



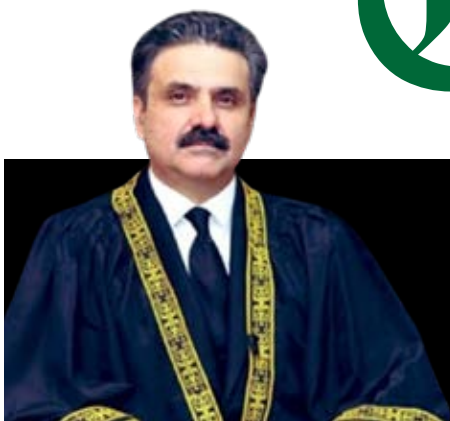
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A Leading National Daily



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(صحیح بخاری: حدیث نمبر 6499)

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CJP Yahya Afridi inaugurates new facilitation centre at Balochistan High Court

Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi on Monday inaugurated a newly established facilitation centre at the Balochistan High Court, describing improved public access to judicial services as an important step towards faster and more effective delivery of justice.



Nawaz Sharif departs for Singapore

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Monday left Lahore for Singapore on a four-day private foreign visit. According to details, Nawaz Sharif left on a special aircraft. He was accompanied by his sons Hassan Nawaz, Hussain Nawaz, and his personal physician Dr Adnan. The former prime minister will proceed to China after completing his Singapore visit.

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Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets the President of Iran H.E. Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian in Bishkek, on the sidelines of the 26th SCO Council of Heads of State Conference, on Monday.



Photo: PID

Shehbaz, Pezeshkian Discuss Regional Peace, Bilateral Ties

Spokesman Report

BISHKEK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian discussed bilateral relations, regional developments and efforts to promote peace and stability during a meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Bishkek.

The two leaders reaffirmed the close and longstanding ties between Pakistan and Iran and agreed to expand cooperation in various sectors, building on understandings reached during President Pezeshkian's visit to Pakistan in June. They also emphasized regional connectivity and stronger people-to-people contacts.

Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated Pakistan's commit-

ment to diplomatic efforts for regional peace, highlighting Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's recent visit to Tehran as a positive development. He stressed restraint and continued dialogue, urging implementation of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as a pathway to sustainable peace.

President Pezeshkian appreciated Pakistan's diplomatic efforts and expressed Iran's desire to deepen bilateral cooperation. He highlighted shared history, culture and faith between the two countries and stressed Muslim unity.

Shehbaz invited Pezeshkian to Pakistan, while the Iranian president invited him to the ECO Summit in Tehran in December 2026.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari clarifies reports about engagement, marriage



Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has denied reports that his engagement has been finalised, saying no engagement has taken place.

In a statement, Bilawal said he wanted to clarify that "neither has the matter been finalised nor has the engagement taken place".

He said social media had already portrayed him as engaged and married, despite there being no such development.

"I do not know any Princess Gloria," he added.

Bilawal described the reports as a "social media spectacle" aimed at diverting public attention from real issues.

Earlier, sources had claimed that President Asif Ali Zardari was in Austria to discuss Bilawal's engagement and marriage. Bilawal was also reportedly accompanying his father, according to the sources.

The sources claimed that at least three meetings had been held with an Austrian family regarding Bilawal's possible engagement and marriage.

They also said the prospective bride was from a prominent European family.

The sources had further claimed that Bilawal's wedding could take place in Vienna later this year.

Bilawal's statement, however, directly rejects reports that his engagement has been finalised or that the ceremony has taken place.

Makkah Defence Alliance's first secretary general to be from Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISTANBUL: Türkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said on Monday that the joint defence pact between Islamabad, Riyadh and Ankara has been named the "Makkah Defence Alliance," with Pakistan set to provide its first secretary-general.

Fidan made the announcement at a press conference in Istanbul, following the first meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee, established under the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement.

The meeting brought together



the foreign ministers, defence ministers and military chiefs of all three member states.

Fidan said regional countries needed to take urgent, collective steps toward security, stability,

prosperity and lasting peace, describing the Makkah Defence Alliance as the start of an effort to establish a new structure for regional security and cooperation.

He said the alliance would help bring stability to the region and reduce uncertainty.

The Turkish foreign minister said the alliance's secretariat has been established in the Saudi capital, Riyadh.

The Istanbul meeting took place as attacks between the United States and Iran resumed after a one-month lull. The war, which erupted after US and Israeli strikes on Iran on February

28, has now continued for more than six months.

Fidan said the Makkah Defence Alliance had been established with the goal of expanding further, and that it was founded on international principles including the sovereignty of states, territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs.

He said Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye were currently working to complete the alliance's early but difficult phase, and that countries joining in future would become part of an already integrated and functioning system.

Ishaq Dar concludes Istanbul visit, heads to Bishkek for SCO summit

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has concluded a one-day visit to Istanbul after attending the inaugural meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee established under the Mecca Joint Defence Treaty, the Foreign Office said.

Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir also attended the committee meeting.

During his stay in Istanbul, Dar held a bilateral meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan.

The deputy prime minister is now trav-



elling from Istanbul to Bishkek along with Fidan and Turkish National Defence Minister Yaşar Güler.

In Bishkek, Dar will join Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Pakistani delegation for the Shanghai Cooperation Organ-

ization Council of Heads of State meeting and the SCO Plus Summit.

He will also accompany the prime minister during a series of engagements in the Kyrgyz capital.

These include bilateral talks between Prime Minister Shehbaz and Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov on September 2, during which the two sides are expected to discuss ways to strengthen Pakistan-Kyrgyzstan relations and expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Prime Minister Shehbaz's official visit to the Kyrgyz Republic runs from August 31 to September 2. During the visit, Pakistan will assume the chairmanship of the SCO Council of Heads of State for 2026-27.

Salman Akram Raja Rejects Govt Report on PTI Founder's Jail Meetings

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja has rejected the Ministry of Information's report on meetings with the PTI founder in jail, calling it inaccurate.

Addressing a press conference with Latif Khosa and other PTI leaders, Raja said the Islamabad High Court's March 2025 order allowing the PTI founder to meet family and lawyers has not been implemented even once. He noted jail rules permit two meetings per week.

Raja alleged the government only allowed meetings with lawyers of its own choosing, and that the PTI founder was denied separate meetings with his legal team despite facing over 300 cases.

He said meetings with the founder's sisters were stopped in October 2025. After a meeting with Dr. Uzma in November 2025, the next meeting only occurred on August 18, 2026. He claimed the founder remained in solitary confinement from October 2025 to August 18, 2026, rejecting the report's claim that he was kept in a 7-cell compound.

IHC Questions PIMS Inquiry, Seeks Detailed Reports on Infant Deaths

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday questioned the process of investigating the deaths of 14

infants at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and sought detailed reports on the action taken by the govern-

ment.

Chief Justice Sarfraz Dogar made

Continued on Page 7

AJK PM pays tribute to Syed Ali Geelani on death anniversary

 **Spokesman Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Iftikhar Gilani has paid rich tribute to prominent Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Geelani on his death anniversary, describing him as a principled and steadfast figure who courageously resisted oppression.

In his message, the AJK premier said Geelani consistently raised his voice against alleged excesses and repression by Indian forces and remained committed to the Kashmir cause throughout his life. He said Geelani's slogan, "We are Pakistanis,



Pakistan belongs to us," continued to

resonate among the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Prime Minister Gilani described Geelani as a symbol of resistance, determination and ideological commitment who inspired generations of Kashmiris.

Despite spending much of his life in detention and imprisonment, he said, Geelani never compromised on his principles or abandoned his political position.

The prime minister said the central focus of Geelani's struggle was advocating the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination, which he said was recognized in relevant United Nations resolutions.

He observed that Geelani's life demonstrated the importance of courage, patience and perseverance in remaining committed to principles. His legacy, he added, would continue to be remembered in Kashmir's political history.

Prime Minister Gilani urged the United Nations, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, international human rights organizations and other relevant bodies to take notice of the human rights situation in IIOJK and play their role in enabling the Kashmiri people to exercise their right to self-determination.

Called on

ISLAMABAD: The Member of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Sardar Amair Naeem called on AJK Acting President Ch. Tariq Farooq at Kashmir House Islamabad and exchanged their views.



JKDFP Pays Tribute to Syed Ali Shah Geelani on His Death Anniversary

 **Abdul Majeed Tahir.**

SIRINAGER: The spokesperson of the Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (JKDFP), Advocate Arshad Iqbal, has paid glowing tribute to the

veteran Kashmiri leader, pro-freedom leader, and great son of the Jammu Kashmir freedom movement, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, on his death anniversary.

