Bulleh Shah's shrine, with work nearing completion.

A modern library-cum-photographic gallery has also been established at the shrine to introduce visitors and students to Baba Bulleh Shah's teachings, Kasur's history and cultural heritage. The facility includes documentaries and briefings, while 20 rare historical photographs have been displayed.

The Auqaf Department made extensive arrangements for Urs devotees, including drinking water, Langar, uninterrupted electricity, sanitation and security. Dr. Bhutta inspected the control room, departmental stalls, Langar Khana, mosque and library and interacted with devotees, especially elderly people and women, to assess facilities.

He appreciated the Punjab Tourism Force for deploying 11 male and 3 female personnel to guide and facilitate visitors. He also praised the district administration, police, Auqaf officials and staff for ensuring comprehensive security and smooth arrangements for devotees.



Unforgettable incident

ISLAMABAD: Members of Civil Society lighting candles during vigil in memory of the Fourteen Newborns, who lost their lives in fire incident in maternity ward of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) early on Wednesday, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Japan Grants \$53,419 for Women's Vocational Training Institute in Chakwal

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan will provide USD 53,419 × PKR 14.8 million in grant assistance to Moawin Foundation under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP). The grant agreement was signed by Ambassador of Japan AKAMATSU Shuichi and a Moawin Foundation representative at the Japanese Embassy. The project will establish a Women's Vocational Training Institute in Village Dulmial, District Chakwal,



Punjab. The Institute will be built on land donated by the local community and will offer structured courses in dress-

making, stitching and fashion design. It aims to train 240 women annually, helping them gain practical skills and secure stable, year-round income to support economic independence. Ambassador Akamatsu said the institute reflects Japan's commitment to women's empowerment and grassroots human security in Pakistan. He noted the project strengthens the longstanding Japan-Pakistan friendship and supports underserved rural communities facing limited employment opportunities.

SUPARCO Holds Third Regional Symposium on Space Technology for Climate Resilience

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), through its Space Applications Center for Climate Sciences (SACCS), organized the third regional symposium of its Space4Climate initiative, focusing on waterways and land-cover dynamics, crop monitoring, air quality and smog, and heat-wave hazard assessment.

The symposium brought together senior government officials, policymakers, scientists, researchers, academics, development partners and environmental experts to promote cooperation on using space technologies for climate resilience and sustainable development. Participants discussed Pakistan's growing climate challenges, including floods, disasters, heatwaves, deteriorating

air quality, changing water resources, glacier melt, droughts and pressures on agriculture.

Chairman SUPARCO Muhammad



Yousaf Khan, HI, PoP, who attended as chief guest, emphasized that Earth observation satellites, remote sensing, geospatial analytics and Geographic

Information Systems are increasingly essential for monitoring environmental changes. He highlighted SUPARCO's role in converting satellite data into actionable climate intelligence supporting disaster risk reduction, water management, food security, environmental protection and climate adaptation.

A key feature of the event was a presentation and live demonstration of SUPARCO's Space4Climate Geospatial Portals. The platforms integrate data from Pakistan's satellite assets, including PRSS-1, SAR-1, EO series and hyperspectral capabilities, providing near-real-time information on air quality, greenhouse gases, glaciers, waterways, land cover, snow cover and other environmental indicators.

Technical sessions examined satellite-based monitoring for agricul-

ture, water resources, environmental assessment and heatwave risks, particularly in Punjab. An interactive panel discussed integrating space-based information into provincial planning, disaster preparedness, infrastructure development and environmental governance.

The symposium concluded with recommendations to expand institutional use of Space4Climate services, strengthen cooperation between government and scientific organizations, improve geospatial capacity and develop operational climate-information services for evidence-based policymaking.

The Lahore event was the third of SUPARCO's seven-city Space4Climate symposium series, following Peshawar and Gilgit. The initiative will next visit Islamabad, Karachi, Quetta and Muzaffarabad.

CCP Holds Open Hearing on Competition Issues in Real Estate Sector

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) held an Open Hearing on competition concerns in the real estate sector, gathering consumers, developers, regulators and government bodies to present complaints and responses.

The hearing, chaired by Chairman Farid Ahmad Tarar and Member Bushra Naz Malik under Section 29(c) of the Competition Act, 2010, aimed to identify recurring issues before the Commission forms its view.

Key concerns raised included deceptive marketing, misleading claims, hidden charges, and misrepresentation of project approvals. Consumers shared experiences of alleged unfair practices, while industry representatives stressed commitment to compliance.

Senior officials from NAB, CDA, RDA, FGEHA, SECP, PPRA, PTA, Ministry of Housing and Works, and other federal/provincial bodies participated alongside major housing societies and real estate associations.

Chairman Tarar said real estate is a major financial commitment and accurate information is vital. Submissions from the hearing will inform the CCP's opinion on competition issues in the sector.

Amended Schedule Issued for Election of AJK Prime Minister

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Secretariat of the Legislative Assembly of Azad Jammu and Kashmir has issued an amended schedule for the filing of nomination papers and election to the office of the Prime Minister of the Azad Government of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the amended schedule, nomination papers will be filed on Friday, August 28, 2026, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Scrutiny of the nomination papers will be conducted from 10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

The list of candidates whose nomination papers are found valid will be displayed at 11:00 a.m., while candidates may withdraw their nomination papers between 11:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. The final list of candidates will be published at 12:00 noon.

The election for the office of Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 28, 2026.

The Assembly Secretariat has further stated that nomination papers may be obtained from the Secretariat and will be received by the Secretary, Legislative Assembly.

International Conference on "Next Generation Chemistry for a Sustainable Future" Concludes at Hazara University Mansehra

Abdul Waheed Khan

MANSEHRA: The two-day international conference on "Next Generation Chemistry for a Sustainable Future" concluded successfully at Hazara University Mansehra. Scholars and researchers from Pakistani universities and research institutions participated, along with chemistry experts from international universities. Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ikram Ullah Khan said chemistry is vital for scientific advancement, medicine, and solving human challenges. He urged researchers to focus on next-generation chemistry and link research to practical outcomes that serve humanity. He praised the university's departments, especially Chemistry, and called for more innovation and expanded research. Dean Prof. Dr. Wajid ur Rehman encouraged students to ask questions, explore ideas, and benefit from learning with renowned experts. Chairperson Chemistry Dept. Prof. Dr. Nadia Bashir said the conference gives young scholars opportunities for academic exchange, collaboration, and exposure to modern research trends. Students, scholars and experts from across Pakistan attended the event.

Hot, humid weather to persist across most parts of country

ISLAMABAD: Hot and humid weather is expected to persist across most plain areas of the country on Friday, while northern areas are likely to remain partly cloudy, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said in its weather forecast issued on Thursday.

According to the PMD, Islamabad and adjoining areas are expected to experience hot and humid weather.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, mainly hot and humid weather is likely to prevail in most districts, while upper districts including Swat, Kohistan, Battagram and Chitral may experience partly cloudy conditions during the afternoon. Most districts of Punjab are expected to remain hot and humid. Similar weather is likely in most parts of Sindh, although coastal areas may remain partly cloudy.

In Balochistan, mainly humid weather is expected in most districts, while partly cloudy conditions are likely in coastal areas.

Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan are expected to experience mainly dry and partly cloudy weather.

During the past 24 hours, hot and humid weather prevailed over most parts of the country.

