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From August 31 for a three-day trip to attend the SCO Council of Heads of State summit on August 31–September 1. He will join regional leaders including Russia's Putin, China's Xi Jinping, and Iran's Pezeshkian. Pakistan is set to assume the SCO's rotating presidency after the summit.



PML-N Azad Kashmir President Shah Ghulam Qadir has been nominated by the party for the position of PM of AJK, following extensive internal consultations. According to sources, a key consultative meeting was held last week in Raiwind, chaired by PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif, with PM Shehbaz Sharif and Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz also in attendance.

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ISLAMABAD: A high-level Saudi business delegation, led by His Highness Prince Mansour bin Mohammad Al Saud, Chairman of the Saudi-Pak Joint Business Council, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the PM House on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

 Bureau Report

QUETTA: Four labourers were killed, and another was injured when gunmen attacked workers involved in road construction in the Saranan area of Pishin district in Balochistan, authorities said on Tuesday.

The workers were targeted by the gunmen belonging to the banned terror outfit Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), according to officials. The injured worker was shifted to a hospital for treatment.

Security forces cordoned off the area following the attack and launched a search operation to track down the assailants, officials said.

Authorities said intelligence-based operations against militant elements were continuing and vowed to thwart attempts to disrupt law and order in the province.

They stated that attacks on develop-



ment projects and on non-local workers were aimed at creating fear and disrupting development, investment and employment opportunities in Balochistan.

They said targeting labourers, passengers and women served no interest and instead reflected an agenda against Balochistan's development.

The authorities said the state remained committed to eliminating terrorism and would continue operations against militant networks.

 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on labourers who were engaged in road construction work in the Suranan area of Pishin district.

The prime minister expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious human lives in the attack, and extended his heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the bereaved



families of the martyred labourers, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

The prime minister said

that targeting innocent and hardworking citizens was a cowardly act on the part of the terrorists.

He reiterated that the entire nation stood united in the war against terrorism and terrorists, and their facilitators would not be allowed to sabotage peace and stability in the country.

The prime minister prayed for the eternal peace of the departed souls and for patience and fortitude for the bereaved families to bear this irreparable loss.

 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said on Tuesday that Pakistan is keen to elevate its economic relationship with Saudi Arabia into a strategic economic partnership, aligned with the vision of Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman. The remarks came during a meeting at the PM House with a high-level Saudi business delegation led by Prince Mansour bin Mohammad Al Saud, Chairman of the Saudi-Pak Joint Business Council.

During the cordial meeting, the Prime Minister conveyed his respects to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin

Salman, and reaffirmed the longstanding brotherly ties between the two nations. He discussed avenues for expanding economic cooperation and investment, recalling Prince Mansour's earlier visits and expressing hope that the current one would lead to the signing of MoUs and agreements across multiple sectors.

The Saudi delegation expressed interest in investment opportunities in agriculture, ports, highways, airport outsourcing, real estate, energy, power distribution, and information technology. PM Shehbaz welcomed this interest, calling it an opportune moment for joint collaboration through both government-to-government and business-to-business channels.

Prince Mansour thanked the Prime Minister for the warm reception and reaffirmed Saudi Arabia's continued interest, both at government and business-community levels, in deepening B2B engagement with Pakistan. The delegation is scheduled to hold further meetings with senior government officials and private-sector stakeholders during its stay in Pakistan.

The meeting was attended by several federal ministers, including Rana Tanveer Hussain, Dr. Musadik Malik, Jam Kamal Khan, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ataullah Tarar, Junaid Anwar Chaudhury, Ali Pervaiz Malik, Sardar Awais Ahmed Leghari, and Muhammad Hanif Abbasi, along with advisors, a minister of state, and senior officials.

 City Desk

ISLAMABAD,; Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs Senator Rana Sanaullah Khan told the Senate that the government would implement any further directions issued by the Supreme Court regarding its August 18 order on the PTI founder's medical examination.

He said the Supreme Court would determine on September 16 whether the order had been fully complied with and whether any shortcomings remained. Rana Sanaullah maintained that the government had made sincere efforts to implement the order, explaining that the PTI founder was shifted to a government hospital due to security concerns at the originally intended facility, where

He stressed that neither the government nor opposition should independently interpret the court's order, as all institutions were bound by law and the Constitution.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Syed Mustafa Kamal rejected claims that



CT scan facilities were unavailable at PIMS, saying both machines were functional. He noted that the hospital faces heavy pressure due to Islamabad's population growth and patients arriving from surrounding regions.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ
And We have not sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ)
except as a mercy to the worlds."
(Al-Quran 21:107)

HAPPY EID MILAD —UN— NABI ﷺ

12 RABI' UL AWWAL

CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF
THE BELOVED PROPHET MUHAMMAD ﷺ

Eid Milad-un-Nabi is a day of love, peace and gratitude. Let us follow the teachings of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and strive to build a society based on compassion, kindness, justice and harmony.

"Indeed,
I have been
sent to perfect
noble character."
(Sahih Bukhari)

FOLLOW HIS
TEACHINGS
for a better
tomorrow

SPREAD LOVE &
BROTHERHOOD
in every heart

SEEK KNOWLEDGE,
PRACTICE PATIENCE
and be grateful

SERVE MATHOSE
& HELP THOSE
in need

PROMOTE PEACE
& UNITY
in society

May the blessings of Allah ﷻ
be with you and your family on this
blessed occasion and always.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi
MUBARAK

Best Wishes From:

TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF PAKISTAN

Islamabad, Pakistan

+923645129008

Chief Secretary hosts farewell reception for AJK PM Faisal Mumtaz Rathore

 **Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Chief Secretary Khushal Khan hosted a farewell reception in honor of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, attended by all secretaries of the AJK government.

Upon his arrival, the Prime Minister was warmly welcomed by Chief Secretary Khushal Khan, Secretary Services and General Administration Chaudhry Imtiaz, and other secretaries, who presented him with bouquets.

Addressing the gathering, PM Rathore thanked the Chief Secretary and all secretaries, emphasizing the vital role of civil bureaucracy in government affairs. He said that during his tenure, the government and bureaucracy worked together through cooperation, teamwork and strong working relationships to resolve public issues and manage state affairs effectively, prioritizing institutional coordination, mutual respect and merit-based decision-making.

He noted that while positions and responsibilities are temporary, the spirit of serving the state and people



must endure, urging officers to continue strengthening public service systems.

Chief Secretary Khushal Khan praised the Prime Minister's efforts

in improving state affairs and inter-institutional coordination during his short tenure, expressing good wishes for him.

The ceremony concluded with

gifts and souvenirs presented to the Prime Minister, followed by a meal with senior bureaucracy and a group photograph, marking a memorable farewell event.

Group photo

Sector Commander SCO Azad Kashmir and Commanding Officer 61 Signals Battalion pose for a group photo with engineers and officers on the occasion of the inauguration of development projects.



PM Rathore Urges Muslims to Follow Prophet's Teachings for Success in Both Worlds

 **Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, in his message on the occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH), said that the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) liberated humanity from the worship of idols and guided mankind towards the worship of the One True God.

He said that the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is an open book and an enduring model for all humanity. His life and teachings continue to serve as a guiding light for mankind, and adherence to his teachings is the path towards success and salvation in both this world and the Hereafter.

The Prime Minister emphasized that Islam teaches the values of sacrifice, patience and steadfastness. He called upon Muslims to

remain committed to the principles of Islam and to be prepared to make every possible sacrifice for the cause of faith and the welfare of their fellow human beings, while never abandoning patience and perseverance.

He said that Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) is being observed across Azad Jammu and Kashmir with religious fervour and devotion, with the objective of highlighting the exemplary life and teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). He urged Muslims to shape their lives in accordance with the teachings and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Referring to the situation of Muslims in different parts of the world, including Kashmir and Palestine, the Prime Minister said that Muslim men and women were making immense sacrifices for the preservation of their faith, dignity,



survival and freedom, thereby keeping the spirit of Islam alive through their steadfast struggle.

The Prime Minister said that the people of Kashmir had not only

preserved the legacy and sacrifices of their forefathers but had also demonstrated through their continued struggle that they could sacrifice everything but would never compromise on their fundamental right to self-determination.

He said that, by adhering to the golden principles taught by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the people of Kashmir had demonstrated their resolve to make every sacrifice for their freedom struggle and remained committed to continuing their struggle until its ultimate success.

The Prime Minister reiterated that the Kashmiri people seek freedom from India and would not submit to oppression or abandon their fundamental right to self-determination at any cost. He said that Muslims may sacrifice their lives, but they would never surrender before falsehood and oppression.

Acting President Highlights Spirit of Devotion Across AĴK on Eid Milad-un-Nabi

 **Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Acting President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Tariq Farooq has said that, on the blessed occasion of the birth anniversary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH), an atmosphere of celebration and devotion prevails in every city, town and household across Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

In his special message on the auspicious occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH), the Acting President said that this sacred and blessed day holds profound significance for Muslims across the world, as it marks the birth of the Mercy to the Worlds, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

He said that the advent of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) illuminated the entire world. He observed that the Prophet of humanity, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (PBUH), was sent to mankind at a time when the world was engulfed in the darkness of ignorance, moral degradation and disbelief, and when people were largely unfamiliar with the values of morality, civility and human dignity.

The Acting President said that violence, bloodshed and barbarity had become prevalent in society, while people lacked a clear understanding of right and wrong, lawful and unlawful, and the fundamental principles of civilized conduct. In such circumstances, he said, Almighty Allah, in His infinite mercy, sent His chosen Messenger, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (PBUH), for the guidance and uplift of humanity.

He said that the personality and character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) represent the highest ideals of human excellence. In the darkness that once prevailed across the world, his life and teachings emerged as a beacon of truth, righteousness and guidance.

