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A Leading National Daily



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President Zardari to return to Pakistan

President Asif Ali Zardari will return to Pakistan from the United Kingdom (UK). Sources said that after his return, President Asif Ali Zardari will hold important talks, including with the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Credible Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) sources said the president had initially planned to remain in London for another three to four days.



Pakistan envoy Tahir Andrabi presents credentials to UN chief in Geneva

Foreign citizens residing illegally in Pakistan now have only 0 days to leave the country or face deportation. Foreigners living illegally must leave Pakistan by October 31 or law enforcement agencies will ensure their arrest and deportation. In the recent meeting of the Apex Committee of the National Action Plan, it had been decided to take strict action against the illegal immigrants living in Pakistan and the trade and properties of illegal immigrants

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Called on

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of AJK Syed Iftikhar Ali Gillani called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Arab, Muslim nations welcome UK-Led sanctions on Israeli settlements

News Desk/ Agencies

ISLAMABAD: Eight Arab and Muslim countries, including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Egypt, Qatar, Jordan, Indonesia and the United Arab Emirates, have welcomed the United Kingdom's decision to ban imports from illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank. They also welcomed restrictions on services linked to such settlements and urged other countries to adopt similar measures in accordance with international law.

The joint statement came after Britain, France and Canada joined nine other European countries in announcing plans to introduce or support restrictions on trade with Israeli settlements.



The measures were announced amid growing international concern over Israel's settlement expansion and reports of increasing attacks by settlers against Palestinians.

The eight countries called on the international community to take concrete steps against

activities supporting illegal settlements and to hold settlement organisations and individuals accountable. They said such measures were consistent with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and the International Court of Justice's 2024 advisory opinion concerning Israel's occupation.

The ministers also stressed that Gaza remains an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and called for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict to address security, humanitarian needs, reconstruction and long-term peace.

They reaffirmed that a two-state solution remains the only viable path to a just and

lasting peace. The proposed solution envisages an independent, sovereign and contiguous Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Pakistan separately welcomed Britain's settlement-related measures, with the Foreign Office describing settlement expansion as a violation of international law and UN resolutions. Pakistan also welcomed similar initiatives being considered by Canada and several European countries, saying they could send a clear message against illegal settlement activities. Islamabad reiterated its support for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Bilawal Bhutto demands debate on new provinces issue in Parliament

Chaudhry Tabraiz Aurah

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto demanded debate on the province issue in Parliament. Talking to media in London, Bilawal Bhutto said that no single political party can solve Pakistan's problems.

Bilawal Bhutto said all political

parties should be engaged in national and public issues. The problems in the system should be openly debated.

He said PPP gives importance to the opinion of the people and elected representatives.

Bilawal Bhutto further said that the solution to inflation, unemployment and poverty lies in democracy.



The Punjab and Sindh assemblies have unanimously passed

resolutions. All issues should be discussed in the National Assembly, Bilawal Bhutto said. He said discussions on grievances are ongoing in the PML-N and the PPP.

Bilawal said hospitality is very famous in the culture of Sindh province, especially when the Chief Minister of another province visits Sindh.

Islamabad police reviews security arrangements ahead of PTI protest

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police have started preparations ahead of a possible Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protest scheduled for September 27. According to sources, a decision has been taken to launch a large-scale crackdown against PTI workers in Rawalpindi and Islamabad ahead of the anticipated protest. Police have also ordered the seizure and deployment of containers to block roads if required. Sources said that postings and transfers of officers have also been made in view of the expected protest.

Additional police personnel will be requisitioned from other provinces to strengthen security arrangements, according to police sources. Authorities will take all possible measures to prevent protesters from entering Islamabad. Security arrangements for the Red Zone will be placed in three layers, with enhanced deployment planned around sensitive locations.

According to police sources, Islamabad Inspector General of Police will monitor the situation from the Command and Control, Communication and Coordination Centre.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi inaugurates Islamabad's Aabpara police station

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The upgradation of Aabpara police station in Islamabad has been completed as part of efforts to develop police stations of the federal capital on modern lines.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi inaugurated the newly upgraded police station on Wednesday.

He went round different sections of the station.

He visited the SHO office, DRC, inquiry office, waiting area and other sections.



He reviewed the facilities being provided to citizens at counters, and expressed his satisfaction.

The minister also met with the members of dispute resolution committee, and praised the committee's performance.

Speaking on the occasion, Naqvi said that the purpose of the project was to provide modern, dignified and people-friendly policing.

He directed the police personnel to behave politely with the complainants and leave no stone unturned to address their grievances. "There should be no delay in the registration of an FIR," the minister directed.

He, on the occasion, was briefed about the police station's upgradation.

IGP Islamabad, DIG, SSP Operations and other police officers were also present on the occasion.

PM Shehbaz assures full cooperation to AJK Govt for people's welfare

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says the Government of Pakistan will continue to extend full cooperation to the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir for the welfare and well-being of its people.

He was talking to the newly elected Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani, who called on him in Islamabad today. Shehbaz Sharif congratulated Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani on assuming the office of the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and expressed his best wishes

for his tenure.

The two sides discussed in detail matters relating to peace and development in Azad Jammu and Kashmir as well as ongoing welfare projects in the region.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed that the Federal Government will continue to take all possible measures for the development and prosperity of the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani thanked the Prime Minister and expressed his resolve to utilise all his capabilities for the development of the region and the welfare of its people.

Amina Baloch to retire as Foreign Secretary, Asim Iftikhar Named Successor



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Amina Baloch, Pakistan's 33rd Foreign Secretary, will retire from government service on September 17 after more than three decades in diplomacy.

She assumed office on September 11, 2024, and led the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during a key period in Pakistan's diplomatic history.

Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar paid tribute to her "tireless service, leadership and national service," saying she leaves behind a legacy of dedication. After retirement, Amina Baloch will

serve as Pakistan's Ambassador to Turkey. Dar expressed confidence she would continue serving with the same professionalism.

Dar also announced that Asim Iftikhar Ahmed, currently Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, will be the next Foreign Secretary. He said Asim Iftikhar would carry forward the work of Amina Baloch and her predecessors to advance Pakistan's national interests with "clarity, professionalism and purpose."

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has approved both appointments and new responsibilities.

DPM Dar, Egyptian FM discuss bilateral relations, regional developments



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday spoke with Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr Badr Abdelattly, during which they reviewed bilateral relations and reaffirmed the close and fraternal ties between the two countries.

During the telephonic

discussion late Tuesday, they discussed regional developments and the need for close consultations on regional matters, including through the Regional Four (R4) Foreign Ministers, with Saudi Arabia and Türkiye.

Both foreign ministers also agreed to meet on the sidelines of the forthcoming United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Acting President AJK Meets Former Minister Dewan Ali Khan Chughtai

City Report

ISLAMABAD: Acting President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Tariq Farooq held a meeting with former Minister Dewan Ali Khan Chughtai. The meeting discussed the overall political situation in AJK, matters of mutual interest and other political issues.

On the occasion, Acting President Chaudhry Tariq Farooq said that strengthening democratic traditions, ensuring political stability and addressing public issues remained among the government's key priorities. He emphasized that all political and social segments should play a constructive role in the development of the region and promotion of public welfare.

Former Minister Dewan Ali Khan Chughtai congratulated Chaudhry Tariq Farooq on his election as Speaker and assumption of the office of Acting President. He expressed his best wishes for the development of AJK, resolution of public issues and welfare of the people of the region.



Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan Meets Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President of Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan held a one-on-one meeting with former Prime Minister of AJK and President of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan in Islamabad.