In his statement, the spokesperson

said that Syed Ali Geelani was a great ideological and principled leader who devoted his entire life to the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination and freedom. He demonstrated unparalleled perseverance, courage, and steadfastness in his principled struggle against Indian occupation and, despite severe state repression, imprisonment, and continuous restrictions, never abandoned his position.

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Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Inaugurated Dialysis Centre at THQ Hospital Hassan Abdal

 **Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has inaugurated the Dr. Sikandar Hayat Dialysis Centre at Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Hassan Abdal, describing it as a significant healthcare initiative for residents of the area.

He said the facility would enable kidney patients to receive dialysis locally, saving them the expense, time and difficulty of travelling to Islamabad or Rawalpindi.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, the governor said providing quality basic healthcare facilities at people's doorstep was among his priorities.

He noted that dialysis centres were already functioning in Pindi Gheb and Fateh Jang, while a similar facility would soon be established in Jand. A Thalassemia Centre and Blood Bank are also operational in Fateh Jang.

Sardar Saleem announced that

a passport office would be established in Hassan Abdal on the pattern of Hazro, while dispensaries in Ratwal and Dhurnal, established with Chinese assistance, would provide basic healthcare services.

He highlighted various welfare and development initiatives, including mass weddings for 125



deserving girls, free treatment for needy patients, eye surgeries, distribution of sewing machines to women and more than 1,000 laptops to students.

The governor also said school laboratories and other facilities would be inaugurated in Hassan Abdal on September 2. With OGDC cooperation, around 70 kilometres of roads had also been repaired or constructed in Jand.

Acting President AĴK Pays Tribute to Syed Ali Geelani on Death Anniversary

 **Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: Acting President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Tariq Farooq has paid tribute to prominent Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Geelani on his death anniversary, recalling his lifelong struggle for the freedom and right to self-determination of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).



In his message, the Acting President said Geelani devoted his entire life to the Kashmir cause and endured prolonged imprisonment, hardships and restrictions. He described him as a steadfast voice for the Kashmiri people whose commitment remained firm despite years of detention and serious illness.

Chaudhry Tariq Farooq said Geelani spent the final 12 years of his life under restrictions imposed by Indian authorities and was kept under house arrest even when he required medical treatment. He said such measures could not weaken Geelani's ideological convictions or determination.

The Acting President described Geelani as a symbol of resilience and steadfastness, saying he remained committed to the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination until his death.

He reaffirmed that the people and leadership of AJK would continue Geelani's mission through political, diplomatic and peaceful efforts, seeking a resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the aspirations and right to self-determination of the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Anti-Corruption Open Court in Attock Flooded with Complaints Against Land Record Centre and Patwaris

 **Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: On the directives of the Punjab Chief Minister and DG ACE Punjab Sohail Zafar Chattha, Deputy Director ACE Rawalpindi Region Sheikh Nasir Mahmood held an open court at the Anti-Corruption office in Attock. Citizens filed numerous complaints against the Attock Land Record Centre and patwaris. Complainants alleged that legitimate work could not be completed without paying bribes, and those who refused were given excuses and made to visit repeatedly to compel them to pay. They further claimed the official fee for obtaining a Fard is about Rs. 800, but citizens were allegedly charged nearly four times that amount. When questioned, staff reportedly said "we have to pay money up the line." Taking immediate notice, Sheikh Nasir Mahmood directed officials to rectify their conduct, resolve property matters efficiently, and ensure citizens receive complete justice. He warned that any Revenue Department official who creates hurdles or fails to cooperate will face strict legal action, adding that negligence, delays and corruption will not be tolerated.

Dr. Aslam Azad Hailed as 'Crusader of Hope' on 61st Birth Anniversary

 **Kamran Khamiso Khowaja**

THATTA: Speakers paid rich tribute to social activist, doctor, journalist and former student leader Dr. Aslam Azad at a ceremony marking his 61st birth anniversary, organized by Sindhi Adabi Sangat and the National Press Club Thatta.

Addressing the gathering at National Press Club Hall, Makli, former PPP senator Sassui Palijo described Dr. Azad as an inspiration for young people facing uncertainty and difficult circumstances. Historian Dr. Muhammad Ali Manji praised his extraordinary courage, saying he had transformed adversity into hope.

Dr. Azad was left completely paralyzed following a road accident in December 1991 and has remained bedridden for more than three decades. Despite his physical limitations, speakers said he continued to remain socially and intellectually active. Veteran politician Dada Abdul Qadir Ranto termed him a "crusader of hope and dignity" amid growing frustration in society. Artist Hameed Maharanvi and journalists Ramzan Memon and Mehboob Brohi highlighted his continued interest in history, culture and politics and concern for Sindh's future.

Expressing gratitude for the tribute, Dr. Azad urged Sindh's youth not to lose hope and to continue working hard despite challenges. He also served with several newspapers and led the Awami Tehreek student wing at LUMHS Jamshoro.

DC Toba Tek Singh Reviews Installation of Fire Hydrants Under 'Safe Punjab' Vision

 **Zafar Chishti**

TOBA TEK SINGH: Deputy Commissioner Maham Asif Malik chaired a meeting to review fire hydrant installations and fire safety arrangements in the district, in line with Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's "Safe Punjab" vision. Officials including CEO Health Dr. Kashif Nadeem, MD WASA Chaudhary Kamran Kahlon, DEO Rescue 1122 Engineer Farhan Mirza, and Civil Defence Officer Mahmood Gill attended. Briefing the meeting, MD WASA said fire hydrants are being installed at 15 key locations in Toba Tek Singh city, with work completed at 10 sites including General Bus Stand, Madina Market, Rail Bazaar, Lala Chowk, and Churi Bazaar. Other sites include Bank Bazaar, Grain Market, and Main Sadar Bazaar Jhang Road. Five more hydrants are being installed at DHQ Hospital for emergency response. The DC directed officers to complete hydrant installation in all tehsils within the timeline and ensure their functionality and easy access.

Sardar Attique Pays Tribute to Syed Ali Geelani on Death Anniversary

 **Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: Former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan paid rich tribute to veteran Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani on his death anniversary, calling him a towering figure of the Kashmir freedom movement whose struggle, steadfastness and sacrifices remain unparalleled. In his message, Sardar Attique said Geelani devoted his entire life to the Kashmir cause and rendered invaluable services to the Kashmiri people while remaining unwavering in his commitment to their right to self-determination. He noted that despite prolonged imprisonment, hardships and persecution, Geelani never compromised on his principles. His life was a testament to courage, resilience and sacrifice, and his struggle for the liberation of the entire state with accession to Pakistan earned him an enduring place in Kashmir's history. The former PM prayed for Geelani's highest ranks in Jannah and for strength to his family and the people of Kashmir, reaffirming that his legacy will continue to guide the peaceful struggle for the internationally recognized right to self-determination.





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Punjab Development Projects Praised, Mega Schemes Bringing Relief to Rawalpindi: Sain Ijaz Malik

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: President of the All Rawalpindi Restaurants Association and member of the District Peace Committee, Sain Muhammad Ijaz Malik, praised the development projects being carried out under Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, saying they are improving public facilities and providing relief to citizens.

He highlighted major projects including Metro stations, Raja Bazaar, Commercial Market, Kacheri Chowk, the Kidney Transplant Centre and Cardiology Hospital. He also praised the Nawaz Sharif Flyover, TM Chowk and GPO Chowk underpasses, Rawalpindi Ring Road, Kacheri Chowk project and the dedicated bike lane on Old Airport Road for improving traffic flow and road safety. He said progress on water supply projects from Rawal, Khanpur and Chahan dams, along with the Dadocha Dam project nearing completion, would further improve facilities in Rawalpindi and Cantonment. Malik said the government's public welfare initiatives were commendable and would contribute to the country's continued development.

CM Maryam Orders Dedicated Bike Lanes on Major Lahore Roads

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has ordered the designation of dedicated bike lanes on major roads in Lahore and directed strict enforcement of traffic laws, particularly for vehicles operating under the Suthra Punjab

programme.

Presiding over a meeting on traffic management, the chief minister expressed concern over traffic violations by Suthra Punjab vehicles and conveyed grief over the death of a minor girl in an accident involving one such vehicle. She directed authorities to ensure all programme vehi-



cles strictly follow traffic regulations.