The Acting President emphasized that the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) constitutes the finest example for all humanity and continues to serve as an enduring source of guidance, compassion, morality and righteousness for people across the world.

Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan Meets Senior Kashmiri Politician Sardar Sawar Khan in Rawalpindi



 **Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: President of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, held a meeting with senior Kashmiri politician and former member of the Kashmir Council, Sardar Sawar Khan, at Mujahid Manzil.

Sardar Sawar Khan, who is currently based in the United States, was accompanied by Sardar Sajid Sawar Khan.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on matters of mutual interest and the prevailing political situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

PML-N's Chaudhry Tariq Farooq Elected 16th Speaker of AĴK Legislative Assembly with 32 Votes

 **Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: A session of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly was held under the chairmanship of outgoing Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar, during which the elections for the offices of Speaker and Deputy Speaker were completed.

Chaudhry Tariq Farooq, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate for Speaker, was elected Speaker of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly by securing 32 votes.

Similarly, Ahmed Raza Qadri was elected Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, also securing 32 votes.

With his election, Chaudhry Tariq Farooq has become the 16th Speaker of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, while Ahmed Raza Qadri has become the 15th Deputy Speaker of the House.

The elections marked an important step towards the constitution of the new parliamentary leadership of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.



Takht Bhai Press Club Organises Internship Certificate Distribution Ceremony

 **Tariq khan Yousafzai**

TAKHT BHAI: Assistant Commissioner Takht Bhai Dr Aleena Shakeel Nagra has said education is the foundation of social progress and prosperity, stressing the need to connect students with practical professional fields alongside academic learning.

Addressing a certificate distribution ceremony organised by Takht Bhai Press Club (Registered), she said internship programmes provide young people with valuable practical experience, professional exposure and opportunities to develop their skills. She particularly emphasised providing female students with equal opportunities for practical training to support their future and contribute to society's development.

The ceremony was held to mark the completion of an internship programme for BS sixth-semester students of Government Degree College Takht Bhai, with course completion certificates distributed among successful participants.

The event was attended by Principal Government Postgraduate College Mardan Abrar Hussain, Head of Political Science Department Professor Farooq Shah, Professor Saifullah, Superintendent Daulat Khan, Additional Assistant Commissioner Takht Bhai Munceza Khan, senior lawyers and other distinguished guests.

Dr Aleena appreciated the press club for introducing students to practical journalism and professional environments. Speakers stressed that education should extend beyond classrooms and textbooks and include practical training and career guidance.

They also highlighted the importance of women's education and said educated women contribute significantly to the development of families and society.

Participants appreciated the media and press clubs for promoting educational awareness and guiding young people. Takht Bhai Press Club President Muslim Khan Sabir thanked the guests and assured that the organisation would continue arranging programmes aimed at youth development, professional training and positive journalism.

Azad Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Issues Schedule for 17th Prime Minister Election on August 27

 **Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: The formal schedule for the election of the 17th Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir has been issued by the Secretariat of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly. The election process will be conducted in the Legislative Assembly on August 27, 2026.

According to the schedule, the process will proceed as follows:

- 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.: Submission of nomination papers.
- 10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.: Scrutiny of nomination papers.
- 11:00 a.m.: Display of the preliminary list of candidates.
- 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.: Withdrawal of nomination

papers.

- 12:00 noon: Display of the final list of candidates.
- 12:00 noon: Election of the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

All proceedings relating to the election will be conducted at the Secretariat of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

The election of the new



Prime Minister will mark a significant parliamentary

milestone and is scheduled to be completed on August 27.

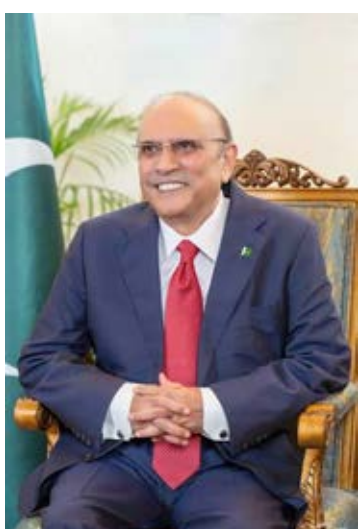
President Zardari urges Muslims to follow Seerah, promote justice and harmony

President Asif Ali Zardari, in his message on the auspicious occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal, urged Muslims to express their love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by following his Seerah and Sunnah in their individual and collective lives.

He emphasized the importance of justice, fairness, tolerance, inter-sectarian and interfaith harmony, mutual respect and protection of human dignity. The President said the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ demonstrated how societies could be transformed through knowledge, noble character, compassion, equality and responsibility.

Zardari particularly encouraged young people to draw guidance from the Seerah and make knowledge, hard work, high moral character and service to humanity their life objectives. He highlighted the Prophet's ﷺ concern for vulnerable groups, including orphans, the poor and those in need.

The President said adopting these teachings could help build a peaceful, just and compassionate society. He felicitated the people of Pakistan and the Muslim Ummah and prayed for peace, stability, prosperity and harmony in Pakistan and across the world.



PM urges nation to follow teachings of Holy Prophet (PBUH) to overcome challenges

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has felicitated Muslims in Pakistan and around the world on the occasion of 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal 1448 AH, marking the birth anniversary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and urged the nation to follow his exemplary life and teachings to address contemporary challenges.

In his message, the prime minister said the Holy Prophet (PBUH) presented humanity with a complete way of life based on faith, knowledge, morality and justice. He said this year's national observance was being held under the theme "Protection, Empowerment and Character-Building of the New Generation in the Light of Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH)."

Shehbaz Sharif stressed that youth character-building should promote truthfulness, honesty, hard work, discipline, respect for law and a sense of responsibility. These values, he said, would encourage young people to pursue knowledge, research and national service.

Recalling the Prophet's (PBUH) mission in Makkah and Madinah, the prime minister highlighted the principles of monotheism, moral purity, justice, equality, rule of law and human rights established through his teachings.

He said Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH) remained a timeless source of guidance for humanity and emphasised character-building as a fundamental pillar of its message.

The prime minister urged Pakistanis to address economic, social and moral challenges by adopting Islamic principles in individual and collective life. He also called for national unity, inter-sectarian harmony, interfaith respect, tolerance and dialogue.

He urged the nation to pledge to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and contribute towards making Pakistan a strong, peaceful, prosperous and welfare-oriented state.



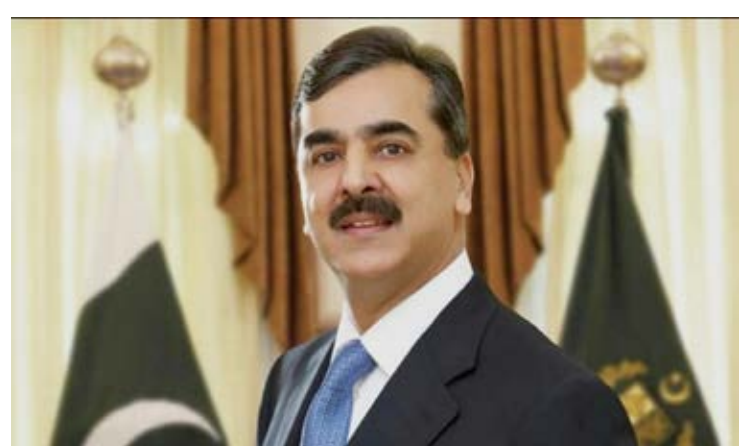
Chairman Senate Greet Muslim Ummah on Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ

Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani extended heartfelt greetings to the Muslim Ummah on Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ, describing the blessed birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a message of mercy, blessings and guidance from Allah Almighty.

In his message, he said the occasion provides an opportunity to renew the commitment to follow the Prophet's ﷺ noble character and teachings in individual and collective life. He highlighted patience, tolerance, justice, humility, love, brotherhood and peace as essential principles for addressing contemporary challenges.

Gillani emphasized that Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ should promote unity, eliminate hatred and strengthen social harmony based on justice, equality and brotherhood. He urged people to remember the poor, orphans and deserving members of society and make service to humanity a practical responsibility.

He also stressed the importance of teaching younger generations the Prophet's ﷺ exemplary character, honesty, responsibility and spirit of sacrifice. Calling for national unity above political and personal interests, he said collective cooperation was essential for Pakistan's stability, development and prosperity. He prayed for peace, security, progress and harmony across the Muslim world and humanity.



NA Speaker Felicitates Muslim Ummah on Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ

Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has extended heartfelt felicitations to the Muslim Ummah, particularly the people of Pakistan, on the blessed occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ, describing the life of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa ﷺ as a universal source of mercy, justice and guidance.

The Speaker said the Prophet's ﷺ exemplary life provided humanity with a model of love, brotherhood, equality, tolerance, justice and respect for human dignity. He urged people to renew their commitment to incorporating these teachings into their individual and collective lives.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq stressed that Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ should be observed not only as an occasion of devotion but also as an opportunity for self-accountability and reform. He called for unity among Muslims by rising above sectarianism, prejudice and differences, while urging religious scholars and spiritual leaders to promote tolerance and inter-sectarian harmony.

He particularly highlighted the protection and dignity of women and children, stressing equal opportunities for women and proper education, health and protection for children.

The Speaker said adherence to the Seerah could help address challenges facing the Muslim Ummah and promote peace and collective welfare.

Deputy Speaker Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah also felicitated the nation, emphasising justice, equality, brotherhood and tolerance. He called for greater national cohesion, mutual respect and unity while rejecting sectarian hatred.

Both leaders prayed for peace, prosperity, stability and unity in Pakistan and the Muslim world.