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

A Ceasefire in Name, a War in Substance

Pakistan’s blunt questioning at the UN Security Council this week deserves attention far beyond the confines of a routine monthly briefing. Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad’s challenge was simple and damning: if a ceasefire is genuinely in place in Gaza, how does one explain over 1,200 Palestinian deaths since it supposedly took hold, renewed airstrikes after only a brief lull, and a hundred more killed and hundreds injured in the latest reporting period alone? The question answers itself. What the world has been calling a ceasefire increasingly resembles a pause dictated by convenience rather than a genuine cessation of hostilities.

The pattern extends well beyond the battlefield. Israel’s continued expansion of settlements, most alarmingly the E1 project designed to sever the West Bank’s northern and eastern halves, is not a peripheral irritant but a direct assault on the territorial contiguity any future Palestinian state would require. Nearly 190 settler attacks recorded per month is not an anomaly; it is a policy environment operating with impunity. The forcible entry into a UNRWA training centre in East Jerusalem and the continued withholding of more than \$6 billion in Palestinian clearance revenue further reveal an occupation apparatus working to dismantle Palestinian institutional capacity even as diplomats speak of peace processes and roadmaps.

This is the uncomfortable truth the Security Council must confront: agreements on paper mean little without enforcement and verification mechanisms with teeth. Resolution 2803 and the 15-point Gaza peace plan represent real diplomatic investment by the United States, Egypt, Qatar and Turkiye, but investment without accountability simply gives cover to continued violations. When one party can violate a ceasefire’s terms almost daily while the international community continues to describe it as “holding,” the credibility of the entire process erodes.

Pakistan’s position — that any durable peace must rest on an independent, sovereign Palestinian state along pre-1967 borders with Al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital — is not a novel demand. It restates decades of UN consensus that has too often been treated as aspirational rather than binding. What distinguishes this moment is the scale of suffering behind the statistics: two million people in Gaza, as aid officials note, remain trapped even where humanitarian access has nominally improved.

The Security Council cannot allow “ceasefire” to become a word emptied of meaning through repetition. Verification, accountability for violations of international humanitarian law, and genuine pressure on all parties — not selective outrage — are the minimum requirements if the current framework is to survive as anything more than a diplomatic fiction.

China’s Great Leap in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics

Artificial intelligence and robotics are becoming the defining instruments of economic, scientific and strategic power. Nations leading these fields will shape manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, education, transportation, defence and scientific discovery. China has emerged as an extraordinarily powerful force in this new age, competing directly with the United States and moving ahead in several areas. This achievement is not the result of one company or an isolated breakthrough. It reflects an entire national ecosystem built around education, research, manufacturing, energy, infrastructure and technological innovation.

Behind this transformation stands a political and philosophical approach that places national development, collective advancement and long-term planning above short-lived political considerations. Under President Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China, scientific and technological self-reliance has become a central national objective. The continuity of Chinese leadership—frequently presented in Western political discourse as a weakness or democratic deficiency—has enabled China to pursue strategic goals over decades.

The results are visible in China’s extraordinary development of human resources. By 2025, China had established 3,167 higher-education institutions enrolling approximately 48.7 million students, while its gross high-

er-education enrolment rate had reached 60.8 percent—more than twice its 2012 level. Chinese universities produced more than 55 million graduates between 2021 and 2025, while the country’s research-and-development workforce reached approximately 7.95 million full-time-equivalent person-years, the world’s largest. Vocational colleges also supplied more than 70 percent of the newly added skilled workers required by modern industries. China has therefore converted the numerical advantage of a vast population into a formidable scientific, technical and industrial asset.

China recognized the strategic significance of artificial intelligence comparatively early. Its 2017 New Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan established objectives extending to 2030 and connected fundamental research, infrastructure, education, industrial applications and regulation. Artificial intelligence was treated not as a fashionable consumer service but as a general-purpose technology capable of transforming the entire economy.

The scale of the resulting achievement is demonstrated by China’s patent output. Updated figures published by the World Intellectual Property Organization in July 2026 show that more than 56,000 new generative-AI patent fami-

lies were published worldwide during 2024 and 2025—exceeding the entire global output of the preceding decade.

China-based inventors accounted for more than 43,000 of those new patent families. When added to approximately 38,000 published between 2014 and 2023, China’s cumulative output since 2014 exceeds 81,000. Chinese generative-AI patent publications recorded a compound annual growth rate of 64 percent between 2023 and 2025, while six of the world’s ten largest applicants are based in China.

China’s open-weight models represent another remarkable achievement. DeepSeek, Alibaba and Moonshot AI have challenged Silicon Valley’s traditionally proprietary approach by releasing powerful systems whose mathematical weights can be downloaded and adapted. These companies have demonstrated that Chinese laboratories can produce frontier-class AI, optimize it under hardware constraints and distribute it globally at highly competitive prices.

Alibaba’s Qwen has become one of the world’s most influential open-model families. It ranges from compact systems to the 2.4-trillion-parameter Qwen3.8 model. According to Hugging Face, Qwen repositories recorded approximately 2.06 billion downloads during the

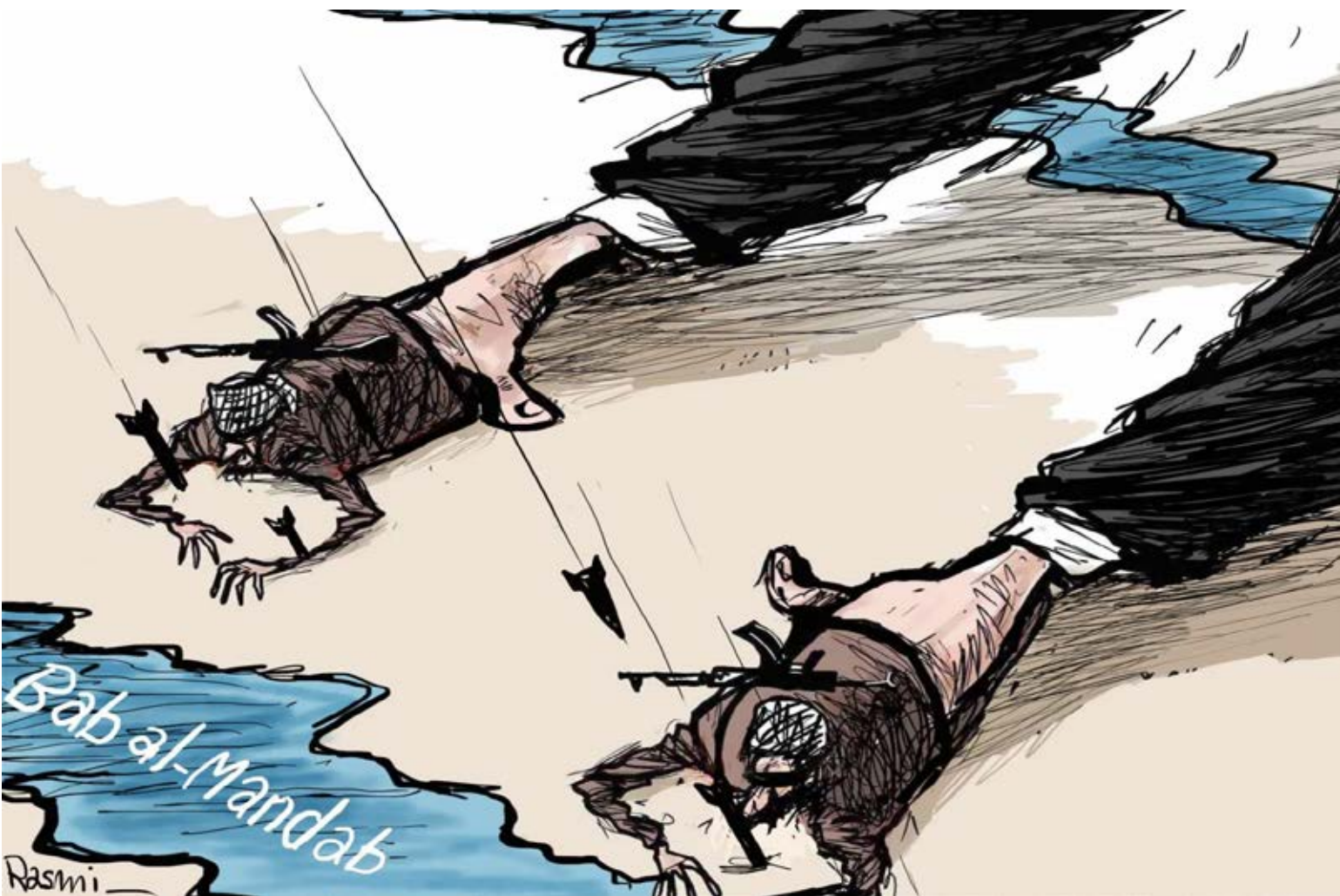
first seven months of 2026, while developers had created more than 151,000 derivative repositories based upon the family. Download totals do not establish overall market share or prove that Qwen is superior to every competitor, but they demonstrate extraordinary global adoption.