The meeting reviewed measures for improving traffic flow and pedestrian safety. Maryam Nawaz ordered strict enforcement of zebra crossings and approved camera-based digital monitoring. A pilot project will be launched on The Mall, while Ferozepur Road will be developed as a model road.

She also ordered proper covering of cargo tractor-trolleys and action against overloaded vehicles ahead of the sugarcane season. Measures were directed to ease congestion at Shahdara and Thokar Niaz Baig, while traffic signals will be installed at Pine Avenue and Jati Umra Chowk.

Chief Traffic Officer Syed Abdul

Rahim Shirazi said Lahore's position had improved in the Numbeo Global Traffic Ranking, with congestion reduced by up to 70 per cent at several locations. The meeting was also informed that 4,096 licences had been issued to 16-18-year-olds and 65,000 panic buttons installed for women.

Spillways opened

ISLAMABAD: Rawal Dam spillways reopened as the dam's water level has reached 1,751.40 feet, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

HEAL Pakistan holds Twin Cities' largest cleanup drive at Rawal Lake

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: HEAL Pakistan Organization, in collaboration with the Capital Development Authority (CDA), held the Twin Cities' Largest Cleanup Drive at Rawal Lake from 3pm to 6pm on Friday.

Over 500 volunteers, mostly Gen Z and youth from universities across Islamabad and Rawalpindi, participated. For three hours they cleaned the shoreline and surrounding areas, collecting plastic bottles, juice pouches, wrappers, plastic bags, discarded fishing line and dead fish.

The drive was led by HEAL Pakistan founder Habib-ur-Rehman. At the closing ceremony, certificates were distributed to volunteers. Chief guests including ADRC Chairman Advocate Tayyab Nawaz Malik,



Vice Chairman Advocate Malik Asif Khan Awan, Malik Allah Nawaz, and Coordinator to the Governor Punjab Mudassir Nawaz Malik praised the effort and urged continued work for a cleaner environment. Volunteers were later served lunch

followed by a jamming session. Speaking at the event, Habib-ur-Rehman said: "Instead of criticizing our institutions, we as youth need to work with them and support them. Change begins with ourselves."

HEAL Pakistan said the

drive also aimed to raise climate change awareness. Volunteers from KIIR, Progressive Climate Foundation, Roshni Foundation and other societies joined, with CDA staff guiding and helping dispose of the collected waste.

NA Committee Reviews Digitalisation, New Approaches to Poverty Alleviation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety reviewed measures to strengthen social protection through digitalisation, broader beneficiary inclusion and sustainable economic empowerment.

At its 18th meeting, chaired by Mir Ghulam Ali Talpur at the Trust for Voluntary Organization (TVO) office, the committee discussed ongoing digitalisation of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). Officials highlighted efforts to bring beneficiaries into the digital system, improve access and address connectivity challenges in remote areas. Digital tools are expected to enhance transparency, prevent fraud and improve the efficiency of social protection services.

TVO briefed the committee on its community-led development model. CEO Sahebzada Ghulam Mohyudin



said the organisation had disbursed over Rs1.3 billion through more than 1,440 projects, benefiting over 10 million people across more than

100 districts through 1,200 partners. The committee appreciated TVO's sustainable institutional approach. Chairman Talpur and Minister Syed

Imran Ahmed Shah emphasized technology, skills and economic opportunities as essential for effective and sustainable poverty reduction.

Religious Leaders in Multan Demand Legal Action Over Controversial Islamabad Press Conference



Dr. Rashid Hussaini

MULTAN: Leaders of Tehreek Tahaffuz-e-Namooos-e-Risalat held a press conference at the Multan Press Club on Sunday, demanding immediate legal action against participants of an August 22 press conference held at the National Press Club Islamabad.

Speakers including President Mian Asif Mahmood Akhwani, Secretary General Muhammad Ayub Mughal, former Multan High Court Bar Association President Syed Athar Hassan Shah Bukhari, and other scholars alleged the Islamabad press conference involved attempts at contempt of court and to undermine laws relating to the sanctity of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). They called for the arrest and legal proceedings against Dr. Farzana Bari, Usman Waraich, Farhatullah Babar, Roshan Dia Mir, Bashir Shah, Younis Alam, Tahira Abdullah and Atiya Shaheen, alleging their statements amounted to a deliberate conspiracy to disturb peace and harmony.

NCSW Demands Swift Police Action as Violence Against Women, Girls Surges

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), chaired by Noreen Bano Lehri, held a high-level meeting with senior police officials nationwide to address the rising surge in violence, rape, murder and harassment against women and girls. The Commission cited specific cases including Hina Javed, Ayat Noor, Asma Jattak, and the deaths of toddlers Kulsoom Mohammed Qasim and Aizal in Karachi, alongside a Shikarpur child assault case.

Lehri directed police to ensure swift, transparent investigations and called for dedicated courts for gender-based violence (GBV) cases. The Commission demanded enhanced patrolling, public awareness of complaint mechanisms, monitoring of educational institutions, and specialized training for police, doctors, prosecutors and judicial staff. It also called for action against illegal jirgas, monthly data reviews from all IGPs, and better integration of NCSW's complaint system with police leadership.

On women prisoners, the Commission demanded fair wage parity with male inmates and access to education and rehabilitation support.

Lehri stressed that these cases must drive institutional reform, declaring: "There can be no compromise on the safety, dignity and fundamental rights of women and girls."

PIMS Tragedy: Those Responsible for Negligence Must Be Held Accountable, Sheikh Abdul Waheed

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: President of Anjuman-e-Tajran Liaquat Road Rawalpindi, Sheikh Abdul Waheed, expressed deep sorrow over the deaths of 14 newborns in the PIMS Islamabad fire, calling it a grave national tragedy that raises serious questions about hospital safety and administrative negligence.

He welcomed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's decision, in light of the inquiry report, to suspend eight officials, including the Executive Director, and order criminal proceedings against those found responsible. Sheikh Abdul Waheed called for immediate improvements in fire safety systems, emergency exits, alarms, staff training and emergency response mechanisms at public hospitals to prevent such tragedies in the future. He extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for patience for the parents and mercy for the departed infants.



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Editorial: Remembering a Life Devoted to a Cause

Five years after his passing, Syed Ali Shah Gillani remains one of the most consequential figures in the modern history of the Kashmir dispute. His death anniversary is not merely an occasion for remembrance but a moment to reflect on what sustained resistance, under some of the harshest conditions imaginable, can mean for a people denied their basic rights.

Gillani’s life was defined by an unwavering constancy that few political figures anywhere in the world have matched. Across decades marked by imprisonment, surveillance, house arrest and relentless state pressure, he never wavered from his central conviction: that the people of Jammu and Kashmir deserved the right to determine their own political future. That he pursued this conviction not through violence but through decades of political articulation, organisation and moral witness is itself a testament to the seriousness with which he approached the cause.

His now-famous words — “We are Pakistanis; Pakistan belongs to us” — continue to resonate not simply as a political slogan but as an expression of an emotional and historical bond that predates the modern boundaries drawn across South Asia. For many Kashmiris, Gillani’s steadfastness became a form of moral anchoring in a struggle that has too often been reduced, in international discourse, to a bilateral territorial dispute rather than a matter of fundamental human rights.

It would be a disservice to Gillani’s legacy, however, to mark this anniversary only with words of tribute. The circumstances that shaped his life’s work — occupation, repression, and the suppression of political expression in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir — remain, by most independent accounts, largely unchanged. Human rights organisations continue to document restrictions on political activity, communication and assembly in the region. Any honest commemoration of Gillani’s legacy must reckon with this continuity, not merely celebrate the man.

Pakistan’s reaffirmation of diplomatic and moral support for the Kashmiri cause is consistent with its longstanding position, rooted in relevant UN Security Council resolutions calling for the right of self-determination. Whatever one’s view of the broader geopolitics at play, the underlying principle — that a resolution to the Kashmir dispute must reflect the will of the Kashmiri people themselves — remains difficult to argue against on its own terms.

Gillani did not live to see a resolution to the cause he devoted his life to. His legacy now rests with those who continue to invoke his name, and with whether the international community can move the dispute beyond commemoration and toward the kind of just, negotiated settlement he spent a lifetime demanding.