The meeting focused on the prevailing political and law-and-order situation in AJK, with particular concern expressed over the situation in Poonch. The two leaders held detailed consultations on the ongoing protest sit-in by the Action Committee in Poonch and appealed to the AJK Government and the Action Committee to seek a peaceful, dignified and negotiated resolution of the issue.

They also agreed to broaden consultations on the overall situation in AJK. The leaders called for immediate arrangements to ensure the supply of essential food items and medicines to Poonch and urged the restoration of internet services without further delay.

They observed that keeping the people of Poonch outside the democratic process of AJK was not in the larger interest of the State and emphasized that the people of Poonch should be included in the process of government formation at the earliest.

Central party leaders Sardar Abid Razzaq, Colonel Ashfaq Khan, Sardar Farhan Anwar and Raja Abdul Jabbar Khan were also present.

Newly Elected AJK MLA Maryam Idrees Receives Congratulations

Bureau Report



MIRPUR: Media Advisor to the Chairman Kashmir Committee Sikandar Rehman Raja, LA-19 Hajira-II candidate Sardar Shehzad Aziz and CEO C92 TV Qazi Muhammad Abid called on newly elected Member of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Maryam Idrees and congratulated her on her election.

Maryam Idrees reaffirmed the PML-N's commitment to freedom of the press, saying that journalism had an important role in promoting democratic values and building an open and progressive society. She appreciated the services of the journalist community and termed responsible, positive and constructive journalism essential for the overall and rapid development of society.

During the meeting, Sikandar Rehman Raja, Sardar Shehzad Aziz and Qazi Muhammad Abid appreciated Maryam Idrees's political and social services, describing her as a source of pride for the people of Mirpur and a role model for women. They expressed confidence that she would utilize her capabilities to address public issues, promote public service and contribute to the development and progress of the region.

Police spend over Rs1.346b on welfare of personnel, families this year

LAHORE, SEP 09 (APP):Punjab Police have spent more than Rs1.346 billion on the welfare and well-being of its personnel and their families during the current year, reflecting the department's continued focus on providing financial, educational, medical and other support to its serving and retired employees.

Providing details, the spokesperson said more than Rs393.1 million has been disbursed as educational scholarships for the children of police employees. He said over Rs417.8 million has been provided to the daughters of police employees as wedding gifts, while more than Rs187.8 million has been released to assist police employees and their families for medical treatment.

Similarly, more than Rs201 million has been paid to police employees under retirement grants, he added.

The spokesperson said more than Rs104.3 million has been provided to the families of police employees as maintenance allowance, while over Rs32.4 million has been provided for funeral expenses.

He said more than Rs10 million has also been released to police personnel as immediate financial assistance.

Public Enjoyment

ISLAMABAD: Youngsters playing volleyball at local ground, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Four-and-a-Half-Year-Old Dispute Over Passageway Resolved Amicably, Parties Reconciled

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: A four-and-a-half-year-old dispute over a passageway in Ganda Kas village of Union Council Kamrial, tehsil Pindi Gheb, has finally been resolved amicably, with the two parties reaching a reconciliation.

The dispute had continued for the past four and a half years between

Sain Zamarad Khan, son of Hayat Muhammad, and Mudassar Hussain and Ishtiaq Hussain, sons of the late Master Manwar Hussain, all residents of Ganda Kas, over the use of a passageway.

The dispute was settled through mutual understanding and consent following sincere and valuable efforts by former Federal Secretary Khalid

Sultan and Malik Abdullah Khan Kamrial. Both parties acknowledged each other's viewpoints and agreed to bring the longstanding dispute to an amicable end.

On the occasion, prominent local residents appreciated the efforts of former Federal Secretary Khalid Sultan and Malik Abdullah Khan Kamrial, saying that resolving

disputes through consultation, tolerance and mutual understanding at the local level plays an important role in promoting peace, brotherhood and social harmony.

The two parties also expressed satisfaction for the settlement and thanked those who played a role in bringing an end to the longstanding dispute.

When a Virus Threatened Pakistan's Poultry Industry, Parc Scientists Fought Back

When the deadly Angara disease first emerged in Karachi, Sindh, it quickly became a serious threat to Pakistan's rapidly growing poultry industry. As the disease spread to other parts of the country, poultry farmers faced heavy losses, while the industry itself confronted a major challenge to its future growth.

At this critical moment, scientists at the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) stepped forward to confront the emerging threat. Recognizing the devastating impact of the disease on poultry farms, PARC agricultural scientists undertook research to understand the disease and develop an effective solution. Their efforts led to the development of vaccines against Angara disease, providing poultry farmers with an important scientific tool to protect their flocks and reduce economic losses.

It is to be noted that In the late 1980s (1987 exactly), that frightening pattern began spreading through Paki-

stan's rapidly expanding poultry farms. Broiler birds were collapsing in large numbers, mortality was mounting and farmers were watching their investments disappear within days. For an industry still in the process of establishing itself, the crisis threatened not only individual farms but the future of commercial poultry production in Pakistan.

The scale of the losses was enormous. In some of the worst-affected areas, mortality devastated a major share of poultry flocks, leaving farmers facing heavy financial losses and an industry confronting one of the most serious disease emergencies in its history. Many foreign experts failed to identify the causative agent and suggested control measures did not result in any improvement.

The enemy was eventually identified as Hydro Pericardium Syndrome (HPS), widely known as Angara disease, a severe viral disease associated with Fowl Adenovirus, particularly serotype 4 (FAdV-4).

But in the early days of the outbreak, farmers did not know its name. They

only knew that apparently healthy birds were becoming sick and dying with alarming speed.

The first recognized outbreak in Pakistan was reported in 1987 at Angara Goth near Karachi, giving the disease the name by which it would become known. What followed was more than a veterinary emergency. It became a race against time—a race to discover what was killing the birds, understand how the disease spread and, above all, develop a way to protect Pakistan's poultry industry.

At the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) and its National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) in Islamabad, veterinary scientists began investigating a disease that was threatening one of the country's most promising emerging agricultural industries.

Their challenge was formidable: identify the pathogen, establish reliable diagnostic methods, understand

the disease and develop a vaccine that could move from the laboratory to poultry farms before the losses became catastrophic.

What followed was a remarkable chapter in Pakistan's agricultural research history—one in which scientists, laboratories, universities and poultry-sector practitioners joined forces against a disease that had initially appeared almost unstoppable.

The story of Angara disease is ultimately not just the story of a virus. It is the story of what Pakistani science can accomplish when an agricultural crisis demands an immediate response.

Farmers saw dying birds and mounting losses. Scientists saw a pathogen that had to be identified. Laboratories became centers of investigation. Veterinary researchers developed an emergency vaccine and then moved towards more standardized and reliable vaccine technologies.



Analysis

Muhammad Saeed Chishti

Most importantly, the knowledge generated in that struggle remained in Pakistan.

The scientists associated with the response—including Dr. Muhammad Afzal, Dr. Khalid Naem Khawaja, Dr. Ashiq Hussain Cheema, and Prof. Dr. Ahmad Din Anjum, working with Pakistani institutes and scientists—helped build more than a vaccine. They helped build Pakistan's capacity to confront emerging poultry diseases through its own scientific expertise.

Their work also demonstrated a fundamental principle of agricultural research: the real measure of science is not only what is discovered in a laboratory, but what difference that discovery makes in the lives of farmers.

For Pakistan's poultry sector, that difference was profound. An industry facing a devastating disease was given a scientific pathway to survive, recover and continue its growth as an important source of meat, eggs, employment and economic activity.