DeepSeek has similarly advanced the open-weight paradigm. Its R1 reasoning system was released under the permissive MIT licence. In 2026, DeepSeek introduced the V4 family, including V4-Pro and the smaller V4-Flash. These models employ mixture-of-experts architectures, activating only part of their total parameters during each operation. This improves efficiency while supporting reasoning, coding and autonomous agent functions. Both versions offer context windows of up to one million tokens.

Moonshot AI’s Kimi K3 provides another example. Released in July 2026, it is a 2.8-trillion-parameter, natively multimodal model designed for complex reasoning, extended coding and knowledge work. Its release further strengthened China’s position in the frontier open-weight ecosystem. Although benchmark comparisons should always be treated carefully, the broader direction is unmistakable: competitive AI no longer originates exclusively from closed American laboratories.

China’s achievements extend from software into the physical economy. Companies such as Unitree and AgiBot

Continued on Page 7



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

One Present, One Future: Field Marshal Vows Pakistan and Balochistan Will Stay United

Balochistan remains central to Pakistan’s strategic, economic, security, and historical interests, with a strong bond of loyalty and national belonging between its people and the wider Pakistani population. Field Marshal Asim Munir has reaffirmed that Pakistan and Balochistan share one present and future, emphasizing that the province’s talented, patriotic, steadfast, and dignified people



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Gwadar Port’s importance to CPEC make peace essential for economic transformation, investment, connectivity, and regional trade. Development of roads, railways, energy infrastructure, schools, hospitals, clean water, and employment can simultaneously unlock economic potential and strengthen Balochistan’s integration with the national mainstream.

Balochistan’s security challenges include a long-running low-intensity insurgency that has killed thousands of security personnel, civilians, and foreign nationals, fueled by economic deprivation, political marginalization, and alleged foreign intelligence support. Militants have received funding, weapons, and training from hostile actors and have exploited genuine grievances over resources and development to recruit fighters, while military operations have reduced militant capabilities and restored greater stability in many areas. However, lasting peace requires more than military action, which is why development efforts aim to address underlying socio-economic problems and win the confidence of local communities. The youth are particularly creative because they possess the energy, creativity, education, and aspirations needed to shape Balochistan’s future, but unemployment, weak educational opportunities, limited technology access, frustration, and hopelessness can leave them vulnerable to militant recruitment.

Providing alternatives through education, vocational training, private investment, entrepreneurship, innovation, and employment is therefore essential. A special development package involving new universities, expansion of healthcare, and new industrial zones is seen as a positive step, provided these projects are implemented transparently and efficiently to deliver tangible benefits. With mutual respect, political inclusion, constitutional protection of provincial rights, socio-economic development, effective security, resource utilization, and cooperation between Pakistanis and Baloch, shared aspirations for peace, prosperity, national unity, and a secure and promising future can be advanced.

The historical and cultural ties between Balochistan and the rest of Pakistan are ancient and deep, predating the creation of the modern nation-state by many centuries, and these ties are rooted in shared faith, shared traditions, and a common history of struggle against foreign domination. The Baloch people have always been a proud and independent-minded community, with a rich cultural heritage that includes a unique language, a vibrant oral tradition of poetry and storytelling, and a fierce code of honor that values hospitality, courage, and loyalty above all else. However, the Baloch have also always been a part of the broader Islamic civilization, and they have shared with their Pakistani brothers and sisters a common faith that has served as a powerful unifying force throughout history, transcending ethnic and linguistic

Continued on Page 7

CM Maryam’s Police Reform Vision Requires Merit and Accountability

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif’s directives to reform the policing system, attach Dolphin Police personnel to their respective police stations and prevent officers facing corruption allegations from being appointed as Station House Officers (SHOs) have been welcomed as important steps. However, the article argues that the success of these reforms will depend on implementation rather than transfers alone.

Multan has recently witnessed a significant wave of police transfers, but questions remain about whether simply changing an officer’s place of posting can resolve deep-rooted policing problems. If an officer has previously faced allegations of corruption, misuse of authority, patronage of criminals or other misconduct, transferring that officer to another police station does not necessarily improve the situation.

The article refers to complaints against some Multan police officers allegedly involving unauthorized intermediaries or touts, interference in property matters, pressure on complainants and other abuses of authority. Similar allegations have reportedly been raised against some station clerks regarding absconding accused, while other officials have faced accusations related to false cases or unlawful facilitation of proclaimed offenders. Complaints have also occasionally been made against security personnel allegedly involved in protecting drug dealers, illegal petrol outlets and other unlawful activities.

The writer emphasizes that allegations must not automatically be considered proof of guilt. Nevertheless, repeated and serious complaints should not simply be ignored. They should be investigated impartially, and decisions should be based on evidence.

For genuine police reform, the article proposes that SHO appointments should be based on comprehen-

sive merit profiles. These should consider an officer’s previous postings, crime-control performance, investigation record, departmental proceedings, public complaints, intelligence assessments and reports from relevant institutions. Political, personal or other extraneous recommendations should not determine important field postings.

An SHO is described as the most visible representative of law enforcement in a locality, with influence over FIR registration, investigations, public dealing and crime prevention. Therefore, appointing an officer with unresolved serious complaints can undermine public confidence and affect the entire police station.

The article recalls an incident involving a former SHO of Shah Shams Police Station concerning FIR No. 2065/23, where it was alleged that a complainant and witnesses were detained after an understanding with the accused. The officer is reportedly serving as an SHO elsewhere, raising concerns about whether allegations of misconduct are being properly addressed before new appointments.

The writer concludes that CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif’s vision should not be reduced to administrative transfers. District police leadership must use the opportunity to establish a culture of merit, transparency and accountability. Reliable and competent officers should receive important responsibilities, while those facing persistent and credible allegations should undergo impartial inquiries.