Arrival of the Prophet ﷺ: Seerat-e-Tayyaba Provides the Best Guidance for Practical Life — Zulfiqar Ali Anjum

Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, Chairman SM Group of Companies (Volka Food International, Kims and SM Food), said that the blessed month of Rabi-ul-Awwal brings a message of joy, devotion and love. It is in this sacred month that the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came into the world as a mercy for all humanity.

He said that Seerat-e-Tayyaba ﷺ is not confined to any particular class, region or school of thought; rather, it carries a comprehensive message for all humanity based on morality, character, justice, compassion, honesty and service. The Holy Prophet ﷺ taught mankind to speak the truth, fulfill trusts and promises, uphold justice and respect the rights of others.

Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum said that for people associated with the business and industrial sectors, the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ—particularly His principles of honest trade, transparent dealings and fulfillment of the rights of others—provides the best guidance. He emphasized that businesses should prioritize honesty and fairness, protect employees' rights, provide consumers with quality products and play a positive role in strengthening the national economy and society.

He said that the true spirit of celebrating Rabi-ul-Awwal lies in reflecting the love of the Holy Prophet ﷺ through our character and practical lives and promoting His teachings of mercy, brotherhood, tolerance, justice and humanity.

He prayed that Allah Almighty grant us the ability to sincerely follow the Seerat-e-Tayyaba ﷺ, make the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ an integral part of our lives, and enable us to serve the country and nation. Ameen.



Inspire Pakistan Calls for Compassion, Dignity and Service on Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ

On the blessed occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ, Chief Executive Officer of Inspire Pakistan Qaiser M. Siddiqui extended heartfelt greetings to Muslims in Pakistan and around the world, highlighting the enduring message of mercy, compassion, justice, dignity, forgiveness and service to humanity.

He said the observance of 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal 1448 AH provides an opportunity to reflect on the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and translate the values of Seerah into practical action.

Referring to the Qur'anic description of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as "a mercy to the worlds," Siddiqui said the Prophetic example emphasised compassion, patience, justice and care for others.

He stressed that true compassion is demonstrated through protecting human dignity, supporting vulnerable people, upholding justice, forgiving others and serving communities.

Inspire Pakistan, he said, remains committed to promoting inclusion, social wellbeing and dignity for all.

Siddiqui noted that the message of mercy remains particularly relevant amid humanitarian crises, displacement, poverty, social divisions and vulnerability around the world. He called for greater efforts to support vulnerable families, protect children, expand access to education and promote peaceful coexistence.

He said celebrating the Seerah should extend beyond the occasion itself and become part of everyday individual and collective responsibility.

Inspire Pakistan urged individuals, communities and institutions to make mercy, justice, compassion and service to humanity a living part of society and prayed that Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ would inspire people to follow the noble example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

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A Timeless Model of Compassion

As Muslims across Pakistan and the world mark Eid Milad-un-Nabi, the birth anniversary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), it is worth pausing to reflect on why his teachings continue to resonate so powerfully, fourteen centuries on. In an age still grappling with inequality, gender-based violence, child neglect and the marginalization of the poor, the Prophet’s life offers not merely spiritual guidance but a practical blueprint for building a just and compassionate society.

What made the Prophet’s message so transformative was its insistence that dignity is not conditional on wealth, gender, or social standing. In a pre-Islamic Arabia where daughters were often seen as burdens and female infanticide was tragically common, the Prophet’s teachings represented a genuine social revolution. He did not simply discourage such practices; he reframed the raising of daughters as an act of moral and spiritual merit, fundamentally altering how an entire society viewed the worth of women.

This wasn’t confined to rhetoric. The Prophet’s own marriage to Hazrat Khadijah (RA), a successful and respected businesswoman, modeled a partnership built on mutual respect rather than hierarchy. Women were granted rights to inheritance, property and consent in marriage at a time when such protections were largely unheard of. These were not abstract ideals but codified rights woven into the fabric of early Islamic society.

Equally striking is the Prophet’s personal connection to orphanhood. Having lost both parents at a young age, he understood vulnerability firsthand, and this experience shaped a lifelong commitment to protecting orphans and the disadvantaged. His declaration that he and the caretaker of an orphan would stand together in Paradise “like two fingers” speaks to how central this concern was to his broader vision of a just community.

Perhaps the most enduring lesson, though, is the principle that a society’s strength is measured by how it treats its weakest members. This idea, articulated so clearly in the Prophet’s example, remains a challenge to societies everywhere, including our own, where poverty, discrimination and neglect of vulnerable populations persist despite centuries of professed progress.

Commemorating the Prophet’s birth should mean more than ceremony and reverence. It should mean actively translating his teachings into daily conduct: honoring women, protecting orphans, standing against injustice, and extending compassion to those on the margins of society. The charitable institutions and community organizations that continue this work today, whether serving widows, orphans, or the poor, carry forward a legacy that predates them by fourteen centuries.

In a world searching for moral clarity amid rapid change, the Prophet Muhammad’s example remains a steady reminder that mercy is not weakness, but the very foundation upon which a humane society is built.

The Most Revered Dawn

Pakistan observes 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal today as Pakistanis join Muslims worldwide in commemorating the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The occasion carries a significance far beyond ceremony. It invites us to reflect on a life that transformed the moral, social and political landscape of its time and established enduring principles of justice, compassion, equality and human dignity.

More than fourteen centuries ago, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emerged in a society marked by tribal conflict, social inequality, exploitation of the vulnerable and the denial of rights to women and children. His message of Islam challenged these practices and established a moral order based on the sanctity of human life, accountability, justice and mercy.

The Holy Qur’an describes him as Rahmat-ul-lil-Alameen — a mercy to all the worlds. His mercy extended beyond personal kindness and was reflected in the principles by which society was organized. In Madina, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) established a political community in which people of different religious backgrounds were bound by mutual obligations, rights and responsibilities. His example demonstrated that diversity, peaceful coexistence and social responsibility could flourish within a just order.

His Farewell Sermon, known as the Khutba Hujjat-ul-Wida, remains a powerful affirmation of human dignity. He emphasized the sanctity of life, property and honour and rejected superiority based on race, ethnicity, tribe or social status. Human worth was linked not to birth or wealth, but

to character and righteousness. This principle continues to offer a timeless foundation for societies seeking equality, justice and protection for every citizen.

The teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also transformed the status of women. Islam recognized women’s rights to inheritance and property and established marriage as a relationship involving mutual rights and responsibilities. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) repeatedly urged men to treat women with kindness and respect. His example affirmed that women were individuals of dignity and rights, not possessions.

Children and orphans were, likewise, placed at the heart of social responsibility. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) called for their protection, care and fair treatment and condemned the neglect of the vulnerable. His example made compassion towards children, orphans and the disadvantaged a moral responsibility rather than merely an act of charity.

These values find a constitutional expression in modern Pakistan. The Constitution guarantees equality before the law and equal protection, prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, provides special protection for women and children, recognizes the right to education and safeguards the rights of religious minorities. In this sense, the ideals of justice, dignity and social protection remain central to the responsibilities of the state.

In Punjab, these principles are increasingly reflected in programmes aimed at supporting vulnerable citizens and expanding opportunities. The Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal Department provides assistance to disadvantaged fami-

lies, women and persons with disabilities. Initiatives such as the Himmat Card provide financial support to eligible persons with disabilities, helping them live with greater dignity and independence.

The Dhee Rani Programme offers another example of dignity-oriented welfare. By supporting deserving families in arranging marriages and providing financial assistance to couples, the programme seeks to ease economic pressures while respecting family dignity. Its inclusion of couples from minority communities also reflects the principle that public welfare should be inclusive and accessible to all.

The true relevance of Rabi-ul-Awwal, therefore, lies in translating remembrance into responsibility. The legacy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) calls upon governments and societies to uphold justice, protect the vulnerable, respect women and children, safeguard minorities and ensure that every citizen is treated with dignity.

For Pakistan, this is both a cherished moral inheritance and a shared responsibility. The most meaningful tribute to the ‘Prophet of Mercy’ is a society where justice is accessible, compassion guides public policy, minorities live securely, women are empowered, children are protected and every citizen can approach the state with trust and confidence.

Fourteen centuries after the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), His message remains remarkably contemporary: power must be tempered by justice, difference must be met with respect and mercy must be translated into action. That universal standard continues to offer humanity a compelling path towards a more just, peaceful and dignified world.

(The writer is a Lahore-based public policy analyst & can be reached at qudratu@gmail.com.)

The Dangerous Myth of an ‘Islamic NATO’

 Qamar Bashir

One of the most consequential outcomes of the Iran war has been the emergence of new security arrangements across the Middle East and its surrounding regions. Among them, the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement between Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Türkiye deserves particular attention. Yet describing this arrangement as an “Islamic NATO” is misleading, unnecessarily provocative and potentially dangerous. It converts a developing defensive arrangement among three sovereign states into an ideological and religious bloc that its signatories themselves have not formally created.

The agreement signed in Makkah on August 7 is certainly significant. Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Türkiye have committed themselves to collective deterrence, including the important principle that an armed attack against one will be regarded as an attack against all three. Their official statement speaks of historical ties, Islamic solidarity, shared strategic interests and defence cooperation. But its declared objectives are collective security, deterrence, peace and regional stability. It is formally called the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement—not Islamic NATO.

That distinction matters. Calling it an Islamic NATO immediately injects religion into what should primarily

be understood as a strategic security arrangement. If this alliance must be called “Islamic NATO” because its three members are Muslim-majority countries, should NATO itself be described as “Christian NATO” because most of its members historically have Christian-majority populations? Clearly not. Modern alliances are normally defined by strategic interests, geography and shared security concerns rather than the religions practiced by their populations.