The lesson remains highly relevant today. Agricultural diseases do not

wait for institutions to prepare. New pathogens can emerge suddenly, cross geographical boundaries and threaten food production and farmers' incomes before their full nature is understood.

That is why national research institutions matter.

The battle against Angara disease showed that when trained scientists, capable laboratories, universities, government institutions and farmers work together, even a seemingly overwhelming agricultural crisis can be confronted—and controlled.

No doubt in the late 1980s, Pakistan's poultry farmers faced an invisible enemy and were watching their flocks—and their livelihoods—disappear.

Pakistan Agricultural Research Council and National Agricultural Research Centre scientists responded not with promises, but with diagnosis, research and a vaccine.

And in doing so, they gave Pakistan's poultry industry something even more valuable than protection from a disease.

They gave it a future



Islamabad

30° – 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 4:22 am
Zohr 12:05 pm
Asr 4:36 pm
Maghrib 6:23 pm
Isha 7:48 pm

EMERGENCY

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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

CDA steps up plantation drive to improve Islamabad's green spaces

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has stepped up tree plantation and landscaping activities across Islamabad, focusing on green belts, road medians, parks, intersections and other public spaces to improve the city's environment and preserve its green character.

The CDA Environment Wing has deployed field teams to plant trees, flowering and ornamental plants and shrubs at identified locations, while also replacing dead or damaged plants and rehabilitating existing green areas.

The campaign is aimed at improving public spaces for residents and visitors while contributing to cleaner air, a healthier urban environment and greater biodiversity.

Alongside plantation, the Environment Wing is undertaking necessary watering, pruning, grass cutting and other horticultural work to support the growth of newly planted trees and improve the condition of existing green areas.

Officials said plant species were being selected according to Islamabad's environmental conditions, with emphasis on climate-compatible and locally suitable varieties.

For residents, the condition of Islamabad's green belts, parks and tree-lined avenues remains an important public concern.

Punjab to launch electric bus service in 91 tehsils from January

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has approved the launch of an electric bus service at the teshil level from January 2027, with 1,500 buses to be deployed across 91 tehsils, officials said on Wednesday.

The chief minister has also approved dedicated electric bus depots for each teshil, while the first batch of buses is

expected to arrive in Lahore in January. The provincial government aims to have 3,000 electric buses operational across Punjab by June 2027.

According to a briefing at a meeting chaired by CM Punjab, Multan's nine tehsils would receive 169 buses, Sahiwal's four tehsils 87, and Bahawalpur's 11 tehsils 215 buses. Dera Ghazi Khan's 10 tehsils would get 63 buses, Faisalabad's 12 tehsils 202, and Sargodha's 14 tehsils



198 buses.

Gujranwala's seven tehsils would receive 125 buses, Gujrat's eight tehsils 122, while 219 buses would be deployed across 16 tehsils of Rawalpindi.

The briefing said 612 electric buses were already fully operational in various districts of the province, benefiting millions of commuters daily. Another 192 buses in Multan and other districts would become operational within days.

Additional buses would be provided to Sargodha, Sahiwal, Faisalabad, Lahore, Muzaffargarh, Rawalpindi, Jhang, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan and Attock, while Bhakkar, Hafizabad, Khanewal, Chinot, Layyah, Okara, Sialkot, Murree, Gujrat and Sheikhupura would also receive additional services.

Further buses are planned for Mandi Bahauddin, Vehari, Kasur, Lodhran, Nankana Sahib, Narowal, Gujranwala

and Multan.

The chief minister set a target for completion of the first phase of the electric bus programme by the end of September this year.

Meanwhile, work on mass transit systems in Faisalabad and Gujranwala is progressing rapidly. A project for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of 25 stations of the Lahore Metrobus service is also under way.

Photo Exhibition

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training Farah Naz Akbar seeing the photograph during exhibition Frames of Freedom at COMSATS Art Gallery, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

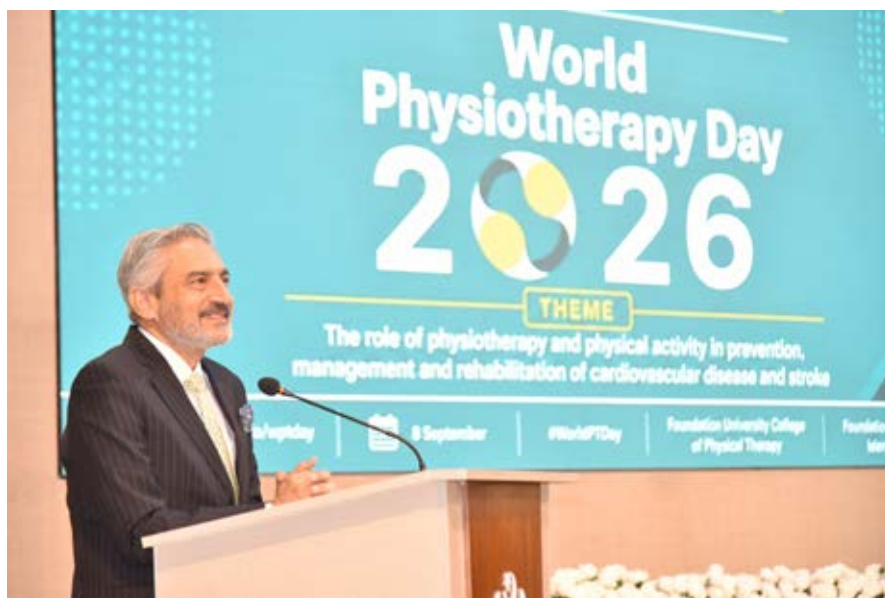
Foundation University Celebrates World Physical Therapy Day 2026

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Foundation University College of Physical Therapy (FUCP), Foundation University Islamabad observed World Physical Therapy Day 2026 under the theme _ "Role of Physiotherapy in the Prevention, Management, and Rehabilitation of Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke."

The event, attended by 200+ participants, was inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Furqan Ahmed Siddiqi, Dean/Principal FUCP. Maj. Gen. Qudrat Ullah HI(M) Retd., Campus Director FUI, graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

Activities included an expert session by Associate Prof. Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Mannan Haider Khan, Federal Member/Registrar Allied Health Professional Council (AHPC), an awareness walk, community



outreach with Urdu health pamphlets, and a student poster competition. Top 3 students were awarded certificates for outstanding performance.

Deans, HODs and faculty from various FUI departments also participated.

In his concluding remarks, the Chief Guest highlighted the vital role of physiotherapy

in preventing, managing and rehabilitating cardiovascular disease and stroke, emphasizing its importance in building healthier communities.

Air University Multan Campus Holds Orientation Day for New Students, Parents



Quratulain Asim

MULTAN: Orientation Day held at Air University Campus; new students and parents attend in full strength.

An orientation day was organized for newly admitted students and their parents at the Air University Multan Campus in Chak Panch Faiz, a suburb of Multan, with full participation from both students and parents. The event aimed to familiarize new students with the university's academic environment, various programs, facilities, extracurricular activities, and future opportunities.

Speaking on the occasion, Director of Air University Multan Campus, Retired Air Commodore Fawad Zaheer, welcomed the new students and extended his best wishes to them. He urged students to focus on their studies, cultivate discipline, and make full use of the academic and co-curricular activities available at the university. He further stated that Air University Multan Campus would continue its efforts to provide quality education and the best possible learning environment for its students.