According to the article, the public does not merely want new faces at police stations; it wants justice, professionalism, rule of law and accountability. Transfers can contribute to reform only when combined with transparent selection, effective supervision and consequences for misconduct.



Analysis

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

Grassroots Politics to AJK Speaker

Chaudhry Tariq Farooq’s Four-Decade Political Journey

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Chaudhry Tariq Farooq’s election as Speaker of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly marks a significant milestone in a political career spanning nearly four decades. His journey began with the 1987 local government elections, when he was elected to the District Council, and subsequently took him through the Kashmir Council, Legislative Assembly, government, opposition and party organisation.

In 1990, Farooq became a member of the Kashmir Council and in 1991 served as Adviser to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Kashmir Council affairs. From 1993 to 1996, he was Special Assistant to AJK Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan. Elected to the AJK Legisla-



tive Assembly in 1996, he served as Deputy Opposition Leader. He also faced an accountability case during this period, endured incarceration and was eventually honourably acquitted. Despite the difficult experience, he remained active in politics. Following his re-elec-

tion after 2001, Farooq held several important positions, including Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, Minister for Revenue, and Minister for Communications and Works. These responsibilities gave him extensive experience in parliamentary oversight, public finance, administration and development.

His political career also included electoral setbacks. In the 2006 elections, he lost his seat by around 600 votes but was subsequently appointed Special Adviser to AJK Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan. He remained politically active despite differences that later led to his departure from the administration.

Farooq played a significant role in strengthening the PML-N in AJK during its organisational phase in 2010. Working alongside Raja Farooq

Haider Khan and other party leaders, he helped build the party structure and became its Senior Vice President.

He was elected to the Assembly on the PML-N ticket in 2011 and served as Deputy Opposition Leader for five years. In 2016, he won again and became Senior Minister of AJK, holding several portfolios during the PML-N government. Various development initiatives and institutional reforms were undertaken during that period.

The 2021 elections brought another electoral defeat, but Farooq continued his political activities as PML-N General Secretary in AJK, focusing on party organisation and mobilisation.

His election as Speaker now represents the culmination of a long journey through almost every major sphere of representative politics. His experience in



both government and opposition may help him maintain balance between treasury and opposition benches.

As Speaker, however, his real test will be ensuring impartial proceedings, protecting parliamentary traditions, facilitating

effective legislation and maintaining the dignity and credibility of the Assembly.

Farooq’s career reflects political perseverance through victories, defeats, government responsibilities and opposition. His election as Speaker is

therefore not simply another constitutional appointment, but recognition of decades of parliamentary and democratic engagement—and the beginning of a new responsibility at the helm of the AJK Legislative Assembly.

Severe Drinking Water Crisis in Basti Sukar Leaves 19,000 Residents Struggling

Zain Khan Malghani

TAUNSA SHARIF: More than 19,000 residents of Basti Sukar, located 5 km southwest of Taunsa Sharif, have been facing an acute clean drinking water shortage for the past month amid intense summer heat.

According to locals, the water supply system has long suffered problems but has been almost completely suspended for a month. Children, women, and the elderly are facing severe hardship, with many forced to travel long distances daily to fetch

water. Basic household needs have become extremely difficult to meet.

Residents said they repeatedly raised the issue with the Taunsa Sharif administration and Dera Ghazi Khan authorities, but their applications were only forwarded between offices. Complaints to the Deputy Commissioner’s Office were referred to local councillors without any practical action, leaving the supply unrestored.

While acknowledging CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif’s efforts to improve basic facilities in Punjab, residents said Basti Sukar remains deprived

despite the government’s stated priorities.

They are demanding an emergency inspection and repair of pumps, motors, and pipelines, or temporary water tankers if restoration is delayed. The residents appealed to the Punjab Saaf Pani Authority, Punjab Government, and Dera Ghazi Khan administration for immediate intervention and a permanent solution.

“Water is not a luxury but a basic necessity of life,” they stressed, calling the month-long deprivation of 19,000 people unacceptable.

Deep Concern Over Shabir Ahmad Shah’s Deteriorating Health and Lack of Adequate Medical Facilities in Jail

Spokesman Report

SIRINAGER.: Advocate Arshad Iqbal, Spokesperson for the Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (JKDFP), has expressed deep concern over the health condition of the Party President, Shabir Ahmad Shah, and the lack of adequate medical facilities available to him in prison.

He stated that despite Shabir Ahmad Shah’s ongoing health concerns, the medical facilities available to him in prison are reportedly inadequate and far from what



is required for a political leader suffering from serious health problems. Such treatment of an elderly and ailing political leader is deeply disturbing and contrary to basic principles of human dignity and human rights.

The JKDFP spokesperson strongly condemned what he described as the continued mistreatment of Kashmiri political leadership and political prisoners in Indian prisons. He said that political differences or political convictions cannot justify depriving any person of essential medical care, dignity and basic human rights.

CPO Tanveer Hussain

A Model of Merit, Accessibility and Citizen-Trust Policing in Faisalabad



Faisalabad is not simply an industrial city. It is a vibrant centre of universities, colleges, schools, hospitals, textile industries, markets, courts, professional institutions and a diverse civil society. Policing such a

large and complex city demands exceptional professionalism, administrative competence, technological awareness and, above all, the confidence of its citizens.

Accessibility as a hallmark of leadership

The author’s central praise is that CPO Tanveer Hussain has kept his office genuinely open to ordinary citizens — professors, traders, students, workers — rather than reserving it for the influential. People with grievances, including victims of crime or property loss, reportedly find him personally responsive rather than passing complaints down an indifferent bureaucratic chain. The piece argues this kind of accessibility, built case by case,

is what actually restores public trust in police, more than any public relations effort could.

Merit-based postings over political influence

A major theme is the department’s shift away from the long-standing perception that key postings — especially Station House Officer (SHO) roles — were awarded through political connections rather than competence. The author credits Hussain’s leadership with visibly tilting toward merit-based appointments, crediting this shift with boosting morale among honest, capable officers. The author does add a caveat of intellectual honesty, noting it would be premature to claim postings are now entirely free



of outside pressure without reviewing official records.

The police station as the true public face of policing

The article stresses that for most citizens, the local police station — not the CPO’s office — is where trust in the system is won or lost. It singles out the SHOs of Civil Lines, Millat Town, and Sadar stations for particular praise, describing them as professionally handling complaints, investigations, and public order in some of the city’s busiest and most diverse jurisdictions. The author frames this as evidence that reform is taking hold not just at the top but at the street level where citizens actually interact with police.

Crime statistics as the ultimate measure

The piece cites what it describes as publicly reported figures showing a substantial decline in overall crime in Faisalabad during the first half of 2026 compared to the same period the previous year, with notable drops in robbery, dacoity, and attempted murder. It also mentions sustained operations against organized robbery gangs, with numerous arrests and recovered stolen property valued in the tens of millions of rupees. The author acknowl-



like universities, hospitals, and trade bodies, framing policing as a shared civic responsibility rather than something police can achieve alone.

Closing appeal

The author concludes by calling this approach — merit-based postings, station-level accountability, technology, and accessibility — a model worth institutionalizing beyond any single officer’s tenure. Writing as “an educationist and citizen of Faisalabad,” the author expresses hope for a police institution that remains open to everyone, values merit over influence, and is seen by ordinary citizens as existing to protect and serve, not merely to enforce law.