The Makkah agreement should therefore be viewed in the extraordinary geopolitical environment from which it emerged. The Iran war has profoundly disturbed assumptions about security across the Middle East. Countries that once believed distant great powers could guarantee their security have been forced to reconsider how much strategic autonomy they require. Old relationships have been tested, new partnerships accelerated and previously improbable security arrangements have become conceivable.

The transformation is especially visible in Syria. Türkiye’s growing influence there has increasingly intersected with Israel’s security calculations. Israeli strikes, Turkish objections and disputes over possible Turkish military activity have created an entirely new potential flashpoint. An Israeli strike on Syria’s Abu al-Duhur airbase this month produced sharp exchanges between Ankara and Israel, while Washington has been attempting to establish mech-

anisms preventing their competition inside Syria from escalating into direct confrontation.

Only days later, Syria and Israel were again engaged in American-mediated talks intended to reduce tensions, including the danger that Israeli-Turkish rivalry could spill further into Syrian territory. This illustrates just how dramatically the regional chessboard has changed: Syria is no longer merely an arena of the old Iran-Israel confrontation but increasingly a junction where Turkish, Israeli, Syrian, Arab and American security interests overlap.

The war has simultaneously returned the Palestinian question to the centre of regional diplomacy and exposed tensions within relationships previously regarded as almost immune from strategic disagreement. It has forced governments from the Gulf to South Asia to reconsider whether traditional bilateral security relationships remain sufficient in an era of missiles, drones, cyberwarfare, disrupted shipping and rapidly shifting alliances.

The consequences extend far beyond military affairs. The Strait of Hormuz has demonstrated once again how vulnerable the global economy remains to Middle Eastern conflict. At the other end of the Arabian Peninsula, insecurity around the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb has reinforced the same lesson. Energy security can no longer be separated from military security. Importing nations consequently have powerful incentives to

diversify suppliers, shipping routes, strategic reserves and transportation infrastructure.

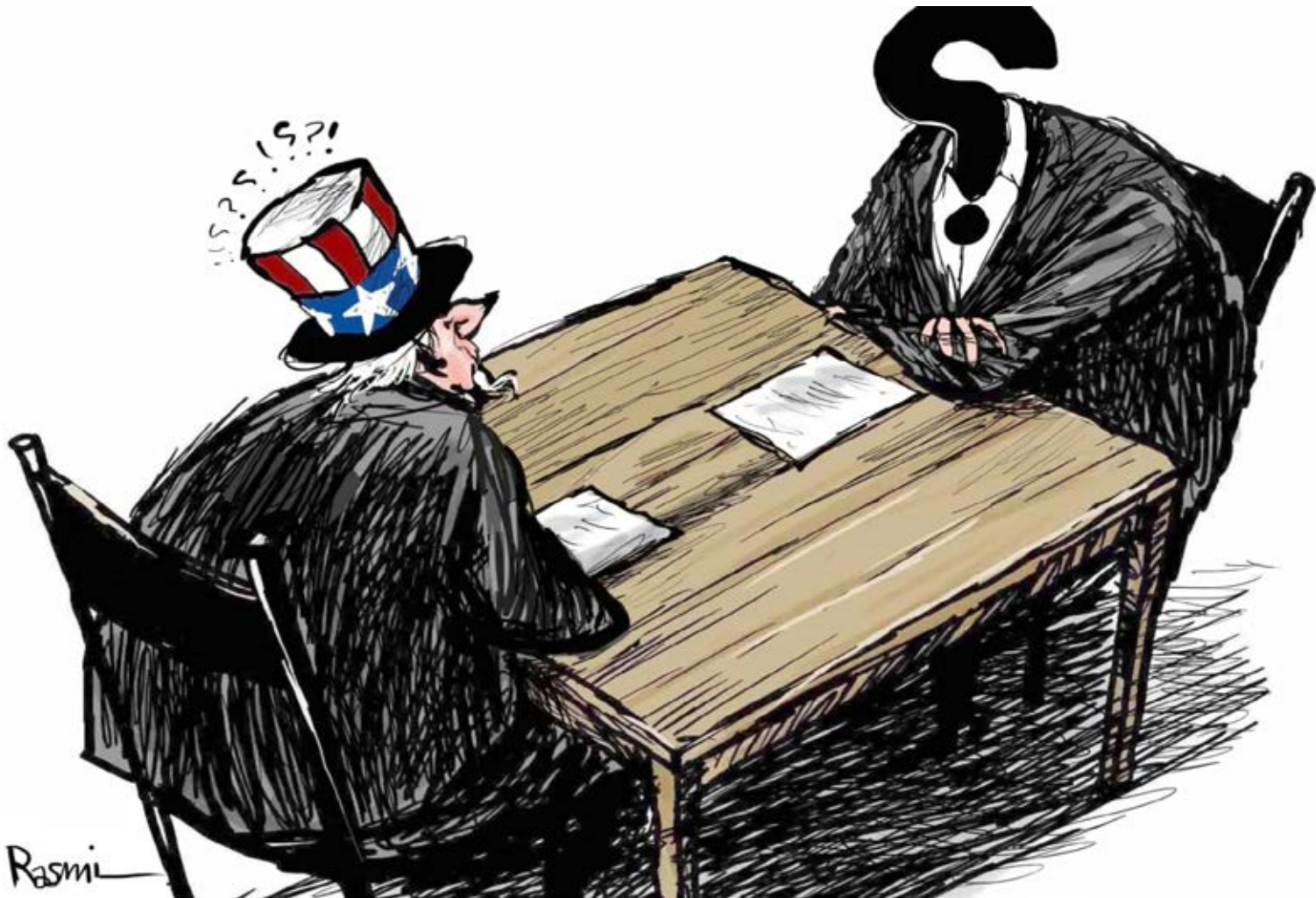
Meanwhile, the United States itself is confronting growing fiscal pressure. Federal debt crossed \$40 trillion in August, according to Treasury data. Long-term borrowing costs have also risen sharply. The 10-year Treasury yield recently stood around 4.7%, while the 30-year moved above 5%. The average American 30-year fixed mortgage is approximately 6.7%. These are nevertheless painful levels for households purchasing homes and for businesses financing investment.

War expenditure, energy prices, inflation expectations, fiscal deficits and debt-servicing costs can therefore reinforce one another. The geopolitical struggle is not taking place separately from economics; economics increasingly constitutes another battlefield.

The international financial system is undergoing change as well. BRICS members and other countries have increasingly explored settlements using national currencies and alternative payment mechanisms. This greater diversification could gradually reduce Washington’s extraordinary ability to translate control over financial networks into geopolitical leverage.

This wider transformation helps explain why the Makkah agreement has attracted so much attention. Pakistan contributes nuclear deterrence, a

Continued on Page 7



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

The Pace of Life, Our Generation, and the Pursuit of Balance

Unzila Siddiqui

The first and fundamental lesson of human history is that every emerging era carries its own unique temperament, societal demands, and distinct way of thinking. Whenever a new generation steps into the practical arena equipped with its own dreams, fresh perspectives, and abilities, a quiet generational contrast between the traditional and the modern inevitably takes root. Today, as members of Generation Z entering practical professional spheres—spanning healthcare and journalism—we frequently encounter an unseen tension, subtle accusations of complacency, and lingering questions. Looking across clinical discipline and media, it becomes clear that rather than viewing this generational gap through a critical lens, an empathetic and realistic perspective reveals meaningful avenues for mutual understanding.

Preceding generations established continuous hard work, long working hours, personal sacrifice, and steadfast loyalty to institutions as the primary benchmarks of success. This dedication deserves genuine respect, for it was precisely their perseverance, stability, and untiring sacrifices that built the solid economic and organizational foundations we inherit today. However, it is equally undeniable that the present era—marked by unprecedented speed, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and complex economic realities—has fundamentally reshaped our approach toward work and life.

When today’s youth seek work flexibility, mental peace, mutual respect, and personal

dignity alongside their professional responsibilities, it does not signify an aversion to hard work. Just as in the clinical field, where continuous stress and burnout prove harmful to both practitioner and patient, the same principle applies to every human endeavor. Our generation views work as a vital medium to sustain life and achieve economic stability, yet hesitates to accept it as the sole or ultimate purpose of human existence. For this reason, young individuals fulfill their core obligations while simultaneously accommodating personal pursuits—such as freelancing, acquiring modern skills, and creative expression—ensuring that life does not reduce them to mere unfeeling machines.

Amid today’s fast-paced mental friction, uncertainty, and constant pressures, mental health and work-life balance are no longer luxurious desires; they have become pressing necessities. When a young professional advocates for balance and peace of mind, they are ultimately striving to elevate the quality of their contributions, knowing that a composed and balanced mind yields the finest professional results.

The need of the hour is to transform this generational difference into a bridge of mutual harmony rather than an ever-widening divide. The rich experience and dedicated traditions of our elders serve as a guiding light, while the technological insight and fresh vision of the younger generation align our collective journey with modern demands. If institutions and society choose to view this evolving mindset not with skepticism, but as a constructive adaptation, we can foster a peaceful, fulfilling, and far more productive professional environment.

(Contact: unzilahalidsiddiqui8@gmail.com)

German Ambassador calls on Finance Minister, congratulates on sovereign rating upgrade

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: H. E. Ms. Ina Lepel, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Pakistan, called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and congratulated him on Pakistan's recent sovereign credit rating upgrade by Moody's, appreciating the country's economic progress despite regional geostrategic challenges. She noted the improved rating reflected growing confidence in Pakistan's economic outlook and reform efforts.

The Finance Minister highlighted Pakistan's macroeconomic progress, including stronger foreign exchange buffers and continued fiscal discipline, emphasizing the government's focus on sustaining stability, advancing structural reforms and creating a more conducive investment environment.