Teach the World Foundation Showcases Solar-Powered Digital MicroSchool on International Literacy Day 2026



News Desk

KARACHI: Teach the World Foundation (TTWF) marked International Literacy Day 2026 by demonstrating its live Digital MicroSchool model at the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi. The event was hosted by the Directorate of Literacy and Non-Formal Education, School Education & Literacy Department, Govt. of Sindh under the theme _ "Literacy for People, the Planet and Prosperity."

TTWF recreated a fully functional digital non-formal classroom where visitors saw out-of-school children learning foundational literacy and numeracy through software-equipped tablets, gamified content, and trained local facilitators. The entire setup ran on TTWF's mobile solar power unit, proving quality digital education is possible in off-grid or power-deficient communities.

TTWF President Arshad Anis said the model offers a scalable, immediate solution for Pakistan's education crisis, where 3 in 10 children lack access to formal schooling. Using compact community spaces, flexible shifts, and clean solar energy, the Digital MicroSchool aims to expand access to basic education alongside government and global partners.

Jammu & Kashmir's Disputed Status Established; UN Must Move Toward Plebiscite: JKSM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Jammu Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) has called on the United Nations to move beyond merely recognizing Jammu & Kashmir as disputed territory and take concrete steps toward implementing a plebiscite. JKSM Spokesman Dr. Irfan Ghani said UN Security Council resolutions already provide a framework entitling Kashmiris to determine their political future through a free vote, and urged the UN to establish a clear roadmap and monitoring mechanisms to initiate this process.

Ghani said the dispute has remained unresolved for nearly eight decades while Kashmiris face political uncertainty, military pressure, and rights violations. He urged the UN and world powers to restrain Indian forces from coercive measures, citing severe restrictions on expression, political activity, and assembly. He also raised concerns over prolonged detentions, limited legal and medical access for prisoners, and the seizure of Kashmiri-owned properties, which he said deepens fear and insecurity.

RPO Faisalabad Visits Samundri, Tandlianwala; Stresses Character Building of Youth

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: RPO Faisalabad Sohail Akhtar Sukhera visited Samundri and Tandlianwala, engaging in activities focused on education, public service, and police-community cooperation. At Concordia College, Samundri, he honored position-holder students, distributing laptops and certificates while emphasizing that education must build character alongside academic success. He urged youth to avoid drugs, warning there would be no leniency for those luring young people into substance abuse.



He then visited Tehsil Bar Samundri, inaugurating an E-Khidmat Facilitation Centre at the Judicial Complex

and stressing coordination between police and lawyers for timely justice. At Tehsil Bar Tandlianwala, he inau-

gurated another E-Khidmat Centre offering over 18 citizen services under one roof, highlighting shared responsibility between police and the legal community in curbing crime.

The RPO also visited Quran Mahal Sharif, Samundri, inspecting arrangements for preserving damaged Quranic pages and urging citizens to hand over worn pages rather than disposing of them improperly.

Throughout the visit, Sukhera emphasized that education, character building, public service, and community partnership are essential for a peaceful, responsible society.

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Sixty Years On, Literacy Remains an Unfinished Promise

This week, Islamabad played host to a gathering that should prompt more than ceremonial applause. At Allama Iqbal Open University, the Ministry of Federal Education, alongside UNESCO, UNICEF, JICA and the National Commission for Human Development, marked the 60th anniversary of International Literacy Day. The theme, “Literacy for People, the Planet and Prosperity,” was fitting for an occasion that asked more than 200 policymakers, diplomats and educators to take stock of six decades of progress and, more urgently, six decades of gaps still unfilled.

There is reason to welcome the moment. The launch of NCHD’s “Each One, Teach One” mobile application signals a genuine, if modest, step toward using digital tools to widen access to literacy in communities that formal schooling has long bypassed. NCHD’s two-decade record of running community-based adult literacy centres and non-formal schools, with a deliberate focus on women and rural populations, deserves recognition rather than routine praise. So does JICA’s continuing investment through its alternative learning project, which has quietly expanded options for out-of-school children and adults alike.

Yet the speeches themselves carried an implicit admission: literacy in Pakistan is not a solved problem dressed up in anniversary bunting. It is a persistent national deficit. UNICEF’s representative was blunt in noting that too many Pakistani children still lack the basic reading and numeracy skills that literacy day is meant to celebrate. That single observation should weigh more heavily than the ceremony around it. A country that continues to carry one of the world’s largest populations of out-of-school children cannot treat literacy as a box already ticked.

What was said at the podium now needs to be tested against what happens in classrooms, community centres and provincial budgets over the coming year. Digital applications and NGO partnerships are useful supplements, but they cannot substitute for sustained public investment in teacher training, school infrastructure and enforcement of compulsory education laws — the unglamorous work that rarely draws international delegations.

Anniversaries are useful only if they generate accountability rather than comfort. The 60th International Literacy Day gave Pakistan’s education establishment a global stage and warm words from its partners. The measure of whether the day mattered will not be the turnout in Islamabad, but whether next year’s literacy statistics look meaningfully different from this year’s. On that count, the real work has only just begun.

Field Marshal Underscores Youth’s Responsibility in the Digital Age

Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir recently met with Harvard Business School students, where discussions covered regional and global affairs, Pakistan’s security situation, and the broader pursuit of peace, stability, and prosperity. During this exchange, he placed particular emphasis on the responsibility of youth in the digital age, calling for active and thoughtful engagement against social media propaganda. He identified education, skill development, entrepreneurship, and fact-based analysis as the essential tools young people need to defend against misinformation.

The article argues that young people can no longer afford to be passive consumers of online content. Instead, they must cultivate critical thinking, intellectual honesty, and a habit of verifying sources before accepting or sharing information. This is especially urgent because fabricated stories have the power to trigger real-world protests and unrest, while declining trust in institutions makes people less likely to turn to credible, established sources. Compounding this problem, algorithmic echo chambers on social media platforms reinforce existing biases, creating fragmented and conflicting versions of reality for different users. Even individuals who believe themselves immune to propaganda can be swayed by unverified tweets, viral WhatsApp forwards, and posts from anonymous accounts, making misinformation a genuine threat to social cohesion.

The piece suggests that education and skill-building strengthen analytical thinking, while entrepreneurship gives young people the means to create economic opportunities. This

economic empowerment, in turn, reduces the underlying conditions—such as frustration and hopelessness—that allow divisive narratives to take root. The article credits Pakistani youth with already demonstrating their potential in numerous ways: rallying behind national unity and the armed forces during periods of crisis, engaging in volunteer work and community development, and contributing meaningfully to the technology sector. Because of these contributions, government and military leadership reportedly view youth as Pakistan’s greatest asset and have called on them to lead what is described as the “battle for progress.”

However, the article stresses that legal crackdowns and regulations alone cannot solve the misinformation problem. Rebuilding public trust requires genuine engagement with young people, and formal digital-literacy education that teaches practical skills: verifying sources, recognizing bias, questioning narratives, and distinguishing credible information from manipulation. Programs like ISPR’s Summer Internship are cited as examples of initiatives that involve thousands of students in discussions about national and information security. The article also notes a psychological dimension—fact-based thinking helps young people stay calm, avoid toxic online debates, resist provocations, and channel their energy toward constructive nation-building rather than anger or division.

Beyond simply resisting propaganda, the article argues that youth have a role in actively shaping a positive national narrative. This can be done through creating videos, articles, podcasts, and social media content that high-

light Pakistan’s culture, history, and achievements, thereby countering harmful narratives pushed by both domestic and foreign actors seeking to exploit internal divisions. Young people are also encouraged to hold leaders accountable through informed and respectful dialogue rather than mob behavior or online harassment—demanding transparency and good governance while engaging in political debates using evidence rather than emotion. This is framed as a mark of democratic maturity, particularly important in a political climate often dominated by sensationalism and personal attacks.