Overall, the article reads as a strongly favorable assessment of the CPO’s leadership, combining anecdotal praise, institutional analysis, and cited crime statistics to argue that Faisalabad policing is undergoing a positive, citizen-centered transformation.

The writer is former Professor and Head, Department of Entomology, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF).he can be reached at jalalarij807@yahoo.com



Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
177,322.77	177,370.70	
Day's High	Day's Low	
178,650.01	177,196.28	
Index Value	Change	
24,402,210,836	-47.93	
Percentage	Time	
-0.03%	27 Aug, 2026 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
10,792.54	-85.58	
Percentage	Time	
-0.79%	27 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
53,677.90	+214.02	
Percentage	Time	
-0.40%	27 Aug, 1:11 pm GMT-	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
66,131.98	-130.18	
Percentage	Time	
-0.20%	27 Aug, 3:45 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	198.29	202.35
Bahrain Dinar	734.45	745.65
Canadian Dollar	198.71	206.73
China Yuan	38.20	38.95
Danish Krone	42.80	43.40
Euro	323.15	327.20
Hong Kong Dollar	34.97	35.97
Indian Rupee	2.65	3.25
Japanese Yen	1.7339	1.8337
Kuwaiti Dinar	886.00	896.45
Malaysian Ringgit	68.05	68.90
NewZealand \$	163.93	166.78
Norwegians Krone	28.15	28.50
Omani Riyal	719.24	729.35
Qatari Riyal	74.92	75.80
Saudi Riyal	73.95	74.65
Singapore Dollar	217.29	223.04
Swedish Korona	28.40	28.90
Swiss Franc	343.16	347.93
Thai Bhat	8.25	8.85
U.A.E Dirham	75.65	76.50
UK Pound Sterling	376.80	381.75
US Dollar	277.60	278.55

SECP Chairman
Welcomes MOBIZ
Expansion, Stresses
Digitalization for
Economic Growth

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: SECP Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu said Pakistan's economic competitiveness will increasingly depend on digitalization, innovation and technology-led business models.

He noted Pakistan's large pool of young tech professionals gives it the potential to become a regional hub for IT services and digital solutions.

Dr. Sidhu said the SECP is modernizing regulatory frameworks across corporates, capital markets, insurance and NBFCs to be more transparent, efficient and technology-enabled, aligned with international standards. The goal is to make regulatory interaction digital, seamless and business-friendly while strengthening governance and investor protection.

He welcomed MOBIZ's expansion in Pakistan through its new Karachi office at NASTP Silicon 1. MOBIZ, with 170+ professionals across 4 continents in cloud, data, AI and cybersecurity, reflects growing opportunities in Pakistan's tech ecosystem. He stressed that connecting Pakistani talent with global markets is key to turning the country's demographic strength into sustainable growth and quality jobs.

Siemens Healthineers
Appoints Evelyn
Gunnawig as CEO
for Pakistan &
Afghanistan

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Siemens Healthineers has appointed Evelyn Gunnawig as Chief Executive Officer for Pakistan & Afghanistan, reinforcing its long-term commitment to healthcare in both markets.

Gunnawig will lead strategic priorities around healthcare innovation, digital transformation, and AI-enabled technologies to improve clinical and operational outcomes.

PNSC Fleet Expansion to
Strengthen Pakistan's Trade and
Economic Security

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Mian Zahid Hussain, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, has welcomed the government's decision to expand and modernize the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC) fleet, describing it as an important step toward strengthening trade sovereignty, energy security and foreign-exchange conservation.

He praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for directing the acquisition and leasing of additional vessels and preparing a comprehensive plan to bring PNSC up to international standards. He said reducing dependence on foreign shipping companies would support Pakistan's economic sovereignty. He also appreciated Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's efforts for peace and strategic stability in the Gulf, particularly regarding regional trade and shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.



Mian Zahid noted that PNSC acquired three modern oil tankers—MT Karachi, MT Lahore and MT Quetta—in January and February 2026 for approximately US\$193.15

million. The vessels added 272,039 dead-weight tonnes, increasing PNSC-managed ships from 10 to 13, including eight tankers and five bulk carriers. This additional capacity

is expected to improve petroleum transportation and reduce reliance on costly foreign spot charters.

Under the government's plan, PNSC aims to increase its fleet from 13 to 30 vessels by the end of 2027. Three to five feeder container ships, each capable of carrying 1,100–2,000 TEUs, are proposed for addition by the end of 2026, improving connections with Gulf, Red Sea and South Asian markets.

He also welcomed the construction of a 1,100-TEU container ship at Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works for US\$24.75 million, saying it would support Pakistan's shipbuilding and marine-engineering industries.

Mian Zahid highlighted Pakistan's US\$4.6 billion annual freight payments to foreign shipping companies and urged transparent acquisitions, competitive financing, assured cargo, refrigerated containers, international partnerships and faster port clearance.

Cultural activity

High Commissioner Rabia Shafiq in a group photograph with attendees of the special screening of The Legend of Maula Jatt, hosted by the High Commission of Pakistan in Singapore on Thursday.



Senate Finance Committee to Take
Up Chemicals & Dyes Sector's Tax,
EFS and E-Invoicing Issues

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance & Revenue, assured the Pakistan Chemicals & Dyes Merchants Association (PCDMA) that its concerns over taxation, Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), 3% additional tax and e-invoicing will be raised at the parliamentary level with FBR, Ministry of Finance and other departments.

Speaking at PCDMA's annual dinner, he urged trade bodies to engage with government and parliament year-round, not just before the budget, as decisions are usually finalized by then.

PCDMA Chairman Salim Valimhammad called for action against EFS misuse, proposing to link EFS imports to actual remittances/LCs, cap imports at 40%, and conduct annual audits.

He also sought withdrawal of 3% additional sales tax and a level playing field for commercial vs industrial



importers. Mandviwalla said the committee will review EFS exclusions and impacts,

noting the government must balance fiscal targets and IMF commitments while addressing sector disparities.

Dandot Cement Finalises Financing
for Waste Heat Recovery Plant

Commerce Desk

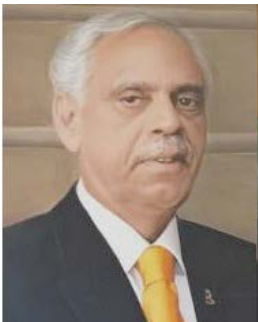
LAHORE: Dandot Cement Company Limited (PSX: DNCC) has finalised financing for its Waste Heat Recovery (WHR) Plant, advancing the Company's transition to cleaner, more efficient production. Letters of Credit have been established with Sinoma Energy Conservation Limited for supply, installation and commissioning. The development has been disclosed to the Pakistan Stock Exchange as material information under the PSX Rule Book and the Securities Act, 2015.



The plant will capture waste heat from kiln and clinker cooler exhaust — otherwise lost to the atmosphere — and convert it into steam and captive power, cutting fossil-fuel reliance and emissions intensity. The investment reflects DCCL's commitment to sustainable growth, recovering energy that would otherwise go to waste to strengthen both environmental performance and cost efficiency.

The project is part of DCCL's broader modernisation programme to improve efficiency and advance its ESG goals.

PPDA Demands
Relief on Demurrage
Charges During
Transporters' Strike



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Malik Khuda Bakhsh, Chairman of the Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA), expressed serious concern over heavy demurrage charges on imported goods stranded at ports due to the prolonged goods transporters' strike.