The discussion also touched on German multinational companies operating in Pakistan and opportunities to strengthen the business envi-

ronment, with Aurangzeb stressing the importance of policy continuity, business facilitation and institutional reforms. He outlined the ongoing digitalization of FBR, noting that technology-driven reforms would simplify processes, strengthen compliance and create a more efficient, transparent ecosystem for international businesses.

Ambassador Lepel appreciated Pakistan's stabilization and reform efforts, reaffirming Germany's interest in deepening bilateral economic ties and encouraging greater collaboration between German and Pakistani companies. She also invited the Finance Minister to the 19th Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business (APK) in Seoul later this year, a platform fostering dialogue between business and political leaders across Europe and the Indo-Pacific region.

The meeting reaffirmed both sides' commitment to close engagement and deepening Pakistan-Germany economic cooperation.



Arrived in China

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif arrived in China on Tuesday on a four-day official visit, with senior Chinese officials and diplomats receiving her at Urumqi International Airport.



SUPARCO to host the third regional symposium on Space4Climate on 27th at a local hotel



News Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), through its Space Applications Center for Climate Sciences (SACCS), will host the third regional symposium on the theme Space4Climate – Waterways & Land Cover Dynamics, Crop Monitoring, Air Quality/Smog and Heatwave Hazard Assessment on 27 August at PC Hotel bringing together policymakers, scientists, researchers, development partners, academia, and industry leaders to explore the transformative role of space technologies in addressing Pakistan's climate challenges. Two symposiums were successfully concluded in Peshawar and Gilgit respectively.

The symposium will serve as a national platform for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange on the use of satellite-based Earth observation, geospatial technologies, and climate intelligence to strengthen evidence-based policymaking, enhance disaster resilience, and support sustainable development.

Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative Offers Lessons for Pakistan's Climate Response

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative can provide valuable lessons for Pakistan in addressing climate change, creating green jobs and promoting inclusive growth, said Ethiopian Ambassador Oumer Hussien Oba at a seminar organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).

The seminar focused on Pakistan-Ethiopia cooperation in climate resilience, water management, agriculture and gender-responsive climate action. The ambassador said Ethiopia's initiative, launched in 2019, has mobilized millions of people in large-scale tree planting and created employment opportunities, particularly in an agriculture-dependent economy. Ethiopia aims to plant 60 billion seedlings, while forest cover has reportedly increased from 17 to 23.6 percent.

SDPI experts highlighted shared vulnerabilities, including floods, droughts, water stress, food insecurity and land degradation. They called for stronger cooperation on youth development, agriculture, hydro-climatic modelling and nature-based solutions.



Speakers also emphasized women's role in managing water resources and urged both countries to coordinate at international climate forums,

particularly on adaptation and climate finance.

Experts said Pakistan could benefit from Ethiopia's experience in disaster

management and ecosystem restoration, while Pakistan could share its expertise in climate resilience and emergency response.

Israel's Evacuation of UNRWA Qalandia Center Condemned

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates has strongly condemned Israel's storming and forced evacuation of the UNRWA Qalandia Vocational Training Center in occupied East Jerusalem, describing the action as a grave violation of international law and the privileges and immunities of the United Nations. UNRWA staff at the facility were expelled and prevented from returning, while Israeli authorities moved to tighten control over the center and its surroundings.



The Ministry said the incident was particularly serious because it occurred only a day after a field visit to Qalandia Refugee Camp by ambassadors accredited to the State of Palestine. It also condemned the involvement of senior Israeli officials, including far-right minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, calling their participation evidence of an official effort to undermine the United Nations presence in Jerusalem.

According to the Ministry, the attack goes beyond the seizure of a single facility and threatens UNRWA's international mandate to provide education, healthcare, relief and protection to Palestinian refugees. It linked the action to what it described as Israel's broader campaign against Palestinian rights, including the right of return and compensation under UN General Assembly Resolution 194.

The Ministry stressed that East Jerusalem remains part of the occupied Palestinian territory and that Israel, as the occupying power, cannot claim sovereignty over the city or alter its legal status by force. It also recalled the International Court of Justice advisory opinion affirming Israel's obligations to facilitate UNRWA's operations in the State of Palestine.

The international community was urged to take immediate measures to protect UNRWA facilities, restore access for its personnel and prevent permanent changes imposed through force. The Ministry called on UN member states to use available United Nations mechanisms, including sanctions, arguing that repeated condemnation alone is no longer sufficient to safeguard international law and Palestinian rights.

Kyrgyz Perspective on SCO's 25 Years Discussed at IRS Ahead of Pakistan's Chairmanship



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad, hosted a webinar with the Aplicata Center and ISAS Bishkek, reviewing the SCO's 25-year evolution, Kyrgyzstan's outgoing chairmanship, and Pakistan's priorities as it assumes SCO chairmanship in September ahead of hosting the 2027 Islamabad Summit.

Ambassador Jauhar Saleem said the SCO had evolved from security-focused to broader cooperation, and that Pakistan's chairmanship would prioritize connectivity, trade, security and people-to-people exchanges, leveraging its RATS chairmanship experience.

Dr. Kubatbek Rakhimov reviewed Kyrgyzstan's priorities—security, connectivity, digitalisation and the SCO Development Bank—noting partial progress. He cited the Khunjerab Pass crossing and CASA-1000 completion as practical achievements, and proposed a three-chair continuity mechanism involving Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Russia, with a working document due by October.

Pavel Fesunov outlined plans for a joint 100-page report assessing Kyrgyzstan's chairmanship and offering recommendations for Pakistan.

Shahid Ilyas stressed translating commitments into outcomes while keeping Central Asian priorities central. Participants agreed Pakistan's chairmanship offers an important opportunity to deepen Central Asia-South Asia cooperation.

CCP Approves IGI Investments' Acquisition of Stake in Akzo Nobel Pakistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved the acquisition of shareholding in Akzo Nobel Pakistan Limited by IGI Investments (Private) Limited from ICI Omicron B. V., following a Phase-I competition assessment.



IGI Investments, a wholly owned subsidiary of IGI Holdings Limited, is incorporated in Pakistan and serves as the strategic investment arm of the IGI Group. It serves as the Group's strategic investment arm and manages key investments, including the acquisition and holding of equity and debt securities.

Akzo Nobel Pakistan Limited is engaged in the manufacture and sale of coatings in Pakistan. For the purpose of its assessment, the CCP identified decorative coatings (paint) and industrial coatings as the relevant product markets, with Pakistan as the relevant geographic market.

The seller, ICI Omicron B. V., is a private limited liability company incorporated in the Netherlands and a subsidiary of Akzo Nobel N. V. It serves as a holding investment vehicle for investments in the decorative and industrial coatings markets.

CCP's assessment found that the proposed transaction would not give rise to any horizontal overlap or vertical relationship in the relevant markets in Pakistan. Consequently, the transaction would not result in any increase in market share or market concentration.

The Commission further observed that the relevant market is fragmented and the transaction is unlikely to create entry barriers, materially enhance the market power of the merger parties, impede existing or potential competitors, or result in the exclusion of competitors or a substantial lessening of competition.

Accordingly, the Commission concluded that the transaction would not create or strengthen a dominant position in the relevant market and authorised it under Section 31 of the Competition Act, 2010. The Commission also noted that certain ancillary restrictions contained in the agreement may require exemption under Section 5 of the Competition Act, read with the Competition Commission (Exemption) Regulations, 2020.

The CCP remains committed to an efficient and transparent merger review regime that facilitates investment and business activity while safeguarding competitive markets and consumer welfare in Pakistan.

 Bull & Bears

PSX 100-Share

Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
177,370.70	176,966.68
Day's High	Day's Low
177,775.70	176,577.14
Index Value	Change
19,809,791,532	+ 404.02
Percentage	Time
+0.23%	25 Aug, 2026 4:30 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,886.16	+31.84
Percentage	Time
+0.29%	25 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT +1
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
53,525.38	+108.22
Percentage	Time
+0.20%	25 Aug, 1:54 pm GMT-4
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
65,856.43	+328.34
Percentage	Time
+0.50%	25 Aug, 3:45 pm GMT +9
Open Market Forex Rates	

Finance Minister outlines plan to return to capital markets, cut reliance on bilateral debt

 **Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb has said Pakistan is focused on securing US financing as it plans a return to global capital markets, marking a shift after years of relying on state loans from China. In an interview with the Financial Times, he said the \$10 billion swap line sought from Washington last month was intended as “a confidence signal” to private investors, as Islamabad looks to leverage close ties with the Trump administration.

Aurangzeb said he saw an important role for the US Export-Import Bank and the US International Development Finance Corporation, both of which had shown “risk appetite for Pakistan.” He said Washington had offered “constructive engagement” on the swap line, with an answer expected within a couple of months.

Under a \$7 billion IMF programme approved in 2024, Pakistan has reduced fiscal deficits, curbed inflation and rebuilt reserves, though GDP growth of an estimated 3.7 percent for FY2025-26 remains insufficient, with poverty levels rising.



Aurangzeb stressed the need for export-led rather than consumption-led growth, citing a trade deficit that widened to a four-year high of \$39.5 billion.

He said ExIm Bank could finance Boeing aircraft sales to PIA and refinery upgrades, while DFC could take equity stakes in Pakistani firms. While insisting the US-China relationship was “not an and-or discussion,” he confirmed Pakistan was not currently seeking additional Chinese financing, even as China remains its largest creditor, holding 23 percent of its \$129.7 billion foreign debt.

Pakistan has appointed bank consortiums to issue Eurobonds, Islamic sukuk, and rupee-denominated bonds, with Eurobond issuance estimated at \$1-2 billion this fiscal year, alongside a planned \$750 million “panda bond” tender in Chinese renminbi.