The article situates this challenge within a global context, noting that misinformation, polarization, and algorithmic manipulation affect societies worldwide, from the United States and India to Europe. However, it argues that Pakistan’s strategic location, diverse population, and complex security environment make its youth especially critical to get this right, since instability within the country could have ripple effects on regional trade, security, and relations with neighboring countries like India, China, Afghanistan, and Iran. The piece frames this as a responsibility that extends beyond national borders to encompass regional peace and stability.

The article also emphasizes that this responsibility isn’t solely on young people’s shoulders—families, teachers, and community leaders must create environments where questioning and open dialogue are encouraged without fear of ridicule. It describes Munir’s message as calling for a broader cultural shift away from blind acceptance of authority toward a more evidence-based approach to life, acknowledging that such change requires sustained, collective effort rather than being achieved by any single institution overnight.

UK Labels Israel ‘Genocidal’ and Bans Its Products

The world stands at a critical juncture in its relationship with Israel. For decades, the international community has watched as Palestinians have been systematically displaced, their homes destroyed, and their rights violated under the guise of security concerns. The recent announcement by the United Kingdom government to impose comprehensive sanctions on Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank represents a watershed moment—one that challenges the long-standing impunity with which Israel has operated. These measures are not merely diplomatic gestures but essential tools for justice, peace, and the preservation of human dignity.

Ironically it was the UK which spearheaded the foundation of Israel in 1948, and was instrumental in ethnically cleansing 750,000 Palestinians from their homes in Majdal Ashkelan to establish the state of Israel. These Palestinians were forcibly removed, placed in prison camps, and eventually dumped into the Gaza Strip, where they have been permanently warehoused under siege conditions.

However, as repentance of its past crimes, the encouraging British government’s decision to ban imports from illegal Israeli settlements, impose strict arms export controls, and sanction individuals involved in settler violence represents a courageous stand for international law, is a step in the right direc-

tion.. These settlements are unequivocally illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits an occupying power from transferring parts of its own civilian population into territory it occupies. For too long, the international community has paid lip service to this principle while allowing Israel to continue its expansion unabated.

Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband’s characterization of settler activities as “ethnic cleansing” is not hyperbole but an accurate description of reality. When Israeli settlers, often with state protection, systematically drive Palestinian communities from their land through violence, intimidation, and the destruction of homes and olive groves, this is ethnic cleansing by any reasonable definition. The UK’s sanctions send a clear message: such practices have consequences, and the era of impunity is ending.

Israel’s reaction to the UK sanctions has been telling. President Herzog and Prime Minister Netanyahu have condemned the measures, claiming that sanctions are not the solution and that dialogue is the only path forward. Yet this appeal to dialogue is fundamentally disingenuous when Israel itself has consistently rejected dialogue in favor of military action. The same government that has flattened Gaza, destroyed

southern Lebanon, occupied the Golan Heights, and continues to expand settlements in the West Bank cannot credibly lecture others about the virtues of peaceful negotiation.

The Israeli government’s countermeasures—closing the British consulate in Jerusalem, expelling UK representatives from coordination centers, and denying entry to British officials—reveal a government more interested in retaliation than reconciliation. This is the behavior of a state that believes it can act with complete impunity, that international law applies to others but not to itself. The irony of Israel’s position becomes even more apparent when considering its enthusiastic support for US sanctions against Iran. If sanctions are illegitimate when applied to Israel, why are they legitimate when applied to others?

What makes the current moment particularly significant is the growing global consensus around the need to hold Israel accountable. Canada and France have already implemented matching bans on settlement trade, and other nations are expected to follow. This is not a fringe movement but a mainstream diplomatic position grounded in international law and basic human rights principles.

The United States, Israel’s most steadfast ally, is increasingly isolated in its

unconditional support. The proposed congressional resolution declaring that the United States will not aid Israel or enter into wars on its behalf represents a significant shift in American public sentiment. Even within the US, there is growing recognition that uncritical support for Israel has damaged American interests, destabilized the Middle East, and put the United States on the wrong side of history.

The call for boycott has extended beyond governments to include religious authorities and civil society organizations. Christian leaders, including Archbishop J. Black, have called for boycott of Israeli products, drawing parallels to the successful international campaign against apartheid South Africa. Their position is rooted not in anti-Semitism but in a profound commitment to justice—the recognition that any system built on racial or religious supremacy must be dismantled.

The boycott movement has practical implications. Consumers are being urged to check labels and avoid products from Israeli settlements, which are often sold under supermarket own brands or other disguises. Items ranging from fruits and vegetables to beauty products, diamonds, and plastic goods should be scrutinized for Israeli origins. The economic impact of such boycotts, if sustained, could be substantial—UK trade with Israel amounts to approximately \$1.6 billion annually.



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

New Provinces Debate: Governance Reform or Restructuring Pakistan?

The debate over creating new provinces, administrative units and restructuring Pakistan’s administrative framework has once again entered the national political discourse. Although the issue has appeared repeatedly in Pakistan’s political history, recent statements from federal-level forums have given it renewed importance. The central question is whether the discussion is genuinely aimed at improving governance and administrative efficiency or whether it represents a broader plan to reshape Pakistan’s political and administrative structure.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi’s recent remarks have attracted particular attention. Speaking at a National Policy Dialogue, he reportedly supported the creation of new administrative units through public consent and political consensus and emphasised the need to reassess Pakistan’s administrative requirements. Earlier discussions at the federal level have also referred to ideas such as an administrative “reset” and the possible creation of new administrative units. Because these statements have come from a federal minister, they carry greater political significance than ordinary political remarks.

However, an important issue remains unclear: what exactly is meant by “new administrative units”? The term can refer to districts, divisions, administrative regions, metropolitan units or, in political discussions, entirely new provinces. If the objective is simply better administration, the government could consider strengthening local governments, empowering

districts and divisions, improving provincial administrative capacity and developing metropolitan governance systems for major cities. If the objective is the creation of new provinces, however, the matter becomes a much more serious constitutional and political question. The federal government therefore needs to clearly define its intentions because vague terminology can create political uncertainty.

Pakistan’s administrative challenges are nevertheless real. The country has a large and diverse population, considerable geographical variation and different linguistic, cultural and economic conditions. Rapid population growth in major cities has increased pressure on public institutions, while provincial capitals often carry the administrative burden of very large territories. At the same time, local governments in many areas remain financially and administratively weak. These circumstances make administrative reform a legitimate issue. The challenge is determining which form of reform would provide the greatest benefit.

Several alternatives therefore need to be examined. Pakistan could strengthen local governments, increase the administrative capacity of districts and divisions, introduce stronger metropolitan governance in major cities or devolve greater powers within existing provinces. Creating new provinces is only one possible solution and should not automatically be treated as the answer to every administrative problem. Each option has different objectives, costs and constitutional implications.