Reversing Age: Humanity’s Oldest Dream Nears Reality

Human beings have always resisted the idea that aging and death are unavoidable. Civilizations created stories about fountains of youth, elixirs of life, resurrection and immortality. Egyptian pharaohs were mummified and buried with possessions needed for the afterlife, although this reflected religious beliefs about spiritual continuity rather than a scientific plan to regenerate their bodies. Modern science fiction transformed the same ancient longing into suspended animation, imagining astronauts sleeping for centuries before awakening unchanged at distant destinations.

Until recently, however, restoring youth to an old body belonged almost entirely to mythology. Medicine could treat individual diseases, exercise could preserve strength and nutrition could reduce health risks, but nothing could instruct an aged cell to become biologically younger. Research into cellular reprogramming has made that possibility scientifically conceivable—although it remains far from proven in human beings.

The sequencing of the human genome and advances in molecular biology allowed scientists to study how genes behave as organisms grow older. Contrary to some popular explanations, aging is not controlled by one gene containing a predetermined expiration date. DNA itself can accumulate muta-

tions and other damage, while mitochondria malfunction, proteins lose their proper form, stem cells become exhausted and senescent cells accumulate.

Another important process is epigenetic change. Epigenetic markers act like instructions telling cells which genes to activate or silence. The underlying DNA sequence may remain substantially the same, but cells can become less effective at reading and executing their instructions. Patterns of DNA methylation change predictably enough with age that researchers use them to construct “epigenetic clocks.”

Scientists have also observed a remarkable rejuvenation process during reproduction. Although an egg and sperm come from adults, a resulting embryo does not begin life at the biological age of its parents. During early development, many age-associated epigenetic markers are reset. The crucial question is whether part of that resetting process can be activated later in life without erasing a cell’s identity or causing cancer.

In 2006, Shinya Yamanaka discovered that four genes—Oct4, Sox2, Klf4 and c-Myc—could return mature cells to a state resembling embryonic stem cells. These became known as the Yamanaka factors. The discovery earned him the

2012 Nobel Prize, but applying all four factors inside a living organism can be dangerous. Excessive reprogramming may cause cells to lose their identities or form tumors.

Researchers subsequently explored “partial reprogramming”: turning back some biological markers of age while allowing cells to remain, for example, functioning skin, muscle or nerve cells.

In a landmark 2020 Nature study, researchers associated with David Sinclair’s Harvard laboratory used three factors—Oct4, Sox2 and Klf4, collectively called OSK—on retinal ganglion cells in mice. The treatment restored more youthful patterns of gene expression, promoted nerve regeneration and improved vision in aged mice and mouse models of glaucoma. The experiment supported the extraordinary possibility that old mammalian cells retain recoverable information about their younger state.

This should be described precisely. It is not yet a trial proving that human aging can be reversed, nor is it intended to make participants generally younger. It is an early trial designed primarily to evaluate safety and tolerability in a small number of patients, while also observing whether visual function improves.

The eye is a logical starting point

because treatment can be delivered locally and monitored closely. A harmful reaction may be easier to contain than it would be after attempting to reprogram the liver, brain or entire body. Even if the therapy restores some vision, years of larger trials would be needed before scientists could establish its effectiveness and understand its long-term cancer risk.

Still, successful rejuvenation of a human tissue would represent a historic medical advance. It could open a route toward treating diseases once considered irreversible rather than immediately producing ageless human beings.

The economic implications could be immense because aging contributes simultaneously to cancer, cardiovascular disease, dementia, diabetes, frailty and many other conditions. A therapy that delayed several diseases together could generate more value than treating each one separately after it appeared.

A 2021 study co-written by economists Andrew Scott and Martin Ellison and geneticist David Sinclair estimated that slowing aging sufficiently to add one year to American life expectancy would be worth approximately \$38 trillion; a 10-year gain was valued at \$367 trillion. These figures represent an estimated aggregate social willingness to pay—including the value assigned to healthier and longer lives.

A later international study estimated that a one-year improvement in healthy

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

The Story Isn’t Over

Life is not measured by how young we remain, but by how meaningfully we continue to live. Many people gradually begin to believe that aging has made them helpless weak tired and dependent on others. They start thinking that their memory is failing their body is no longer strong and they cannot do the things they once did. While illness is certainly real and conditions such as diabetes high blood pressure heart problems joint problems or breathing difficulties require proper treatment medication and medical advice illness itself should not become the entire definition of a persons life.

Sometimes the greatest limitation is not the body but the mind. A person may stay at home saying that they are too tired or unable to walk yet attend a wedding or family gathering and spend hours talking laughing walking around and enjoying time with others. Once they return home they may suddenly feel exhausted again. This shows how strongly our thoughts can influence our behavior. When we repeatedly tell ourselves that we cannot do something that we are too old or that we will become tired these thoughts gradually become habits. Eventually we begin living according to those beliefs.

When people stop using their bodies they can actually become weaker. They avoid stairs even when they are capable of climbing them. They give simple household tasks to their children or spouse. They refuse to carry light objects or walk to nearby places. They spend more time sitting or lying down and gradually become afraid of movement. Then the things they avoided really do become difficult. Their muscles become

stiff their breathing becomes harder their balance may decline and ordinary activities require more effort. They may then blame everything on old age without realizing that inactivity itself can contribute to physical decline. This creates a cycle in which less movement causes weakness and weakness causes even less movement.

Growing older does not mean that life has lost its value. A persons worth is not determined by their job income wealth house or past achievements. Age may reduce physical speed but it can increase wisdom experience patience understanding and the ability to guide others. An older person may no longer be able to work all day but may have decades of experience that can help a younger person. Someone can teach a child read a book guide a young person teach a useful skill listen to someone who is lonely or offer valuable advice during a difficult time. These contributions are meaningful and society needs them.

Helping others is not limited to giving money. Teaching a child something useful guiding someone toward the right path visiting a sick person checking on someone who is alone encouraging a person who has lost hope or sharing valuable knowledge can all make a lasting difference. A simple piece of advice may change someones future. A skill taught to a young person may help provide food for an entire family. A kind word may give hope to someone who feels hopeless. Knowledge and good deeds can continue benefiting others long after the person who shared them is gone.

Therefore people should stop calling themselves useless burdens or unnecessary. If a doctor has not advised against physical activity a person should try to remain active

according to their ability. A short daily walk can be valuable. Small household tasks can be done independently. Stairs can be climbed slowly when appropriate. The mind should also remain active. Reading learning something new reciting the Quran spending time with grandchildren meeting friends telling stories and maintaining social connections can all give life purpose and freshness.

At the same time genuine illness must never be ignored. People should seek proper treatment take prescribed medicines on time follow medical precautions and listen to their doctors. The goal is not to reject medicine or pretend that illness does not exist. The goal is to prevent unnecessary fear laziness hopelessness and negative thinking from controlling every part of life. Instead of constantly saying I cannot do it a person can say I will try according to my ability. Perhaps they cannot run as fast as before but they can still walk. Perhaps they cannot lift heavy objects but they can carry something light. Perhaps they cannot work for an entire day but they can spend a few hours doing something useful.

Dear readers! In the end I will say that the value of a persons life is not measured only by how many years they lived. It is also measured by how many people benefited from their presence how many people received hope because of them and how many lives became a little easier because they were there. Perhaps the most peaceful meaningful and blessed stage of life begins when a person stops living only for themselves and starts using their remaining time experience and abilities for the benefit of others.

The story is not over. There is still knowledge to share people to help lessons to teach prayers to offer and lives to touch. Growing older does not mean that your purpose has ended. It may simply mean that your purpose has changed and that the most meaningful chapter is still waiting to be written.

The PIMS Tragedy: A Trial of the State’s Moral Obligation Within the House of Healing

There are calamities which refuse to remain mere calamities. They become, rather, revelatory moments in which the concealed anatomy of an entire system is suddenly exposed, as though an unseen hand had torn away the veil from its countenance. The conflagration that erupted within the Mother and Child Health Block of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in Islamabad belongs unmistakably to this grievous category. The smoke that ascended from the nursery on the third floor did not merely suffocate a ward; it permeated the collective conscience with a far more disturbing question: Can institutions established for the preservation of human life themselves be permitted to remain unsafe for life?

The infants who perished had scarcely crossed the threshold of existence. Their fragile breaths were still inscribing the opening sentences of their earthly narrative when fire and poisonous smoke abruptly transformed the nursery into a theatre of helplessness. Only one infant could be rescued; approximately fourteen to fifteen newborn lives were extinguished. For those infants, death was not simply a medical occurrence; for their mothers, it was the instantaneous desolation of an entire universe of hope. The Qur’anic moral imagination accords human life an extraordinary sanctity, declaring that the unjust taking of one innocent life is as though humanity itself had been slain. The question, therefore, is not merely how these children died, but where the protection of such utterly defenceless lives stood within the hierarchy of our collective priorities.