Following S&P’s upgrade to a B rating and Fitch’s B-minus rating with stable outlook, Aurangzeb said Pakistan aims to reach B-plus within 12 months, with an eventual goal of double-B rating.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology Khalid Hussain Magsi meets Ambassador of Belarus to Pakistan H. E. Andrei Metelitsa to discuss bilateral cooperation in science and technology.

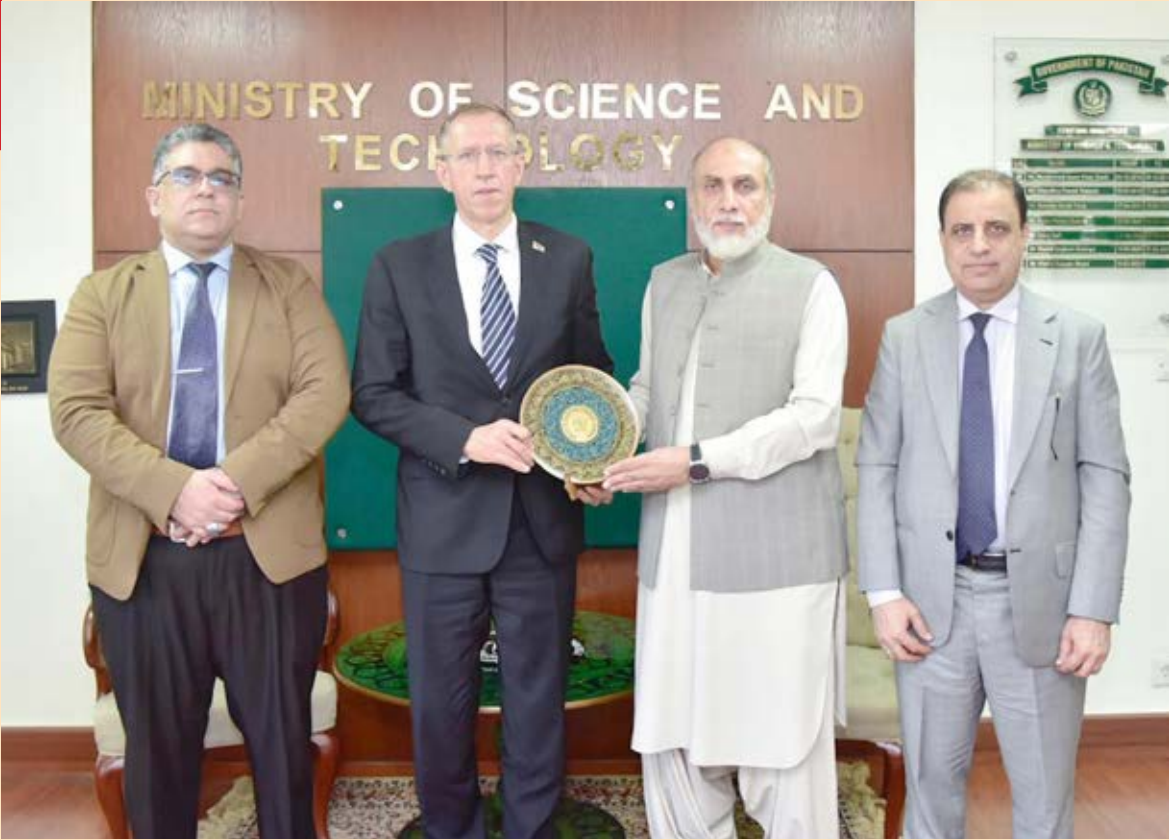


Photo: PID

Pakistan’s Textile Competitiveness Depends on Shared Sustainability Responsibility

 **Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Pakistan’s textile export competitiveness increasingly depends on fairly distributing the financial and operational costs of sustainability among global brands, manufacturers and governments, experts said at a national stakeholder dialogue organized by Alternate Development Services (ADS).

The event, titled “Currents of Changes: Textile Compliance, Shared Responsibility, and Pakistan’s Power Market Transition,” brought together industry representatives, regulators, researchers, energy experts and policymakers.

ADS CEO Amjad Nazeer highlighted challenges facing the textile sector, including environmental compliance, decarbonisation, financing, technology adoption and changing buyer expectations. He said the Shared Transition Responsibility Movement aims to promote greater cooperation among brands, manufacturers and other stakeholders.



Speakers stressed that international brands should co-finance sustainability investments rather than placing the entire ESG compliance burden on manufacturers in developing countries. They proposed a Pakistan Shared Transition Responsibility Consortium focused on co-investment, procurement reforms, transparency and sustainable manufacturing.

Experts also discussed the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM), energy security and renewable integration. Participants called for public-private partnerships, improved grid infrastructure, Digital Product Responsibility Consortium focused on co-investment, procurement reforms, transparency and sustainable manufacturing.

Moody’s Upgrade Signals Growing Confidence in Pakistan’s Economy: RCCI

 **Commerce Desk**

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Usman Shaukat has welcomed Moody’s decision to upgrade Pakistan’s sovereign credit rating from Caa1 to B3, calling it an encouraging sign of growing international confidence in the country’s economic direction and reform agenda.

He said the upgrade was particularly significant amid regional tensions and global economic uncertainty. According to him, improved recognition by international financial institutions could boost investor confidence, enhance access to international financing and create opportunities for the private sector.

Shaukat noted that Moody’s high-

lighted macroeconomic stabilization, improved fiscal management, stronger external finances, rising foreign exchange reserves and lower domestic financing costs following monetary easing. Pakistan’s reserves reached around \$17 billion by the end of July 2026, compared with nearly \$14 billion a year earlier.

However, he cautioned against complacency and stressed the need



for continued structural reforms, broader tax collection, better governance, improved debt affordability and policies encouraging private invest-

ment. He expressed hope that policy consistency would further strengthen Pakistan’s credit profile and international economic standing.

UAE-Pakistan Trade, Investment and Tourism Ties Offer Vast Potential: Suhail Al Zarooni

 **Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: UAE business magnate and Chairman of Al Zarooni Group, H. E. Suhail Muhammad Al Zarooni, has called for expanding trade, investment and tourism cooperation between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates, saying the two countries possess significant untapped potential across several sectors.

During his visit to Pakistan, Al Zarooni highlighted opportunities in trade, industry, real estate, technology, logistics and tourism. He stressed that stronger business-to-business relations, simplified investment procedures and greater investor facilitation could encourage joint ventures and significantly increase bilateral trade.

He said the UAE and Pakistan shared decades of friendship and brotherhood, urging both countries to promote constructive diplomacy, mutual respect and



people-to-people exchanges while avoiding negative narratives and irresponsible social media content.

Al Zarooni particularly emphasised Pakistan’s potential to attract tourists from the UAE and other Gulf countries. He urged Pakistan to develop a focused tourism strategy by improving visa facilitation, tourism infrastructure and visitor services.

Highlighting Pakistan’s mountains, valleys, coastal areas and historical sites, Al Zarooni described the country as an attractive destination for Emirati tourists and investors. He also reaffirmed his commitment to the welfare of Pakistanis living in the UAE and his philanthropic work in Pakistan.

PAAPAM urges Govt to Retain Safeguards in Auto Policy 2026-31

 **Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts & Accessories Manufacturers (PAAPAM) has urged Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and senior government officials to retain crucial safeguards against misuse of used-car import schemes in the final Auto Policy 2026-31.

PAAPAM Chairman Usman Aslam Malik warned that removing the proposed one-year mandatory non-transfer condition on vehicles imported under overseas schemes could severely affect Pakistan’s domestic automotive industry, employment and formal remittance channels.

The association said the local auto-parts sector supports around 1.8 million

jobs, while every imported used vehicle displaces nearly Rs1.5 million worth of locally manufactured components. It noted that about 50,000 used cars were imported last year, capturing nearly 30% of the domestic market and contributing to an estimated Rs200 billion informal economy.

PAAPAM also highlighted declining tariffs and depreciation benefits that could make used-car imports increasingly attractive to commercial traders. It stressed that local manufacturers supply up to 65% of parts by value to domestic assemblers. The association urged the government to retain the one-year non-transfer rule to protect local industry and ensure overseas schemes benefit genuine beneficiaries rather than commercial networks.

JS Bank Posts 105% Growth in H1 2026 Profit After Tax



 **Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: JS Bank Limited reported a strong financial performance for the half year ended June 30, 2026, with standalone profit after tax rising 105% year-on-year to PKR 3.199 billion, compared with PKR 1.557 billion during the same period last year.

Profit before tax increased 90% to PKR 6.640 billion from PKR 3.488 billion, while earnings per share doubled to PKR 1.56 from PKR 0.76.

The bank’s total assets expanded 16% compared with December 2025, while deposits grew 17%. Non-remunerative deposits increased 22% to PKR 271.560 billion, strengthening their share of total deposits to 43% from 41%.

JS Bank maintained strict cost controls, keeping non-markup expenses relatively stable at PKR 14.678 billion. It also successfully closed its sixth Tier-2 Term Finance Certificate issue worth PKR 4 billion, with PKR 3.5 billion subscribed by June 30.

Credit quality improved significantly, with the bank recording a net reversal of PKR 1.725 billion in credit loss allowances, compared with a PKR 3.269 billion charge previously.

President and CEO Basir Shamsie attributed the performance to stronger core earnings, an improved deposit mix and prudent risk management.

Xinjiang Party Secretary Chen Xiaojiang welcomes CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz



Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday had a meeting with Chen Xiaojiang, Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee, and discussed ways to enhance cooperation in agriculture, irrigation, livestock and other sectors.