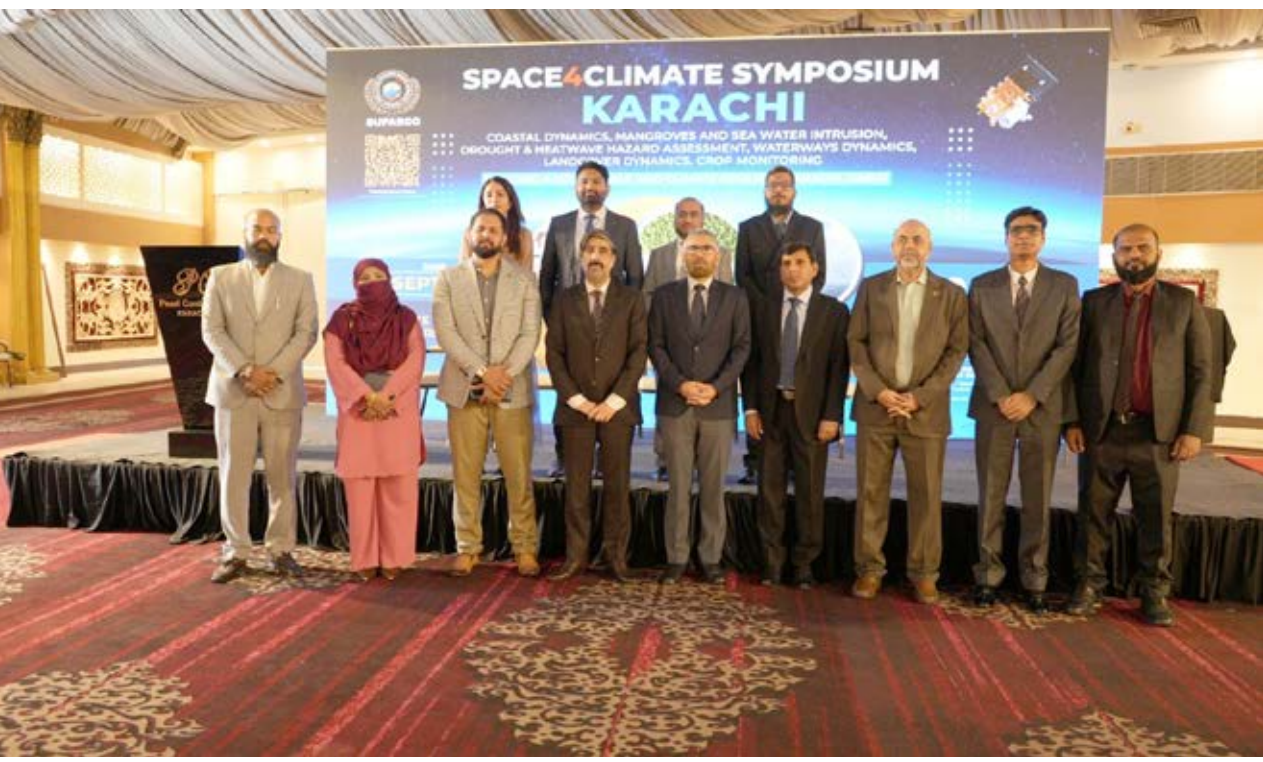
SUPARCO Holds Fourth Regional ‘Space4Climate’ Symposium in Karachi

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), through its Space Applications Center for Climate Sciences (SACCS), organized the fourth regional symposium under its “Space4Climate” initiative on September 8, 2026, in Karachi. The event focused on coastal dynamics, mangroves, seawater intrusion, drought and heatwave hazards, waterways, land-cover changes and crop monitoring. The symposium brought together government officials, policymakers, scientists, researchers, development partners, academics and environmental experts to promote the use of space technology for climate resilience and sustainable development. Participants examined climate-related challenges facing Sindh and Pakistan, including floods, disasters, heatwaves, air pollution and changing

water resources. Secretary Sindh Environment, Climate Change and Coastal Development Faisal Ahmed Uqaili, the keynote speaker, stressed the importance of advanced geospatial technologies, scientific data and stronger institutional cooperation for climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction. He also highlighted Sindh government initiatives related to carbon monitoring, carbon financing, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and climate projects. SUPARCO Member Space Application and Research Wing Zafar Iqbal, the chief guest, highlighted the growing impacts of climate change, including glacier melt, floods, droughts, heatwaves, air pollution and pressures on agriculture and water resources. He emphasized that satellites, remote sensing, geospatial analytics and Geographic Information Systems are essential for monitoring environ-

mental changes and supporting national climate priorities. A major feature was the presentation of SUPARCO’s Space4Climate initiative and a live demonstration of its geospatial portals. These portals use data from Pakistani satellites, including PRSS-1, SAR-1 and EO series, to provide near-real-time information on air quality, greenhouse gases, glaciers, waterways, land cover and coastal ecosystems. Technical sessions and a panel discussion explored ways to integrate satellite-based information into provincial planning, disaster preparedness, agriculture, water management and environmental governance. The symposium concluded with recommendations for wider institutional adoption of Space4Climate services, stronger inter-agency collaboration, capacity building and continued development of operational climate information services.



Independence Day of Tajikistan

ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Director General Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saleem Mazhar National Language Promotion Department (NLPD), Ambassador of Tajikistan Yusuf Sharifzoda and others cutting the cake on the occasion of the 35th Independence Day of Tajikistan at the Embassy of Tajikistan.



Founder Group Rallies Islamabad Traders Ahead of ICCI Elections

Commerce Desk

Founder Group Chairman Tariq Sadiq addressed a dinner hosted by Wajid Ayub and Javed Ullah Wazir in Tarnol, honouring the group’s leadership and candidates ahead of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) elections. Sadiq said a stronger economy requires cooperation between the business community and government institutions, calling for effective representation of traders in key decision-making bodies and citing unity and organization as the Founder Group’s core strengths. Wajid Ayub reaffirmed a decade-long commitment to the group, noting its leaders had served Islamabad’s business community for 40 years, and highlighted that roughly 280 voters — about half the total electorate — attended the event as proof of the group’s strength. Former ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, referencing ongoing national discussions on new provinces, proposed that the business community lay the groundwork for an “Islamabad Businessmen and Citizens Party”



and field candidates for a proposed city assembly, arguing local businessmen best understand their constituencies’ problems. He praised presidential candidates Zakariya Zia and Umar Hussain, and senior vice presidential candidate Iftikhar Chattha, and called for resolving Tarnol’s parking issues with the National Highway Authority and building a flyover at the GT Road railway crossing. Candidates Zakariya Zia and Umar Hussain both pledged to prioritize traders’ issues and unite all trade groups if elected. Aamir Waheed, Ejaz Abbasi and Central Traders Organization Pakistan President Kashif Chaudhry echoed calls for unity and strong representation. Babar Chaudhry hosted and moderated the event, which drew several ICCI council members and a large gathering of traders.

HEC Chairman Inaugurates Theatre Hall at AIOU, Launches Book on Teacher Education



HEC Chairman Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar inaugurated a modern theatre hall at Allama Iqbal Open University’s Academic Complex, aimed at giving students a dedicated space for creative, literary and cultural activities alongside their academics. The ceremony was attended by Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, faculty members and principal officers. As the venue’s first event, the ceremony also featured the launch of “Teacher Education in Pakistan,”