He said importers are already suffering major losses, and adding demurrage for delays beyond their control is unjustified. Essential items including EV DC chargers, food items and other imports are stuck and unable to reach markets on time.

Bakhsh urged the government, port authorities and shipping companies to consider the extraordinary situation and waive or review demurrage accumulated during the strike.

He called for emergency clearance of food and essential goods and a permanent mechanism with stakeholders to protect importers from such costs in future disruptions, so trade and industry are not harmed.

Pakistan and China Aim
to Make Healthcare a
New Pillar of Economic
Partnership

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Adeel Munawar, Commercial Ambassador of the Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI), said healthcare cooperation is set to become a major pillar of the Pakistan-China economic partnership.

He noted that China's advances in AI, digital health, biotechnology, medical equipment and research offer Pakistan key opportunities to modernize its healthcare sector.

The focus should be on joint ventures, technology transfer, research partnerships and investment in modern infrastructure to create commercially viable

projects.

Munawar highlighted digital technologies like telemedicine, AI-based diagnostics, smart hospitals and remote consultations as vital for improving access in Pakistan's remote and underserved areas.

He identified medical equipment manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, health IT, biotechnology and hospital management as prime areas for Chinese investment and Pak-China joint ventures.

Strengthening links between universities, hospitals, research centers and professionals can drive knowledge transfer and innovation, contributing to SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being.

SITE Chief warns daily fuel
price revisions are paralyzing
industry and exports

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Abdul Rehman Fudda, President of SITE Association of Industry Karachi, warned that frequent revisions of petroleum prices are creating a crisis for Pakistan's industrial sector and export economy.

He said prices daily or every other day has caused unprecedented uncertainty, raised transportation and freight costs, disrupted raw material supplies to factories, and made export consignments more expensive to move to ports. This is pushing



the industrial supply chain toward paralysis and hurting competitiveness.

Fudda urged the government to withdraw the daily pricing policy, reduce petroleum taxes, and review prices at minimum 15-day intervals to allow stable production and shipment planning.

He criticized the government for not honoring its agreement with transporters to extend the revision period to two weeks, and for prioritizing dealer/OMC margins over broad-based relief. He called for immediate action to prevent further damage to production, jobs and exports.

UMT Will Soon Join the Ranks of the World’s Leading Universities: Ibrahim Murad

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The University of Management and Technology (UMT) has achieved a significant milestone in the U. S. News & World Report Best Global Universities Rankings 2026, securing 4th position among Pakistan’s private universities, 161in Asia and 573 position globally.

Chairman and President UMT, Ibrahim Hasan Murad, congratulated the faculty, research scholars, students and administration on the achievement, saying that UMT’s strong position in the global rankings reflects its commitment to maintaining high standards in education and research, as well as the sustained efforts of the entire UMT community. He said UMT’s continued achievements in education and research are a matter of pride for Pakistan and demonstrate the potential of Pakistani universities to achieve international recognition in education, research and



innovation.

Ibrahim Murad said UMT is focusing

on further strengthening its global standing through excellence in education, research, innovation and international collaboration. He appreciated the contributions of faculty members, researchers, students and the administrative team, saying that the achievement would serve as an impetus for setting and achieving even higher goals in the future.

Chairman UMT expressed confidence that UMT will soon join the ranks of the world’s leading universities. He emphasized the need to promote high-quality research, internationally relevant academic programs and greater opportunities for students and faculty to further strengthen Pakistan’s representation among leading global universities.

He reiterated UMT’s commitment to mobilizing all available resources to further elevate the university’s position on the global academic landscape and enhance its contribution to Pakistan’s higher education and research sector.

BRI Excellence Centre Inaugurated at GIFT University Gujranwala

Bureau Report

GUJRANWALA: The Diplomatic Insight Group (DIG), GIFT University and Gujranwala Business Alliance (GBA) have jointly inaugurated the BRI Excellence Centre (BEC) at GIFT University, aiming to strengthen cooperation between Pakistan and China through academia, industry and diplomacy.

Chinese Consul General in Lahore H. E. Mr. Sun Yan, who attended as chief guest, welcomed the initiative, saying the Centre would promote academic and industrial exchanges between the two countries. The inauguration coincides with the 75th anniversary of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations and comes amid efforts to advance CPEC 2.0, particularly in industry, agriculture and mining.

The Centre will provide platforms for Pakistani businesses to explore Chinese markets, students to learn Mandarin, startups to access technology and investment, and Chinese institutions to develop partnerships



in Pakistan.

Its six areas include trade and investment, Chinese language and culture, AI and digital innovation, EV and green technology, research

and policy, and entrepreneurship and startups.

GIFT University Chairman Muhammad Anwar Dar and GBA Chairman Ahmad Ikram Lone high-

lighted the Centre’s potential to create new opportunities in trade, technology, education and culture, particularly for Gujranwala’s export-oriented economy.

Schedule Announced for Touchme Trophy U-15 Inter-Zonal Cricket Tournament

16 Teams from Seven Zones to Feature– Tournament to Begin on August 28

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Chairman RCA Karachi Tournament Committee Khalid Nafees has announced complete Schedule of RCAK Talent Hunt Program’s first Phase of Touchme Trophy Under-15 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament Organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi with the Collaboration of Medicam Group of Companies, according to which matches of tournament are starting from Friday 28 August. 16 selected teams of seven Zones are participating in the tournament in which two teams from each Zone while three teams of Zone Three and Four are included. Matches of tournament will be played according to the following Schedule.

Friday 28 August. Zone-III Whites vs Zone-VII Blues (KPI Ground)

Monday 31 August! Zone- VII Whites vs Zone-IV Green (KPI Ground), Zone-IV Whites vs Zone-II Blues (Landhi Gymkhana), Zone-I Whites vs Zone-III Green (TMC), Tuesday 1st

September! Zone-II Whites vs Zone-I Blues (KCCA Stadium)

Wednesday 2nd September! Zone-III Whites vs Zone-II Blues (KPI Ground), Zone-I Whites vs Zone-VI Blues (KCCA Stadium), Zone-V Blues vs Zone-II Blues (Landhi Gymkhana)

Thursday 3rd September! Zone-VII Whites vs Zone-I Blues (TMC), Zone-V Whites vs Zone-III Green (Landhi Gymkhana) Zone-VI Whites vs Zone-III Blues (KCCA Stadium),

Monday 7th September! Zone-II Whites vs Zone-IV Green (KPI), Zone-IV Whites vs Zone VII Blues (TMC), Zone-V Whites vs Zone-VI Blues (KCCA Stadium),

Wednesday 9th September! Zone-I Blues vs Zone-IV Green (TMC), Zone-II Blues vs Zone-VII Blues (KPI), Zone-VI Whites vs Zone-IV Blues (KCCA Stadium),

Thursday 10th September! Zone-III Green vs Zone-VI Blues (KCCA Stadium), Zone-V Whites vs Zone-I Whites (TMC), Friday 11th

September! Zone-VI Whites vs ZoneV Blues (KC2CA Stadium),

Monday 14th September: Zone-VII Whites vs Zone-II Whites (KCCA Stadium), Zone-III Whites vs Zone-IV Whites (KPI) Both the Semi Finals of the tournament will be played on Wednesday 16th September and final on 18 September at KCCA Stadium. All Zones are advised to collect their Draws from Muhammad Tauseef Siddiqui Joint Secretary from RCA office National Stadium between 3 to 6 pm.