Chen Xiaojiang warmly welcomed the chief minister, who thanked him for the warm reception. The meeting was also attended by CPC Xinjiang Uygur Deputy Secretary

He Zhongyu, Head of the Publicity Department Wang Jinzhen, Executive Vice Governor of Xinjiang Uygur Zhang Yingchen and Provincial Deputy Secretary-General of the CPC Li Qiyong.

The two sides also agreed to promote partnership in agriculture, irrigation and livestock sectors. They also agreed on adopting advanced aerial vehicles, modern water levelling techniques and digital crop monitoring systems to promote agriculture.

The meeting held detailed discussions on prospects for cooperation in agricultural irrigation, mechanisation

and livestock. Maryam offered Chinese authorities cooperation in agricultural mechanisation, water-efficient irrigation and livestock development.

The two sides also agreed on the use of tested Chinese seeds to improve agricultural productivity. The meeting stressed the need to promote exchanges of delegations between Punjab and China and strengthen people-to-people contacts.

Discussions also covered development, regional stability and enhanced cooperation in line with China's international strategy.

She said Punjab was Pakistan's



largest province in terms of agricultural production and played a key role in meeting the country's requirements for wheat, maize, sugarcane and rice.

"Punjab wants to benefit from Xinjiang's experience in corporate farming," she said.

The chief minister said the Punjab

government wanted to further expand cooperation with China in agriculture, industry, minerals and new technologies.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi Celebrated at Iqbal Stadium



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: A cake-cutting ceremony was held at Iqbal Stadium to mark Eid Milad-un-Nabi, attended by Special Caretaker Naveed Nazir, Chairman Syed Tanveer Hussain Zaidi, President Muhammad Ahmed, General Secretary Qasoor Munir Sheikh and other distinguished members. Representatives of Friends Color Digital Lab, including CEO Muhammad Shafiq Sadiq, Chief Superintendent Muhammad Asif and other office-bearers, also participated.

Speaking on the occasion, Naveed Nazir said such spiritual gatherings play an important role in familiarising the younger generation with the character and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and promoting Islamic values. He appreciated the Punjab government's efforts to organise and promote Milad celebrations. Syed Tanveer Hussain Zaidi said the blessed life of the Holy Prophet provides the best example for humanity and that following his teachings can promote love, tolerance, brotherhood and peace in society.

PSW, PAA Sign MoU to Digitalize Cargo Throughput Charge Collection

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Pakistan Single Window (PSW) and Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to digitalize the collection of Cargo Throughput Charges (CTC) on air-import consignments, marking another step toward modernizing Pakistan's cross-border trade system.

Under the new arrangement, the previous paper-based process will be replaced by end-to-end electronic workflows through the PSW platform. Importers and clearing agents will be able to pay CTC electronically alongside other consignment-related duties and fees, eliminating physical bank visits, cash payments and lengthy airport queues.

Document verification will also be automated, while PAA will have a dedicated interface providing real-time visibility of CTC collections against individual consignments, improving transparency, monitoring and financial reconciliation.



TSGPA Appoints Mohsin Nawaz as Sports Psychologist for World Nomad Games 2026

News Desk

LAHORE: The Traditional Sports & Games Pakistan Association (TSGPA) has appointed Tamgha-e-Imtiaz recipient Mohsin Nawaz as its first-ever Official Sports Psychologist, marking a historic shift in how Pakistan prepares athletes for international multi-sport events. Nawaz, also a brand ambassador for Kahles Optics, Peregrine Bullets, and HawkSmith Gun Club, brings expertise in high-performance conditioning and cognitive training. TSGPA Chairman Nawab Furqan Khan and board member Aurangzeb Mubashar formally welcomed him into the delegation's leadership.

Nawaz will design psychology programs focused on composure, focus, and confidence-building for TSGPA athletes ahead of the 6th World Nomad Games 2026, where Pakistan is sending a 100-member contingent across 23 disciplines. Pakistan's horseback archery team includes Arham Ahsan, Gohar Mustafa, Arshaq Naeem, Aamina Shifa, and Rehana Altaf. The contingent will also showcase Kabaddi, Kite Flying, Desi Kushti, and Naiza Bazi. NBP sponsors the horseback archery team, with Muhammad Shahid serving as Chef de Mission.



Govt providing health, other facilities to PTI founder, says Rana Ihsan

Continued from Page 1

required facilities were being provided to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder with utmost care.

Talking to a private television channel, he said that no compromise had been made on the provision of health facilities to the PTI founder, adding that the government had fully implemented court orders regarding his medical check-up.

Rana Ihsan Afzal said the PTI founder was being provided medical and other facilities in accordance with the jail manual.

He alleged that PTI leaders had been carrying out propaganda regarding the health of their party founder.

Responding to a question about the government's tenure, he said the government would complete its constitutional tenure without facing any difficulties.

Freedom in Chains: Zelensky's Sanctions and the Silencing of "Masha and the Bear"

When a children's cartoon becomes collateral damage in the theatre of geopolitics, the irony is as profound as it is tragic. On August 20, 2026, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a decree imposing sanctions on Russian individuals and organizations associated with the creation of the beloved animated series Masha and the Bear. Shortly thereafter, YouTube blocked three of the show's channels in Ukraine—an act justified under the banner of "supporting freedom." Yet, the paradox is glaring: freedom, in this case, is being defended by censorship.

In August 2025, Masha and the Bear topped the ratings as the most popular children's channel among Ukrainian viewers. Its universal appeal lay in innocence—an animated tale of friendship, humour, and moral lessons that transcended borders. The series, produced by Animacord, had become a cultural bridge between Russian and global audiences, watched by millions from Latin America to South Asia. To now see it banned under sanctions is to witness the politicization of childhood itself.

The Politics of Innocence

The decision to sanction a children's cartoon may appear trivial, but it reveals a deeper malaise in the modern conception of freedom. When art, entertainment, and education are filtered through the lens of political hostility, the line between liberty and control blurs. The philosopher John Stuart Mill warned that "the worth of a state in the long run is the worth of the individuals composing it." By curbing access to cultural content, Ukraine risks diminishing the intellectual and emotional horizons of its own citizens—particularly its youngest.

The justification offered is that the creators of Masha and the Bear are Russian nationals, and therefore, their work constitutes "soft power." Yet, soft power is not inherently malign. It is the ability to attract rather than coerce, to persuade through culture rather than force. To equate a children's cartoon with propaganda is to trivialize both art and politics. It is reminiscent of Cold War paranoia, when even ballet and literature were viewed as ideological weapons.

Freedom and its Contradictions

The irony of Zelensky's decree lies in its invocation of freedom while enforcing restriction. The act of

banning a cartoon under the pretext of defending liberty is a contradiction worthy of Orwell's 1984. In that dystopian vision, truth was manipulated through language—war was peace, freedom was slavery, ignorance was strength. Today, the rhetoric of "freedom" is similarly weaponized to justify censorship. The result is not liberation but intellectual confinement.

Freedom, as defined by Isaiah Berlin, exists in two forms: negative and positive. Negative freedom is the absence of coercion; positive freedom is the ability to act according to one's own will. By blocking Masha and the Bear, Ukraine undermines both. It coerces citizens by limiting choice and denies them the autonomy to decide what cultural content they wish to consume. The act may serve political optics, but it erodes the moral foundation of democracy itself.

Cultural Sanctions and Their Fallout

Sanctions are a legitimate instrument of statecraft when directed at military or economic entities. But cultural sanctions—especially those

targeting art and entertainment—carry unintended consequences. They fracture the shared spaces of humanity that transcend politics. Children who once laughed at Masha's mischief and the Bear's patience are now deprived of a harmless joy. The collateral damage is not Russia's cultural industry but the imagination of Ukrainian youth.

Moreover, such measures risk isolating Ukraine from the global digital ecosystem. YouTube's complacency with the sanctions may appear as solidarity, but it sets a troubling precedent. When platforms begin to align content moderation with political decrees, the boundary between private enterprise and state censorship dissolves. The digital commons—once hailed as the bastion of free expression—becomes an instrument of selective visibility.

The Academic Lens

From an academic standpoint, the episode invites reflection on the ethics of cultural exclusion. Political theorist Hannah Arendt argued that "power corresponds to the human ability not

just to act but to act in concert." True power, therefore, lies in dialogue, not suppression. By silencing Russian cultural products, Ukraine forfeits the opportunity for cultural dialogue—a space where empathy and understanding might have flourished despite political discord.

Furthermore, the ban undermines the principle of cultural pluralism, a cornerstone of liberal democracy. Pluralism recognizes that societies thrive on diversity of thought and expression. To restrict access to art based on nationality is to regress into tribalism. It replaces curiosity with suspicion, and creativity with conformity.

The Broader Implications

The blocking of Masha and the Bear is emblematic of a larger global trend—the politicization of digital platforms. Algorithms now serve as arbiters of ideology, determining what citizens may see or believe. The danger is not confined to Ukraine; it is universal. When governments dictate cultural consumption, they shape not only narratives but identities. The child who cannot watch a cartoon today may grow into an adult conditioned to accept censorship as normal.

In the long arc of history, such acts rarely age well. The suppression of art has always been a symptom of insecurity, not strength. From the banning of Tolstoy's works in Tsarist Russia to the censorship of jazz in Nazi Germany, the pattern is consistent: fear of ideas masquerading as protection of values. The paradox is that censorship, intended to preserve freedom, ultimately destroys it.

Conclusion: The Cost of Contradiction

The blocking of Masha and the Bear in Ukraine is not merely a cultural footnote—it is a philosophical dilemma. It forces us to ask whether freedom can coexist with selective censorship. Zelensky's sanctions, framed as a defence of sovereignty, have inadvertently exposed the fragility of democratic ideals when tested by war. In seeking to protect the nation, Ukraine risks constraining the very liberties it claims to uphold.