Preliminary accounts suggest that the fire may have originated in an electrical short circuit or

malfunction of an air-conditioning compressor, while the presence of oxygen facilitated the rapid intensification of the flames. Yet this is precisely where superficial explanation must yield to deeper inquiry. The decisive question is not from where the spark emerged, but why that spark was permitted to become a catastrophe.

An electrical malfunction may constitute the immediate technical cause; it cannot, however, exhaust the moral and institutional causality of a disaster within a hospital. In any medical facility where oxygen is present, automatic fire-suppression mechanisms, instantaneous detection and warning systems, trained personnel, clearly designated emergency exits, evacuation protocols and regularly rehearsed contingency procedures are not ornamental luxuries. They are elementary requirements of institutional responsibility. Where such safeguards are absent, defective, neglected or merely ceremonial entries in administrative files, an ostensibly accidental occurrence begins to assume the character of preventable human negligence.

Here lies a fundamental philosophical distinction: matter possesses neither intention nor moral agency; responsibility belongs to the human will. Oxygen does not comprehend that it is accelerating combustion. An electrical wire has no consciousness of the life its failure may imperil. A machine possesses neither prudence nor remorse. Intention, foresight, precaution, supervision and institutional preparedness belong to human beings. Hence to reduce a catastrophe of this magnitude to the phrase “short circuit” is not to arrive at the final truth; it is merely to stand before the threshold of the question and decline to enter.

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President Zardari felicitates President of Kyrgyzstan on Independence Day

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has conveyed his warm felicitations to President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Zhaparov and the brotherly people of Kyrgyzstan on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Kyrgyz Republic.

In his letter, the President said that Pakistan highly values its close and

friendly relations with the Kyrgyz Republic, founded on shared history, cultural affinity, mutual trust and close cooperation.

Recalling his visit to Kyrgyzstan in July 2026, President Asif Ali Zardari said that the visit had revived cherished memories of his earlier visit to the country in 1995 and provided another valuable opportunity to further strengthen bilateral relations. He also



fondly recalled President Sadyr Zhaparov's visit to Pakistan in December 2025.

The President said that productive discussions during both occasions had reaffirmed the shared commitment of Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan to expanding cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

President Asif Ali Zardari expressed his desire to continue working closely

with President Sadyr Zhaparov to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries for their mutual benefit.

He also conveyed his best wishes for President Sadyr Zhaparov's good health and happiness and for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the brotherly people of the Kyrgyz Republic.

President Zardari felicitates Malaysia on Independence Day

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has conveyed his warm felicitations to the Government and people of Malaysia on the occasion of Merdeka Day, marking the country's 69th Independence Day.

In his letter to Sultan Ibrahim, the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia, the President said that Merdeka Day marks the historic occasion of Malaysia's independence and reflected the vision of its founding fathers, the leadership of the nation and the dedication of its people.

The President said that Pakistan



and Malaysia enjoy close and friendly

relations founded on shared values,

common faith, mutual trust and cooperation.

He noted that bilateral collaboration has continued to strengthen in areas including trade and investment, education, defence, culture and people-to-people exchanges.

President Asif Ali Zardari expressed confidence that cooperation between Pakistan and Malaysia would continue to deepen for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

He also conveyed his best wishes for the good health and happiness of the Malaysian leadership and for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the people of Malaysia.

PM, Uzbekistan President discuss ways to strengthen cooperation in industry, agriculture

Spokesman Report

BISHKEK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday met Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of State Meeting and discussed further strengthening cooperation in industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, textiles, mining, digital technologies, education, culture, defence and security.

Jam Kamal Khan, Minister for Commerce, Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister for Communications and Attaullah Tarar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting were also present.

The Prime Minister conveyed warm felicitations to President Mirziyoyev and the brotherly people of Uzbekistan on the 35th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence. Recalling President Mirziyoyev's State Visit to Pakistan in February 2026, the Prime Minister noted that the visit and the inaugural meeting of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council had imparted fresh momentum to the Pakistan-Uzbekistan Strategic Part-



nership.

The Prime Minister stressed the importance of timely implementation of decisions taken at the leadership level, particularly in trade, investment, connectivity and economic cooperation. He reiterated the shared objective of increasing bilateral trade to US\$2 billion by 2029 and called for effective implementation of the expanded

Preferential Trade Agreement, greater business-to-business engagement and promotion of mutually beneficial joint ventures.

Highlighting regional connectivity as a shared strategic priority, the Prime Minister underscored the transformative potential of the Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan Railway for linking Central and South Asia

and facilitating Uzbekistan's access to Pakistan's seaports. He emphasized early progress on the Joint Feasibility Study and greater utilization of existing multimodal transport corridors. The Prime Minister also reaffirmed Pakistan's readiness to facilitate Uzbek trade through its ports and transport infrastructure.

The Prime Minister also supported enhanced air connectivity, including progress towards direct Tashkent-Karachi flights.

The Prime Minister appreciated Uzbekistan's support for Pakistan's forthcoming Chairmanship of the SCO Council of Heads of State and expressed the desire to work closely with Uzbekistan on regional security, connectivity, trade and sustainable development. He also emphasized continued cooperation within ECO and other multilateral forums.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening its Strategic Partnership with Uzbekistan and translating the excellent political relationship into tangible economic benefits for the peoples of both countries.

President's representatives visit Nepal Embassy to convey solidarity over flood devastation



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: On the instructions of the President of Pakistan, former Chairman of the Senate Syed Nayyar Bokhari and President's Spokesperson Murtaza Solangi visited the Embassy of Nepal in Islamabad to convey the condolences of the President and the people of Pakistan over the loss and devastation caused by last week's massive flooding following landslides and the bursting of a glacier along the China-Nepal border.

Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan Rita Dhital received them and expressed her appreciation for the solidarity and support extended by the Government and people of Pakistan to Nepal during this difficult time.

Syed Nayyar Bokhari and Murtaza Solangi also recorded messages of condolence and solidarity in the Visitors' Book.

GHQ Hosts Turkish Victory Day, Honoring Centuries of Brotherhood



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A ceremony to commemorate 104th anniversary of Turkish Armed Forces Victory Day was held at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi. Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan İrfan Neziroğlu graced the occasion as Guest of Honour.

The ceremony highlighted the enduring bonds of brotherhood and close bilateral relations between Pakistan and Türkiye, rooted in shared values, mutual respect and a history of unwavering support for each other.

On the occasion, participants paid tribute to the valour and sacrifices of the Turkish Armed Forces and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the longstanding defence and strategic partnership between Pakistan and Türkiye.

The event was attended by military officers and officials of the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye and other distinguished guests.

The ceremony concluded with warm expressions of goodwill for the people and Armed Forces of the Republic of Türkiye.

Nepal flood tragedy highlights need for Pakistan to strengthen climate resilience: OICCI

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) has expressed solidarity with the people of Nepal following devastating flash floods, saying the tragedy should prompt Pakistan to accelerate efforts to strengthen climate resilience, disaster preparedness and early-warning systems.

OICCI noted that Pakistan, like Nepal, remains highly vulnerable to climate-related disasters, with communities repeatedly facing floods, displacement, infrastructure damage and livelihood losses. It stressed that Pakistan must prepare for disasters before they occur rather than relying solely on emergency response.

The Chamber highlighted Pakistan's growing climate risks, noting that 2025 was the country's second-warmest year in 65 years, following the warmest year recorded in 2024. Rising temperatures, glacial melting and changing rainfall patterns are increasing threats to communities, agriculture, infrastructure and the economy.

Malaysia celebrates 69th National Day with flag-hoisting ceremony at Karachi consulate

Maqssod Ali

KARACHI: The Consulate General of Malaysia in Karachi hosted a flag-raising ceremony to mark the 69th National Day of Malaysia, with the participation of Malaysian students, families, professionals, business community members, consulate officers and staff, as well as distinguished Pakistani guests.

In his remarks, the Consul General of Malaysia in Karachi, His Excellency Mr. Mohd Yunus Ibrahim, welcomed the Malaysian community and Pakistani friends, describing the occasion as especially meaningful as his first National Day programme with the Malaysian community in Karachi since assuming his post.