Farhan Yousaf to lead Pak U19 on England tour

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Thursday appointed middle-order batter Farhan Yousaf as captain of the Pakistan U19 which is due to tour England between September 2 and September 16.

The 15-member Pakistan men’s U19 squad will play a solitary Youth Test match at the Arundel Castle Cricket Ground and four Youth ODIs.

Right-handed batter Farhan Yousaf led Pakistan to ACC U19 Asia Cup title win in December last year.

The squad comprises a quartet of pacers – Mohammad Sayyam, Abdul Subhan, Rizvanullah and Umar Zaib along with the spin duo of left-arm wrist-spinner Mohammad Huzaifa and left-arm spinner Nigab Shafiq. Aliyan Salman, Ahmad Hussain, Jahangir Bilal and Hayam Khan were set to provide the squad with all-round support.

Hanza Zahoor and Abdul Qadir were the two wicketkeepers in the squad, while apart from Farhan, Usman Khan and Hasnain Abbas Dar are the designated batters.

Pakistan to begin ACC Women’s T20 Asia Cup Campaign on 1st September

Sports Desk

Fatima Sana-led Pakistan women’s team will take the field against Thailand in their first match of the ACC Women’s T20 Asia Cup 2026 on Tuesday, 1 September, while the tournament is set to kick off on Friday. Meanwhile, Thailand will be up against Hong Kong, China women in the opening match of the tournament.

In Pakistan the action will be live-streamed on Tamasha and broadcast on PTV Sports. The ball-by-ball live scores will also be available on the Asian Cricket Council’s official website.

All the fixtures in the 15-match tournament will take place at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium (DICS) and will begin at 7.30pm Pakistan time. Pakistan, who are placed in Group A, are set to face India on 5 September in their second match and will play Hong Kong, China on 7 August.

Defending champions Sri Lanka are placed in Group B with Bangladesh, Indonesia and United Arab Emirates.

The semi-finals of the eight-team tournament will be played on 10 and 11

September, respectively with the final slated for 13 September. Pakistan squad reached United Arab Emirates on 26 August after preparing for the tournament with a 10-day training camp at the National Cricket Academy.

In Pakistan’s squad, top-order batter Sadaf Shamas replaced wicketkeeper-batter Najiha Alvi, who was ruled out of the tournament after sustaining an injury in her left knee.

Pakistan women played three T20Is at the DICS during the ICC Women’s T20 World Cup 2024. At the Women’s Asia Cup, Pakistan’s best results have been in 2012 and 2016 when they finished runners-up in consecutive editions of the tournament. In 2022 and 2024 editions, Pakistan’s campaign ended at the semi-finals stage.

The current edition of the tournament will be the 10th iteration and sixth in T20 format after the first four tournaments in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2008 were players in One-Day format.

Pakistan women’s captain Fatima Sana in her pre-departure media talk said, “We played matches against boys in our pre-tournament camp and that

also helped us create pressure situations on the team, which is really helpful. Our aim to adopt the conditions as soon as possible in the tournament.

“We created such scenarios that helped our players deal with pressure situations. I’ll try to take the challenge of this tournament day-by-day and no one game is more important in the event. We want to win every single game and produce positive results.”

Pakistan women’s squad for ACC women’s Asia Cup

Fatima Sana (captain), Ayesha Zafar, Eman Naseer, Eymaan Fatima, Gull Feroza, Momina Riasat, Muneeba Ali Siddiqui (wk), Nashra Sundhu, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal, Saira Jabeen, Shawaal Zulfiqar, Tuba Hassan, Umm-e-Hani, Waheeda Akhtar.

Reserves – Tasmina Rubab, Humna Bilal, Maham Anees

Support Staff
Wahab Riaz (coach/mentor), Ayesha Ashar (team manager), Abdur Rehman (spin bowling coach), Umaid Asif (fast bowling coach), Abdul Majeed (fielding coach), Imran Farhat (batting coach), Waleed Ahmed (performance



analyst), Moeen (strength & conditioning coach), Dur Samand (Physio-therapist) and Raza Rashid Kitchlew (media manager)

Schedule of Pakistan’s matches at the

ACC women’s Asia Cup: (All matches at Dubai International Cricket Stadium; all matches to begin at 7.30pm PKT) 1 September – Pakistan v Thailand 5 September – Pakistan v India

7 September – Pakistan v Hong Kong, China 10 September – semi-final 1 11 September – semi-final 2 13 September – final

China’s Great Leap in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics

Continued from Page 4

are developing humanoid robots capable of walking across difficult terrain, recovering from falls, carrying loads and performing complex movements balancing machine vision, dexterity, durability and affordability.

China possesses a decisive advantage in converting such inventions into manufactured products. It has dense supply chains for batteries, motors, sensors, cameras, electronics and precision components, together with enormous factories and a large domestic market. The same industrial ecosystem supported China’s rise in electric vehicles, commercial drones, telecommunications equipment and solar technology. China has become exceptionally capable of carrying innovation from the laboratory through engineering and into mass

production.

NVIDIA chief executive Jensen Huang has repeatedly emphasized China’s universities, engineering culture and technical workforce. His widely reported observation that approximately half of the world’s AI researchers are Chinese illustrates the immense contribution Chinese scientists make to global artificial-intelligence research.

China has demonstrated that political continuity, when combined with capable leadership, education and measurable national objectives, can become an instrument of rapid advancement.

Only after recognizing the foundations and magnitude of China’s achievement does the larger lesson become clear. This is not a warning solely for Pakistan, Africa, Latin America or the Muslim world. It is a lesson for every developed or developing nation that has failed to prior-

itize artificial intelligence and robotics as seriously as China and the United States.

China’s rise demonstrates that lasting national power grows from educated people, scientific institutions, productive industries, infrastructure and leadership capable of sustaining a vision. Other countries need not copy China’s political system mechanically, but its discipline, continuity and investment in human capability deserve serious study. Every nation that has not entered the AI and robotics race must begin immediately. The opportunity to participate in the emerging technological order still exists, but it will not remain open forever.

The writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former Press Attaché to Malaysia and Former MD, SRBC. He is living in Michigan, USA.

One Present, One Future: Field Marshal Vows Pakistan and Balochistan Will Stay United

Continued from Page 4

differences. The creation of Pakistan in 1947 was a moment of great hope for the people of Balochistan, as they saw in this new nation the promise of freedom, justice, and equality, and they willingly chose to accede to the new federation, trusting that their rights and their identity would be respected within the larger framework of the state.

Over the years, there have been periods of misunderstanding and tension, as the people of Balochistan have sometimes felt that their voices were not being heard and that their province was being neglected, but

the vast majority of Baloch have always remained loyal to Pakistan, and they have repeatedly rejected the overtures of separatist groups who seek to undermine the national unity.

The current leadership of the country, under the guidance of Field Marshal Asim Munir, has shown a genuine commitment to addressing the grievances of the Baloch people and to ensuring that they are treated as equal partners in the national enterprise, and this has been widely welcomed and appreciated by the political leadership of the province.

The recent meeting between Field Marshal Asim Munir and the polit-

ical leadership of Balochistan was a landmark event that marked a new chapter in the relationship between the state and the province, as it was characterized by a spirit of openness, mutual respect, and a shared determination to find solutions to the challenges facing the province.