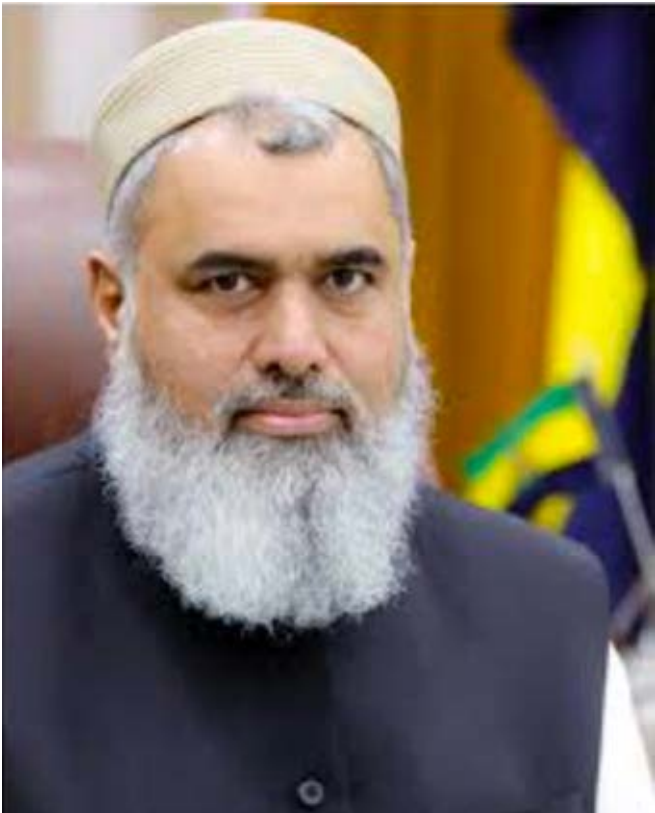
authored by Punjab University Professor Emeritus Dr. Munawar Sultana Mirza, with Dr. Akhtar presiding. He said competent and committed teachers are essential to quality education, describing teachers as role models beyond mere sources of knowledge, and stressed the need for continuous professional development. He called the book a valuable resource on teacher training and encouraged educators to read it. Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood praised Dr. Mirza’s academic contributions, calling

her a respected authority in education whose book reflects her extensive experience and insight. The event was also addressed by Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Education Hassan Saqlain, Parliamentary Secretary Rabia Naseem, Professor Emeritus Dr. Mahmood-ul-Hassan Butt, and Dr. Afshan Huma, all of whom praised the book as a significant scholarly contribution to teacher education in Pakistan and commended Dr. Mirza’s academic and research work.

LUMHS Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ikram Din Ujjan’s Services Commended for Institutional Progress

Abdul Ghafoor SAROHI

Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences (LUMHS) Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ikram Din Ujjan has led significant initiatives across education, research, healthcare and infrastructure, boosting the university’s national and international standing. Under his leadership, LUMHS has continued hosting international conferences and research programmes, while healthcare services at LUMHS Health Services Hospital have expanded with specialist doctors across various disciplines. Student facilities have grown considerably, including an electric shuttle bus service, a computer-based examination centre handling over 500 exams daily, a modern library, girls’ sports facilities, new hostels, and an ATM at the girls’ hostel. A dedicated sports complex has been built for male students, alongside modern laboratories and diagnostic facilities strengthening academic and healthcare infrastructure. LUMHS has also expanded healthcare outreach across Sindh’s districts, enhanced medical services at Dadu’s 400-bed DHQ Hospital, and established a new medical college in Thatta, marking a major step in provincial medical education. The growing presence of international students further reflects LUMHS’s expanding global academic profile. These developments under Prof. Dr. Ujjan’s leadership are seen as reinforcing LUMHS’s position as a leading medical education and healthcare institution in Sindh.



PSCA Intensifies Province-Wide Crackdown Against Smog; Over 2,000 Environmental Violations Detected in Seven Days

Bureau Report

LAHORE: On the directions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA) has intensified its crackdown against smog and environmental pollution, deploying AI-powered cameras, virtual patrolling and drone technology for round-the-clock monitoring

across the province. Through its 43 Smart Safe City Centres across Punjab, PSCA detected more than 2,000 environmental violations in just seven days, with real-time information being shared with the relevant departments for immediate enforcement action. Safe City cameras identified 810 vehicles transporting construction material without

proper covering. As a result, 487 challans were issued, while 189 drivers were warned. The AI-enabled surveillance system also detected 767 smoke-emitting vehicles, leading to 591 fines. In addition, 183 e-challans were issued through Safe City cameras against vehicles found emitting excessive smoke. Drone surveillance was also deployed

to monitor burning of crop residues. Twelve violations were detected and action was initiated against those responsible. The crackdown also covered industrial pollution, with 39 cases detected. Enforcement authorities imposed fines at four locations, sealed two industrial units and issued warnings to seven others. Similarly, 151 cases of smoke emis-

sions from brick kilns were reported. Action resulted in the registration of 20 FIRs, imposition of fines and sealing of 10 brick kilns. Safe City surveillance further detected 268 violations involving barbecue smoke and chimney emissions. One site was sealed, six were fined, while 224 violators were issued warnings. A Safe City spokesperson

said that environmental violations were being identified promptly through the 43 Smart Safe City Centres, with actionable information immediately shared with the relevant departments to ensure timely enforcement. The spokesperson urged citizens to play their part in controlling environmental pollution and immediately report activities contributing

to smog through Emergency Helpline 15. The spokesperson further affirmed that the Punjab Safe Cities Authority remains fully mobilised and committed to eliminating smog and air pollution, adding that the use of advanced technology for environmental monitoring and enforcement would be further expanded across Punjab.

Bull & Bears

PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
171,943.59	172,642.16
Day's High	Day's Low
173,174.18	171,801.66
Index Value	Change
11,057,636,175	−698.57
Percentage	Time
−0.4%	9 Sept, 2026 4:30 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,670.06	−141.60
Percentage	Time
−1.31%	9 Sept, 4:35 pm GMT+1
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
52,511.35	−274.72
Percentage	Time
−0.52%	9 Sept, 1:30 pm GMT-4
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
65,142.78	−126.55
Percentage	Time
−0.19%	9 Sept, 3:45 pm GMT+9
Open Market Forex Rates	

PSO Hosts KVTC Student Exhibition Celebrating Vocational Skills and Inclusion

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan State Oil (PSO) hosted a student exhibition at its head office in collaboration with the Karachi Vocational Training Centre (KVTC), celebrating the creativity and skills of differently-abled students. The event builds on a partnership between PSO and KVTC that began in 2018.

The exhibition featured stalls of hand-made products crafted by KVTC students. PSO employees interacted directly with the young artisans, purchasing items and learning about their crafts through step-by-step demonstrations.

Speaking at the event, PSO CSR Trust member Mr. Asif Khan said the partnership reflects PSO's commitment to inclusion, dignity, and equal opportunity, enabling differently-abled individuals to develop skills and participate fully in society.

Farheen Amir, COO KVTC, thanked PSO for its steadfast support, noting that such events give students confidence, tools for financial independence, and recognition for their hard work.

Is Samsung Faking Mini LED? TCL Takes Legal Action

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Technology company TCL is suing Samsung over what it alleges is false advertising concerning the use of "Mini LED" in some of its television models.

TCL, a pioneer of Mini LED technology and among the first companies to introduce it to the market, alleges that Samsung's "Mini LED" label could mislead consumers into believing that the televisions provide the technological benefits and performance associated with Mini LED technology.

Export Insurance Pool, Financing Facilities to Boost SMEs and Exports: Mian Zahid Hussain

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Mian Zahid Hussain, President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and holder of several other business leadership roles, has welcomed a series of government measures aimed at boosting exports and supporting SMEs. These include a Rs3 billion export-insurance risk pool established through the Export Development Fund (EDF) and EXIM Bank of Pakistan, along with expanded export financing facilities. He credited Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb for endorsing these initiatives.

Highlighting the economic backdrop, Hussain noted that Pakistan's merchan-



dise exports fell 5.97% to \$30.1 billion in

FY2025-26, while imports rose to \$69.6 billion, widening the trade deficit by 21.57% to \$39.5 billion. Remittances of \$41.6 billion helped offset this gap, underscoring the need for greater value addition and market diversification.