Addressing the gathering, the



Consul General highlighted the significance of having a "jiwa yang merdeka" — a free and independent spirit — emphasising that Malaysians living abroad represent their country through

their conduct, values and interactions with local communities.

He stressed that patriotism extends beyond National Day and is reflected in respecting local laws, helping others, building



friendships and upholding the good name of Malaysia.

He also encouraged Malaysian students, professionals and businesspeople in Pakistan to strengthen

connections and contribute to closer Malaysia-Pakistan relations through education, professional networks, cultural exchange and cooperation.

The Consul General further

underscored that independence is both a right and a responsibility, or "amanah," inherited from previous generations and entrusted to future generations.

Calling for unity under the

spirit of "Rapatkan saf, teguhkan muafakat, satukan tenaga dan ikhtiar," he urged Malaysians abroad to stand together, support one another and transform their diversity into strength.

 Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
176,975.67	177,696.50
Day's High	Day's Low
178,138.68	176,944.91
Index Value	Change
23,333,446,358	-720.83
Percentage	Time
-0.41%	31 Aug, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,824.26	+31.72
Percentage	Time
+0.29%	31 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT +1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
53,229.32	-330.67
Percentage	Time
-0.62%	31 Aug, 1:49 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
66,311.93	-93.63
Percentage	Time
-0.14%	31 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

FPCCI President
Urges Govt to
Rationalize Diesel
Prices to Boost Export
Competitiveness

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) President Atif Ikram Sheikh has urged the federal government to adopt a realistic approach to rationalize petroleum prices, especially high-speed diesel (HSD), to reduce the “exorbitant” cost of doing business in Pakistan. In a statement, Sheikh said current fuel pricing is inflating logistics, transportation and agricultural supply chain costs. He called diesel the “lifeblood” of transport, agriculture and manufacturing, adding that high diesel prices have a compounding inflationary effect. He emphasized that relying on fuel as a primary revenue tool through the Petroleum Development Levy (PDL) is hurting competitiveness.

\$3 Billion Saudi Agri-
Export Target Seen as
Opportunity for Pakistani
Farmers: Mian Zahid

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Business leader Mian Zahid Hussain has welcomed Pakistan and Saudi Arabia's plan to increase Pakistan's agricultural and food exports to the Kingdom to \$3 billion annually within two years, calling it a major opportunity for farmers and the national economy.

He said the recent Pakistan-Saudi-Türkiye

defence agreement had strengthened mutual trust and could pave the way for greater trade, investment and food-security cooperation. A high-level Saudi delegation's visit to Islamabad identified rice, halal meat, fruits, fruit concentrates, animal feed and water-efficient agricultural technologies as priority sectors.

Hussain noted that Pakistan exported about 169,000 tonnes of rice worth \$163 million and 30,000 tonnes of halal meat valued at \$167

million to Saudi Arabia in 2025. However, reaching the \$3 billion target would require Pakistan to expand its current export capacity more than fourfold, particularly as overall food exports declined during FY2025-26.

He stressed that Pakistan must compete through competitive prices, consistent quality, traceability, halal certification, improved packaging and compliance with Saudi food-safety standards. He proposed a joint Pakistan-Saudi



Agri-Food Export Task Force with product-specific targets and monthly progress reviews.

Hussain also urged investment in cold storage, refrigerated transport, packaging, maritime links and value-added food products. He said achieving the target could boost farmers' incomes, rural employment, food-processing industries, exports and foreign-exchange reserves, provided implementation remains effective and sustainable.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani in a meeting with the Ambassador of Italy Ugo Ciarlatani at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Monday.



Photo: PID

GTEC and
Portugal
Ambassador
Discuss
Boosting
Pakistan-
Portugal
Trade Ties

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairman & CEO of Global Trade & Expo Centre Pakistan (GTEC) Mazhar Hussain Thathal met with H. E. Paulo Domingues, Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan, at the Embassy of Portugal in Islamabad. Trade Counsellor Ms. Huria Sheikh, GTEC Director International Trade Liaqat Ali Thathal, and Ms.

Farzana Shaheen also attended.

Thathal highlighted GTEC's efforts to connect Pakistani exporters, SMEs, and entrepreneurs with European markets. He announced that GTEC will organize the 1st Pakistan Trade & Business Delegation to Portugal to promote Pakistani products, enable direct B2B engagement, and encourage Portuguese investment in Pakistan.



Ambassador Domingues welcomed GTEC's initiatives and expressed support for strengthening commercial and economic relations, as well as introducing Pakistani businesses to the Portuguese market.

Liaqat Ali Thathal briefed on potential cooperation sectors and stressed the need for structured B2B initiatives and exchange delegations for sustainable ties.

Friends Group Finalises
Associate Class
Candidates for Multan
Chamber Elections



Iram Asim

MULTAN: Renowned industrialist and Friends Group Chairman Chaudhry Zulfikar Ali Anjum has said that the group's candidates for the Associate Class in the Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) elections have been selected through consultation and with his support.

He said the group's candidates would raise the issues of traders and industrialists before the government and relevant institutions and work to make the Chamber a stronger platform for service, unity and welfare. He emphasised that small and medium-sized businesses would also receive special attention.

Anjum said the group believed in unity, consultation and practical efforts to resolve business problems, particularly amid challenging economic conditions. He appealed to voters to ensure the success of Friends Group candidates so the Chamber could become more active and effective.

The Associate Class candidates and a large number of business leaders and voters attended the event. Participants expressed confidence in the candidates and pledged their support for the elections. The ceremony concluded with prayers for the health and long life of veteran businessman Khawaja Muhammad Shafiq.

SECP Probe Leads to FIA
Case over Alleged Multi-
Billion-Rupee Irregularities
at Unity Foods

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has referred alleged multi-billion-rupee financial irregularities at listed company Unity Foods Limited to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), resulting in registration of a criminal case. The probe focuses on alleged misuse of shareholders' funds, falsification of accounts and other financial irregularities.

According to the SECP reference, Unity Foods raised Rs3.75 billion through a 2019 rights issue for expansion, including asset acquisition, refinery expansion and an oil terminal. The SECP found

that around Rs2.87 billion of the proceeds could not be accounted for as being used for the stated purposes.

The inquiry also identified alleged payments of Rs5.318 billion from company funds to the former CEO's mother and Rs2.6 billion advanced through a subsidiary to two undisclosed parties, along with other related-party transactions.

Serious discrepancies were also reported in financial records, including an alleged Rs44.7 billion difference between published accounts and internal SAP records, a Rs5.2 billion inventory discrepancy and around Rs5 billion in aged receivables lacking supporting delivery evidence.

PSW, TDAP Expand Khadijah Programme to Empower Women Entrepreneurs

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Single Window (PSW) and Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) have expanded the Khadijah Women Entrepreneurship Programme to Sialkot and Gujranwala to increase women's participation in international trade.

The two organisations jointly organised specialised sessions aimed at equipping women entrepreneurs with digital trade tools, export compliance knowledge and sustainable business practices to help them access global markets. The programme provides training, mentorship and market-linkage opportunities while helping women-led businesses understand trade regulations and use digital platforms.

In Sialkot, PSW and TDAP held a Focus Group Discussion under Phase 2 of the programme



in collaboration with the Sialkot Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The session gathered feedback from women exporters to improve digital trade

facilitation and address challenges in cross-border business.

In Gujranwala, a capacity-building workshop was organised with GIFT University and the Gujranwala Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Participants received practical guidance on customs procedures, e-commerce, digital marketing, financing and environmentally sustainable trade standards.

PSW CEO Syed Aftab Haider said expanding the programme to major industrial centres would make international trade more accessible to entrepreneurs across Pakistan. TDAP's Fouzia Perveen Chaudhry said the initiative would help women-led businesses compete globally.

The Khadijah Programme, recognised with the WTO Global Award for Gender Equality in Trade, promotes digitally enabled, sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

IS England Won the Three Test Matches Series 2.0

England Cricket Team Defeated Pakistan Cricket Team at Lord’s Cricket Ground After 16 Years

Asim Tanveer

LONDON: England cricket team defeated Pakistan cricket team at Lord’s Cricket Ground after 16 years and won the series 2.0

Saud Shakeel was on the verge of good fortune and bad fortune. But very disappointing news has come out for Pakistani fans from the holy ground of cricket, Lord’s, where Pakistan cricket team has lost a Test match after 16 years at the Home of Cricket, Lord’s.