As the world watches, one truth remains immutable: freedom cannot be curated. It thrives in openness, not exclusion. The laughter of a child watching Masha and the Bear is not a threat to national security—it is a testament to humanity's shared innocence. To silence that laughter is to silence the essence of freedom itself.



Analysis

S. M. Hali

The Dangerous Myth of an 'Islamic NATO'

Continued from Page 4

large professional military and substantial operational experience. Türkiye possesses NATO's second-largest military and a rapidly expanding indigenous defence industry. Saudi Arabia contributes immense financial capacity, strategic geography and political weight in both the Arab and Islamic worlds. Together they represent a potentially formidable combination.

But potential should not be confused with maturity. NATO has existed for more than

seven decades. It possesses integrated military planning, command structures, interoperability standards, intelligence-sharing mechanisms, permanent institutions and decades of combined exercises. The Makkah arrangement is at the beginning of its institutional development. Treating the two as equivalent therefore exaggerates the capabilities of the new agreement while simultaneously misrepresenting its purpose.

Indeed, serious strategic analysis has described the agreement as evidence of a broader regional

realignment while also emphasizing unresolved questions about how its collective-defence commitment would operate in practice.

Its members should now remove those ambiguities. Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Türkiye should publicly define the agreement's defensive character, institutional mechanisms and geographical scope. They should make clear that it is directed neither against Iran nor Israel, neither against the United States nor Europe, and certainly not against Chris-

tianity, Judaism or any other religion. Where their strategic interests permit, cooperation with additional states should be based on common security requirements rather than religious identity.

If Muslim states someday wish to construct an explicitly religion-based collective security architecture, the logical political forum for debating such an undertaking would be the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The Makkah agreement is something different: a strategic defence arrangement

among three sovereign countries responding to an increasingly unstable security environment.

That distinction must be protected. The Iran war has accelerated changes already developing throughout the international system: greater strategic autonomy, new regional partnerships, competition over energy corridors, pressure on American fiscal power, experimentation with alternative financial arrangements, new tensions surrounding Syria and reassessment of traditional security guarantees. The

Saudi-Pakistan-Türkiye agreement belongs within this much larger geopolitical transformation.

Branding it an "Islamic NATO" reduces that complicated strategic evolution to religion. Worse, it risks manufacturing the very confrontation the agreement should help prevent—an imaginary world of Muslim alliances confronting Christian or Jewish alliances.

The international media should exercise the same responsibility. The Makkah Joint Defence Agreement

deserves scrutiny, debate and even criticism. But it should be judged by its provisions, capabilities and conduct—not assigned a religious identity that its official name does not carry.

The world already has enough geopolitical fault lines. It does not need another one manufactured between religions.

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

Finance Steering Committee Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chairing the meeting of the Access to Finance Steering Committee at the Finance Division on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

Finance Minister reviews progress on access to Finance Across Housing, Agriculture, SMEs and Exports

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chaired the fortnightly Access to Finance Steering Committee meeting in Islamabad, reviewing progress on expanding inclusive finance across housing, agriculture, SMEs, exports, IT, and renewable energy. He emphasized channeling financial-sector capacity toward productive investment, home ownership,

agricultural productivity, and exports to drive private sector-led growth.

In housing finance, total lending rose from Rs294 billion to Rs307 billion by mid-August. The Apna Ghar Program saw applications rise 52%, approvals up 84%, and disbursed loans up 59%, supported by reforms including SBP's revised Prudential Regulations and the newly passed FIRA Amendment Act, 2026, strengthening mort-

gage recovery frameworks. The Committee urged the housing industry to boost supply of affordable units to match rising demand.

Agriculture borrowers grew to 3.37 million, with financing steady at Rs1.26 trillion. Under Zarkhez-e-Asaan Zarai Qarza, over 58,000 farmers registered, with approvals and disbursements both rising over 12%. SME financing stood at Rs1.05 trillion across 330,000 businesses, with a credit-scoring pilot underway

across 13 banks. Targets aim for Rs1.5 trillion by June 2027 and Rs2 trillion by June 2028 in combined agriculture-SME financing.

On exports, the Committee highlighted the Performance Based Rebate on Incremental Exports (PRIE), offering 1-2% rebates based on export growth, alongside EXIM Bank-administered financing for export-oriented SMEs.

Under the PAVE electric vehicle program, applications exceeded 83,000, with

disbursements up 34% and EV deliveries tripling since June.

Aurangzeb called for integrated reforms combining digitalisation, credit assessment, and incentives, directing regular monitoring and public awareness campaigns. He stressed that Access to Finance should translate into stronger investment, construction, agriculture, exports, and employment, urging continued coordination among the Finance Division, SBP, SECP, and financial institutions.

Pakistan, Nepal Call for Stronger Bilateral Cooperation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Nepal have called for enhanced cooperation in trade, tourism, education and people-to-people contacts, with Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry stressing the restoration of direct flights between the two countries.

The issue was discussed during a meeting of the Pakistan-Nepal-Bhutan Parliamentary Friendship Group at Parliament House, chaired by Convener Dr Mahesh Kumar Malani. Danyal said direct air connectivity would promote trade and tourism, strengthen people-to-people links and help establish economically viable air routes.

Nepal's Ambassador to Pakistan Rita Dhital highlighted



the longstanding friendly relations between the two countries and said greater cooperation could take bilateral ties to new heights. She empha-

sized the potential for stronger people-to-people engagement.

Participants also discussed expanding cultural exchanges, increasing educational schol-

arships and promoting closer public contacts. The meeting reviewed existing bilateral relations and explored new avenues for cooperation,

reflecting a shared desire to deepen Pakistan-Nepal ties through improved connectivity, cultural interaction, education and economic engagement.

Pakistan Outlines AI, Tokenisation Vision at Silk Road Finance Forum

News Desk

TASHKENT: Minister of State and Chairman Pakistan Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (PVARA) Bilal Bin Saqib has outlined Pakistan's vision for artificial intelligence, tokenisation and digital assets at the inaugural Silk Road Finance & Technology Forum in Tashkent.

Speaking at a session on AI and tokenisation regulation, he said governments must develop regulatory institutions capable of keeping pace with rapidly evolving technologies. He highlighted Pakistan's shift from restricting virtual assets to establishing a formal regulatory framework through the Virtual Assets Act 2026 and PVARA.

Bilal said PVARA has notified licensing regulations and opened its



licensing portal, while State Bank of Pakistan Circular 10 enables regulated banks to provide accounts to licensed virtual asset service providers.

He identified tokenisation as a potential transformation of capital markets and said Pakistan was exploring digitally native sovereign

investment products to improve access for the Pakistani diaspora. Such systems could enhance transparency, reduce investment barriers and accelerate settlement.

The PVARA chairman also stressed the growing role of AI in financial supervision, compliance and risk management, saying regulators themselves must become technology-enabled.

He urged Pakistan's young population to become builders of AI and blockchain businesses. PVARA's regulatory sandbox, he said, would allow entrepreneurs to test innovative products under supervision.

He said Pakistan's goal was to create the regulatory clarity, digital infrastructure and institutional capacity needed to compete in the future financial economy.

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PM Forms High-Level Committee to Resolve Pak-Iran Gas Pipeline Impasse



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has constituted a high-level committee to explore a mutually acceptable solution to the stalled Pak-Iran Gas Pipeline project and address the dispute currently under arbitration.

Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik informed the Senate that the committee is examining the project's legal, financial and energy dimensions, with the objective of protecting Pakistan's national interests while balancing potential financial liabilities with the country's future energy requirements.

Responding to a Calling Atten-

tion Notice raised by Senator Talha Mahmood, the minister said Pakistan and Iran remained engaged in efforts to reach an amicable settlement. He described Iran as a brotherly country and stressed the importance of resolving the matter through negotiations.

Regarding gas-related concerns in Balochistan, Malik said the prime minister had directed him to consult provincial stakeholders. A separate high-level committee, headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, is examining Balochistan's gas issues, including technical and payment-related matters.

NA Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Launches Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign at Parliament House



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq inaugurated the Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign by planting an olive sapling at the lawn of Parliament House today.

Members of Parliament, senior officers of the National Assembly Secretariat and representatives of the media participated in the plantation ceremony in large numbers. A special prayer was also offered for the progress, prosperity and security of the country.

Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that tree

plantation was essential for environmental protection and a secure future for coming generations. He stressed that tree plantation must be promoted to make Pakistan green and prosperous. He noted that trees play a vital role in mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change.

The Speaker urged Members of Parliament and the public to actively participate in tree plantation campaigns. He said that olive oil was one of the best edible oils and that Pakistan's climate was highly suitable for olive cultivation. By promoting olive cultivation, he said, Pakistan could move towards self-sufficiency in the edible oil sector.

Aleem Khan Greet Nation on Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party and Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan has extended greetings to the nation and Muslim Ummah on the blessed occasion of Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ.

He said 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal reminds Muslims of the noble life and teachings of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa ﷺ, whose Seerah provides an eternal message of peace, love, brotherhood, justice, equality and tolerance.

Abdul Aleem Khan urged people to follow the Prophet's ﷺ exemplary principles in their individual and collective lives, saying they could help promote unity, harmony, tolerance and mutual respect and lay the foundation for a peaceful and welfare-oriented society.

He reaffirmed the commitment



to building Pakistan as a peaceful and prosperous country based on equality and welfare-state principles. He also paid tribute to the sacrifices of the nation's martyrs, saying their contributions had strengthened the country's peace and stability.

The federal minister urged the nation to offer special prayers for Pakistan's peace, security, progress, prosperity, unity and stability.

He prayed for protection from challenges and for unity, brotherhood and mutual love among the Muslim Ummah.