The people of Pakistan and the people of Balochistan are united in their love for their country, and they are determined to thwart all nefarious designs, whether internal or external, that seek to divide them, and they are committed to working together to build a Pakistan that is strong, prosperous, and just for all its citizens.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif A view of debris of the demolished Chambers of Lawyers at F-8 Football ground after the Supreme Court ultimatum, which was till 01-05-2021, as the Workers of Anti encroachments.



Photo: PID

Gillani calls for stronger parliamentary action for global peace

Kiran Asim

PHNOM PENH: Chairman Senate of Pakistan Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani addressed the inaugural session of the 2nd Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC) in Phnom Penh, attended by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet and President of the Cambodian Senate Samdech Hun Sen. Gillani thanked Cambodia's

leadership, the King, Senate and people for hosting the conference and appreciated the participation of the Cambodian Prime Minister as a demonstration of commitment to parliamentary dialogue and cooperation. Speaking on the theme "Solidarity for Peace and Shared Prosperity – Strengthening International Law and Resolving Conflicts Peacefully,"

he called for greater unity and collective parliamentary action to address armed conflicts, terrorism, climate change and economic inequality. He emphasized that parliamentary diplomacy must move from commitments to practical action and results. Gillani proposed establishing mechanisms for rapid parliamentary responses to emerging crises and strengthening respect for

international law as the basis for global peace and stability. Referring to Pakistan's experience, he said parliamentary diplomacy could create avenues for dialogue when traditional diplomatic channels face limitations. He also highlighted Pakistan's cooperation with Saudi Arabia and Türkiye for regional peace and stability. Quoting former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto,

Gillani urged parliamentarians to demonstrate courage, conviction, unity and vision in promoting peace. Earlier, he led participating Speakers and delegates in a courtesy call on Cambodian Senate President Hun Sen. The conference brings together parliamentary leaders to advance cooperation on peace, development and global challenges.

President, PM condole death of 14 newborns in PIMS fire incident; direct immediate inquiry

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed deep grief over the tragic death of 14 newborn infants in a fire incident inside the nursery of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) Hospital here. In their separately issued statements, the president and the prime minister conveyed their profound sympathies to the bereaved families,



describing the tragic loss of innocent lives as heartbreaking

and an irreparable tragedy. Calling the deaths of newborns a deeply painful and irreparable loss, President Zardari said that those responsible for the incident must be identified and held accountable according to the law. He also directed for ensuring effective fire safety measures and emergency protocols in hospitals to safeguard patients, especially newborns. Prime Minister Shehbaz, taking notice of the tragic inci-

dent, instructed authorities to conduct an immediate inquiry. "Such a situation involving children is an irreparable loss. The factors behind the incident must be thoroughly investigated, those responsible identified, and the strict action taken against them," the prime minister instructed. The president and the prime minister offered sincere condolences to the bereaved families of the innocent infants and prayed for strength to them to bear the irreparable loss.

Saudi Asyad Group Reaffirms Confidence in Pakistan, Plans Further Investment

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb met Ghassan Ahmed Amodi, CEO of Saudi Arabia's Asyad Group and Chairperson of Wafi Energy Pakistan, to discuss existing investments and new opportunities. Amodi reaffirmed Asyad's long-term commit-



ment to Pakistan, calling it a key investment destination and expressing satisfaction with current operations. He

announced plans to expand across sectors and briefed the minister on interest in Pakistan's upcoming airport privatization, with plans to partner with Saudi and international firms with technical expertise. The meeting also reviewed Wafi Energy's expansion: growing its retail network, storage infrastructure, and digitalization, with ongoing investments in

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other regions. Asyad also seeks opportunities in the financial sector and to facilitate Saudi-Pakistani partnerships. Aurangzeb welcomed Saudi interest, highlighted improving macroeconomic indicators, fiscal discipline, reforms, and Pakistan's strategic location, and assured continued government support for investors.

President, PM pay tribute to security forces for successful operation in Bannu

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday paid tribute to the security forces for successfully conducting an operation against terrorists in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In separate statements, the president and the prime minister commended the security forces for killing 11 terrorists during the operation. They reiterated their resolve to completely eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country and ensure



lasting peace and stability. President Zardari said the elimination of terrorists backed by "Fitna al-Hindustan" and "Fitna al-Khawarij" was inevitable to safeguard national security and ensure sustainable peace. He said the nation took pride in the successes and professional capabilities of the security forces and law enforcement agencies. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the entire nation stood firmly with the security forces in the fight against terrorism and acknowledged their sacrifices and continued efforts to protect the country.

DPM/ FM Ishaq Dar met UK Minister of State Stephen Doughty



Chaudhry TabraizAurah

LONDON: Discussions centred on Pakistan-UK bilateral relations and cooperation in key areas of mutual interest. The Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister welcomed the positive momentum in bilateral ties and stressed the importance of sustained engagement to further strengthen political, economic and institutional linkages between the two countries. The two sides discussed ways to enhance trade and investment, expand cooperation in emerging sectors, strengthen climate cooperation and promote cultural exchanges. The Deputy Prime Minister highlighted the important contribution of

the Pakistani diaspora in the United Kingdom, describing it as a vital bridge between the two countries. The two sides exchanged views on key regional developments, including the situations in the Middle East and Afghanistan. They underscored the importance of dialogue, diplomacy and continued engagement in support of regional peace and stability. UK Minister of State Stephen Doughty appreciated Pakistan's important role in promoting regional peace and stability and reaffirmed the United Kingdom's interest in maintaining close engagement with Pakistan on bilateral and regional issues.

Pakistan and UK Agree Structured Talks Mechanism to Strengthen Bilateral Ties



Chaudhry TabraizAurah

LONDON: During an official visit to the UK, Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held delegation-level talks with British Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband. Both sides reviewed the full spectrum of Pakistan-UK relations and agreed to establish a structured mechanism for formal talks between the two Foreign Ministries to cover all areas of cooperation and regularly review progress. They discussed regional and international

developments, including the Middle East. Dar briefed on Pakistan's diplomatic and mediation efforts. Miliband appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting dialogue and stability. Talks also covered the Indus Waters Treaty and regional security. Dar highlighted India's violations of international obligations and raised concerns over terrorist threats from Afghan soil. Both emphasized the role of the Pakistani diaspora in strengthening longstanding people-to-people ties.

Canadian High Commissioner Called On By Shoaib Siddiqui

Bureau Report

LAHORE,: Member of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab and General Secretary of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party Punjab Shoaib Siddiqui called on Pakistan's High Commissioner to Canada, Muhammad Saleem, in Canada. During the meeting, they discussed matters of mutual interest, bilateral relations between Pakistan and Canada, avenues for mutual cooperation and other matters of importance. The meeting also covered the issues being faced by the Pakistani community residing in Canada, their role and their strong ties with Pakistan. Talking on the occasion, MPA Shoaib Siddiqui said there is significant potential for promoting trade, investment and people-to-people contacts between Pakistan

and Canada which can further strengthen relations between the two countries. Shoaib Siddiqui said that overseas Pakistanis are Ambassadors of Pakistan and important partners in the country's development. Pakistan's High Commissioner to Canada, Muhammad Saleem welcomed MPA Shoaib Siddiqui and appreciated his visit and meeting. Both sides agreed on the need to further strengthen people-to-people and diplomatic ties between Pakistan and Canada.