England defeated Pakistan by 194 runs in this match and faced a tragic end. With this painful defeat, the national team has also lost the ongoing three-Test series and the host England has taken an unbeaten two-nil lead in the series, which has lowered the morale of the Green Caps. When the match began on the fourth day of the second cricket Test played at the historic Lord’s in London, a thrilling turn was seen in the game. The English team could not hold on for long in front of the Pakistani bowlers in its second innings and the entire team was dismissed for 208 runs. The highlight of England’s second innings was the brilliant and magical bowling of Pakistani pacer Mohammad Abbas, who left the English batsmen helpless with his swing. Mohammad Abbas performed well, taking 5 wickets in the second innings and for the first time in history, he managed to get his name written in golden letters on the



Lord’s owner’s board, which was the only big honor for Pakistan in this entire match. He showed his overall line and length in this match and proved his class by dismissing 9 players for just 130 runs.

The Pakistan cricket team, which had to chase a big target

of 389 runs to win the match, looked to be in serious trouble from the beginning. As usual, the team’s batting line proved to be a wall of sand and the first three wickets fell for a total score of just 14 runs. Among those dismissed was star batsman Babar Azam, who was widely

mocked on social media for the way he was dismissed by Jofra Archer. Cricket fans say that the world’s top batsman cannot lose his wicket like this while facing a great bowler in such a wrong way. Before them, opener Azan Ovais and Abdullah Shafiq had returned to the pavilion for 6



runs and 0 runs. When Babar Azam was dismissed for just 6 runs, Pakistan was in a serious crisis. At this critical juncture, Saud Shakeel joined Shan Masood at the crease and the two had a tough time together. Heavy rain also fell in the middle of the match, due to which the play had

to be stopped for some time, but when the play resumed after the rain, the innings seemed set. However, this partnership could not last long and Shan Masood was dismissed for a total score of 111 runs. He scored 26 runs while facing 72 balls. The two had a 97-run partnership for

the fourth wicket, which died here. The loss to Pakistan from the captain’s dismissal was that the newcomer Mohammad Rizwan could only add 4 runs to the team’s score and returned to the pavilion after scoring one run, which made Pakistan’s score 115 for five. After this, Ali Usman came to the crease, he supported Saud Shakeel and took the partnership forward, taking the team’s score to 146 runs. Ali Usman batted confidently but he too was dismissed for 16 runs in 44 balls. Pakistan’s next and biggest loss came at a score of 169 when Saud Shakeel was caught by Harry Brook off Josh Tong. Saud Shakeel was both lucky and unlucky in this match. He was lucky because he did not give up in the face of falling wickets and fought bravely for Pakistan’s innings alone, but unlucky that at the holy ground of cricket like Lord’s, he could not complete his magnificent century by just three runs and gave up on 97 runs. Pakistan’s last hope also died with the dismissal of Saud Shakeel. Imam-ul-Haq did not come to bat due to injury and he was not supposed to come, after which the entire Pakistan team was dismissed for 194 runs and England won this match by 194 runs and took an unbeaten two-nil lead in the three-match series. English bowler Ollie Robinson bowled devastatingly in this innings, taking four wickets for just 24 runs, while he had dismissed four players in the first innings as well.

Is Cricket Following the Same Decline as Hockey and Squash in Pakistan?

After Pakistan’s defeat in the second Test at Lord’s, concerns about the future of Test cricket in the country have become even more serious. A nation that once produced some of the finest cricketers in the world now appears to be struggling to maintain its traditional standards. There is an increasing fear that cricket may eventually face the same decline that has already affected hockey and squash in Pakistan.

The reasons for this disappointing situation are numerous. Poor management, inconsistent selection policies and a lack of long-term planning have badly affected the development of the national team. Frequent changes in captains, coaches and playing combinations prevent the team from devel-

oping stability and confidence. Selection should be based purely on merit, current performance and the specific requirements of international cricket rather than on reputation, pressure or short-term considerations.

Another major issue is the shortage of properly developed talent. Pakistan has no lack of natural ability, but talented youngsters need quality coaching, modern facilities, regular competitive cricket and exposure to international standards. The domestic system should be strong enough to identify promising players and prepare them for the physical, technical and mental demands of Test cricket.

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing the longer format is the growing attraction of T20 cricket. Prominent players are understandably interested in various



T20 leagues around the world because they offer enormous financial rewards, greater exposure and shorter playing commitments. As a result, many established players show less interest in long-form domestic cricket. This trend is particularly damaging because Test cricket requires patience, concentration, sound technique and the ability to play under pressure for long periods—qualities that can only be developed through regular first-class cricket.

The Pakistan Cricket Board must therefore take urgent and meaningful steps to revive domestic Test cricket. First-class players should be given better financial incentives, facilities and career opportunities so that playing the longer format becomes attractive. Selection procedures must be transparent, while coaches and administrators should be held accountable for their decisions and results.

Pakistan still possesses immense crick- eting talent and a passionate fan base. What is needed is competent manage- ment, consistent policies and a genuine commitment to Test cricket. If these reforms are ignored, Pakistan may not merely lose matches; it could gradually lose the proud cricketing culture that has been one of the country’s greatest sporting assets.

Mir Raza died after bullet tore through heart, final report finds

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had also accumulated in his chest, while two wounds were found on his heart. The board concluded that the gunshot caused the heart to rupture, resulting in his death.

A significant amount of gunshot residue (GSR) was detected around the bullet’s entry

wound on his back. GSR was also found around the bullet holes in his shirt.

The final examination report said the findings were not consistent with the suicide theory.

The report also documented an injury to Raza’s head and a fracture in part of his skull.

IHC Questions PIMS Inquiry, Seeks Detailed Reports on Infant Deaths

Continued from Page 1

the remarks while hearing a petition seeking a judicial inquiry into the deaths on August 26.

The petitioner’s lawyer, Qasim Iqbal Jalali, raised concerns that government-formed inquiry committees consisted of bureaucrats who could be investigating colleagues from their own departments.

In response, the chief justice questioned whether the lawyer expected the matter to be handed over to the army and also asked about the legal basis for ordering a judicial inquiry. The court observed that

inquiry commissions were generally constituted by the government rather than courts. The lawyer argued that the existing inquiry had failed to fix responsibility for the deaths.

The court was informed that the federal health secretary and PIMS officials had been suspended.

It sought the report submitted to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and details of action taken so far.

The court also sought a complete inquiry report, including responsibility for the tragedy, while the government said the final report would be submitted within five days.

Reversing Age: Humanity’s Oldest Dream Nears Reality

Continued from Page 4

longevity could produce an annual welfare benefit equivalent to roughly 4 to 5 percent of GDP. The benefit would come through healthier workers, longer productive careers, reduced disability, lower demand for expensive late-life care and the intrinsic value people place on living well for longer.

Pakistan offers a different but equally important case. Its population reached approximately 255 million in 2025, life expectancy was about 68 years and

nominal GDP was approximately \$407 billion. Only 3.55 percent of the population was 65 or older in the 2023 census, while nearly 56 percent was of working age.

Applying the international estimate mechanically, a one-year improvement in healthy longevity might carry an annual welfare value equivalent to approximately \$16 billion to \$20 billion—4 to 5 percent of Pakistan’s present GDP.

The potential is enormous for the least developed and developing countries. These countries could retain experienced doctors,

teachers, engineers, farmers and entrepreneurs for longer. Families might spend less on chronic illness, while healthier older adults could remain independent instead of requiring full-time care. Reduced disability could also increase household savings and national productivity.

Humanity is not yet approaching immortality. It may, however, be approaching the ability to repair particular tissues by restoring some of their youthful biological instructions. If that achievement expands safely from

eyes to other organs, it could transform medicine and economics. The greatest challenge will not only be making a longer, healthier life possible—but ensuring that its benefits belong to humanity rather than to a privileged minority.

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

The PIMS Tragedy: A Trial of the State’s Moral Obligation Within the House of Healing

Continued from Page 4

Nor can the subsequent ritual of official committees, administrative pronouncements and solemn assurances by itself constitute justice. The bereaved public does not require another committee merely for the sake of institutional appearance; it requires findings. It does not need another report destined for archival obscurity; it requires reform. It does not require symbolic suspensions alone; it requires accountability. If every tragedy is followed by the formation of a committee, a succession of meetings, a compilation of documents and, finally, the silent burial of the file within some bureaucratic cabinet, then investigation ceases to be an instrument of justice and becomes instead an administrative

mechanism for the manufacture of forgetfulness.

The proper response, therefore, must extend far beyond the confines of PIMS. Every public and private hospital in the country particularly maternity units, neonatal intensive-care facilities and nursery wards must undergo a rigorous and comprehensive safety audit. Electrical infrastructure, oxygen-supply systems, fire alarms, automatic suppression equipment, emergency exits, evacuation procedures, staff preparedness and emergency-response mechanisms must be tested not merely upon paper but under authentic operational conditions. Where grave negligence is established, the law must proceed without fear or favour, and responsibility

must culminate in genuine legal accountability rather than administrative theatre.

The dignity of a state is not ultimately measured by the altitude of its buildings, the breadth of its highways or the grandeur of its institutions. Its true moral stature is revealed by the degree to which it safeguards those who possess the least power to safeguard themselves. A newborn enters the world bearing no political influence, no wealth, no demand and no bargaining power; it possesses only the primordial right to live. If the state cannot adequately protect even that most vulnerable manifestation of human existence, then its proclamations of development, modernity and institutional excellence risk becoming nothing more than an

impressive vocabulary devoid of moral substance.

The PIMS tragedy therefore compels us to recover the deeper meaning of healing. Healing is not merely the treatment of disease; it is also the preservation of life from preventable danger. And whenever prudence, trust, transparency, institutional competence and accountability are extinguished within a system, even its houses of healing may become mute witnesses to death.

This, then, is not merely a moment for lamentation. It is a summons to muhasabah moral reckoning; not merely an occasion for condolences, but a demand for structural reform; not merely an exercise in identifying individuals after disaster has struck, but an imperative to construct insti-

tutions in which no mother’s lap is ever again emptied through the avoidable negligence of those entrusted with the protection of life.

“The Lament of PIMS:”

Is this indeed a sanctuary of healing or a realm where death holds sway?

Does outward life merely glitter, while inwardly a battlefield lies concealed?

Its walls appear resplendent with purity and grace,

Yet within, the sudden grave of death has found its place.

Pause, O friend, and ponder before you answer me:

Was this merely an accident the flames’ blind tyranny?

Those tender shoots of life consumed within the nursery’s fire,

Was a short circuit truly all that caused the fatal pyre?

No there was more: the spark itself was but a transient thing;

The deeper truth was negligence, beneath the smoke’s dark wing.

Blame not the oxygen, nor matter for the deed;

It was human heedlessness that failed the helpless in their need.

Where in lifeless matter dwells intention, judgement, thought?

Human foresight and human governance determine what is wrought.

Then what are these commitments that arise after every calamity?

Are they truly seeking truth or manufacturing a semblance of activity?

These papers, press releases, proceedings dressed as law

Are but shadows pursued, while truth retreats unseen.

From sound reflection one conclusion stands supreme:

The covenant to protect the vulnerable is the state’s true esteem.

If it cannot shield the innocent from the demons of their fate,

Then its houses of healing become but monuments where grief must wait.

The writer is a recipient of the Sanad-e-Imtiaz and a distinguished senior analyst, scholar, and PhD holder. He currently serves as the General Secretary of the Pakistan Federal Union of Columnists and Creators (Sindh). He can be reached at +92 333 2103855. Email: muhammadtayyabk773@gmail.com

Meeting Genetically Modified (GM) Corn

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chairing the Committee on Genetically Modified (GM) Corn meeting at the Finance Division Monday.



Photo: PID

Finance Minister Chairs Committee on GM Corn, Reaches Consensus on Way Forward

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired a meeting of the committee constituted by the prime minister to review Pakistan's policy on commercialization of genetically modified (GM) maize. The committee discussed stakeholder consultations and proposed a practical framework for the transition towards GM corn.

The meeting emphasized the coexistence of GM and non-GM maize in line with the National Agricultural Biotechnology Policy.

Participants discussed a gradual transition period, continued availability of non-GM seed and measures to prevent unnecessary increases in prices or disruption to existing industry.

Industry representatives raised concerns about the transition period, seed availability and its possible impact on businesses. The committee stressed the need for clear guidelines, safeguards and a comprehensive implementation framework incorporating views from the seed industry, maize millers, academia and technical experts.

Senator Aurangzeb

emphasized that the process should focus not only on policymaking but also on effective implementation, realistic timelines and avoiding unnecessary delays. The committee also highlighted technology adoption and improvements in harvesting, storage and agricultural infrastructure.

The minister said stakeholders had moved from differing positions towards broad consensus. The committee agreed to finalize the transition and implementation framework expeditiously for consideration and implementation by relevant authorities.

Mir Raza died after bullet tore through heart, final report finds

Bureau Report

KARACHI: A final medical examination report in the Mir Raza murder case has found that the 25-year-old businessman died after a bullet entered his upper left back, passed through his body and exited from the front left side of his chest, causing fatal damage to his heart.

The report was prepared by a medical board headed by the Karachi police surgeon after Raza's body was exhumed for a second post-mortem examination.

According to the report, the bullet fractured Raza's sixth rib and severely damaged his lung. Blood

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Field Marshal Asim Munir Holds High-Level Talks in Istanbul on Defence Cooperation

Farooq Hassan

ISTANBUL: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), during his official visit to Türkiye, held a series of high-level engagements in Istanbul.

COAS & CDF separately met H. R. H. Prince Khalid bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, H. E. Hakan Fidan Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, H. E. Yaşar Güler, Minister of National Defence of Türkiye and General Selçuk Bayraktaroglu Chief of the Turkish General Staff.

During the engagements, matters of mutual interest, bilateral defence cooperation



tion and the regional security environment were discussed.

COAS & CDF also attended the meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee under the Makkah Agreement

for Joint Defence, bringing together Pakistan, Türkiye and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The three sides reviewed avenues for further strengthening strategic coordination and defence cooperation.

The engagements reflected the close bonds of brotherhood and growing strategic and defence cooperation among Pakistan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Türkiye.



PM Shehbaz to Visit Kyrgyzstan for SCO Summit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will undertake a three-day official visit to Kyrgyzstan from August 31 to September 2, 2026, at the invitation of Kyrgyz President Sadyr Nurgozhoevich Zhaparov. He will participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of State meeting and other bilateral engagements.

The prime minister will attend the SCO Plus Summit and assume Pakistan's Chairmanship of the SCO Council of Heads of State for 2026-27. He will also hold meetings with leaders of participating countries and attend the opening ceremony of the World Nomad Games.

On September 2, PM Shehbaz will hold detailed talks with President Zhaparov on bilateral relations and ways to enhance cooperation in trade, investment, energy, regional connectivity, education, tourism and people-to-people contacts. They will also exchange views on regional and international developments and cooperation at multilateral forums.



Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan, Communications Minister Abdul Aleem Khan, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar and senior officials

will accompany the prime minister.

The visit is expected to strengthen Pakistan-Kyrgyzstan relations and translate recent high-level contacts into greater practical cooperation.

Both countries share close historical, cultural and fraternal ties and common aspirations for regional peace, connectivity and prosperity.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif Meets Newly Elected PM of AJK Iftikhar Gilani

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif met with the newly elected Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Iftikhar Gilani in Lahore on Sunday.

The Punjab Chief Minister congratulated Iftikhar Gilani on his election as Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and conveyed her best wishes for his tenure in office.

Prime Minister Iftikhar Gilani expressed his gratitude to Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and



the leadership of the Pakistan Muslim League (N) for their support and confidence.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed his commitment to implementing a 100-day

reform agenda aimed at accelerating development and improving governance in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

He expressed his resolve

to transform Azad Jammu and Kashmir into a model of development and good governance under the guidance and leadership of Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.





افتخار گیلانی
وزیر اعظم آزاد جموں و کشمیر

طارق فاروق
قائم مقام صدر آزاد جموں و کشمیر

پانچویں برسی

بہم پاکستانی ہیں

پاکستان ہمارا ہے

قائد تحریک آزادی کشمیر، بطل حریت، مقبوضہ کشمیر میں الحاق پاکستان کی

توانا آواز ہر ممتاز کشمیری رہنماء، سابق چیئر مین گل جماعتی حریت کانفرنس

سید علی شاہ گیلانی

کو تحریک آزادی کشمیر کیلئے گراں قدر خدمات پر پوری کشمیری قوم

خراج عقیدت پیش کرتی ہے

ان شاء اللہ سید علی شاہ گیلانی کے مشن کی تکمیل تک

کشمیریوں کی جدوجہد جاری رہے گی

آزاد حکومت ریاست جموں و کشمیر