He welcomed the 50% increase in the Export Finance Scheme envelope, from Rs1 trillion to Rs1.5 trillion for FY2026-27, with Rs300 billion specifically earmarked for SME exporters, agricultural SMEs, and new borrowers. He also praised the Rs350 billion Long-Term Export Growth Financing Facility, meant to support machinery upgrades and production modernization, which could help exporters meet international environmental standards.

Hussain emphasized that the insurance

risk pool would protect smaller businesses against non-payment risks from new buyers, while financing schemes would address working-capital needs. He also welcomed a reinsurance agreement between EXIM Bank and ICIEC, plus the HBL-EXIM Bank Master Policy, as complementary risk-protection measures.

He noted SME financing grew 30.5% to Rs901.6 billion by June 2026, with borrowing businesses increasing 15.18% to 318,585. Hussain called for these gains to translate into higher exports and recommended prioritizing product improvement, certification, packaging, and market intelligence, alongside efforts to retain GSP+ status, reduce energy costs, and expedite tax refunds.

Souvenir

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja received General Manager Mr. Lu Guoping of Shanghai Pumin Technology Development Company on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Multan Chamber Building Renovation Completed, Inaugurated by President Mian Bakhtawar Tanveer Sheikh

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The renovation and repair work of the Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) building has been completed. President Mian Bakhtawar Tanveer Sheikh inaugurated the renovated building along with senior members, followed by special prayers for national development, industry, trade, and the Chamber's progress.

Speaking at the ceremony, President Sheikh said the building was originally constructed in 1995 and last renovated in 2006. This time, upgrades were focused on modern requirements and member facilities. Key additions include

a lift for elderly and senior members to access the second-floor hall, a waiting area for visiting members, roof reconstruction and repairs, and separate washrooms for women and men.

He noted MCCI is the voice of South Punjab's business community and it is the Chamber's responsibility to provide a comfortable, safe and dignified environment. The administration aims to further improve facilities and performance to support industry, trade and economic development in the region.

Senior members including Vice President Azhar Baloch, Khawaja Muhammad Yousuf, Syed Iftekhar Ali Shah, and others attended and praised the efforts.

State Bank Bought \$27bn in 3 Years to Stabilize Dollar: Malik Bostan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: ECAP Chairman Malik Muhammad Bostan said the State Bank of Pakistan purchased \$27 billion from the market over the past three years. He noted that without these purchases, the US dollar exchange rate would have fallen below Rs200.

Bostan said the interbank market is not a true free-float system. A genuine free float would allow customers to convert PKR to USD at the prevailing interbank rate directly through banks, but banks often cite dollar shortages. This makes the current regime "neither completely free float nor completely controlled." He added a real free float could only work when forex reserves reach \$70 billion. Current reserves are too low to sustain it.

On the economy, he linked political instability to weak



investment and urged political parties to engage in dialogue. He praised PM Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir for Pakistan's role in the Iran-US ceasefire efforts, asking why similar facilitation cannot happen domestically. He stressed political stability is essential for economic stability, and flagged the national savings rate at just 6.4%.

Bostan also warned of climate and flood risks, citing dam shortages and wasted water. He proposed building major dams every 100 km or a network of smaller dams to store floodwater and protect agriculture.

Sarsabz Announces Winners of ‘Dil Se Dekho Sarsabz Pakistan’ Campaign

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sarsabz, Fatima Fertilizer's flagship brand, has announced the winners of its nationwide social media campaign "Dil Se Dekho Sarsabz Pakistan," launched to mark Independence Day by encouraging people to share stories, places, and identities close to their hearts. The campaign invited participants to showcase Pakistan through a personal lens, capturing local traditions, cultures, and everyday moments from communities nationwide.

Winners were chosen based on originality, storytelling, and their ability to reflect the spirit of their hometown and the country. The five winners are: Noorehtsham (Lahore), Ayesha (Multan), Hareera Alvi (Okara), bhatti_brand_1989 (Gujrat), and Hum Kissan Hamara Pakistan2 (Bahawalpur).

Rabel Sadozai, Director Marketing & Sales at Fatima Fertilizer, said the campaign drew thousands of entries offering



diverse perspectives on Pakistan, each reflecting pride and a sense of belonging. She congratulated the winners and thanked all participants for contributing to the initiative.

The campaign aimed to give Pakistanis a platform to celebrate their hometowns and highlight the people, culture, and places that make their communities unique, turning individual stories into a collective expression of national diversity and pride. Sarsabz concluded the campaign by celebrating both the winners and all who took part in the nationwide initiative.

FBR Agrees to Clear Rs83bn Refunds, Rs43bn Rebates in Relief to Karachi Traders

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: FBR Chairman Rashid Mahmood Langrial met with FPCCI office-bearers in Karachi, following PM Shehbaz Sharif's directive for monthly meetings with the business community. Key outcomes included addressing misuse concerns under the Export Facilitation Scheme, clarifying that the 10% value-addition requirement applies to finished goods rather than raw material imports, and agreeing exports won't be halt-

ed solely over this issue.

The FBR reduced classification dispute resolution time from 120 to 90 days and agreed to resolve Fifth Schedule tax exemption anomalies. On refunds, Rs83 billion in pending income tax refunds will be cleared within two to three months, alongside Rs43 billion in pending rebates. Low-risk sales tax registrations will be completed within a week.

The meeting also reviewed the small traders' registration scheme, which has enrolled only about 3,800-5,000 of a targeted



one million traders. FPCCI pledged cooperation through awareness campaigns to improve

enrollment and communication between FBR and traders.

Experts Call for Stronger Academia-Industry Linkages to Bridge Pakistan’s Skills Gap

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Educationists, policymakers, industry representatives and university Vice-Chancellors called for structured collaboration between academia and industry to address Pakistan’s skills gap and improve graduate employability, at a forum titled “Skilling Pakistan: Challenges & Learning from Best Practices” held at FPCCI’s Regional Office, Islamabad. The event was jointly organized by FPCCI, Young Entrepreneurs Summit (YES), HEC’s Task Force on Business Incubation Centres, Atlas VTI, and the Vice Chancellor Forum of Federal Universities, and moderated by Muhammad Murtaza Noor of the Inter-University Consortium.

Speakers included HEC’s Prof. Dr. Syed Habib Ali Bukhari, Pakistan Science Foundation Chairman Prof. Dr. Muhammad Akmal, HEC Advisor

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ali Nasir, PM’s Youth Programme DG Dr. Syed Shahbaz Hussain Shamsi, and FPCCI’s Tariq Khan Jadoon and Aziz Malik. A docu-

mentary on Atlas Vocational Training Institute was screened, and a Best Practices session featured models from Pak-Austria Institute Haripur, GCU

Faisalabad, Honda Atlas, Health Services Academy and Rawalpindi Women University. Participants called for institutionalized academia-industry liaison, industry-informed curriculum updates, mandatory outcome-oriented internships, and greater industry involvement in teaching, research and innovation. They stressed equipping graduates with AI, digital and entrepreneurial skills, strengthening ORICs and BICs with dedicated staff, and upgrading labs through industry and CSR funding.

Jadoon pledged FPCCI’s cooperation on joint initiatives, while Shamsi announced the federal government has declared 2027 the “Year of Skills.” Participants were invited to the upcoming YES Summit, Expo and Awards in mid-October 2026, and recommended regular forums to develop scalable interventions for a skilled workforce.



Supreme Court grants woman final relief in inheritance case after 50 years

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD :The Supreme Court has granted final relief to a woman from Dera Ismail Khan in a decades-old inheritance dispute, ordering implementation of its 2022 judgment and rejecting an attempt by the opposing side to revive a dismissed review petition.

A three-member bench comprising Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan and Justice Salahuddin Panhwar announced the decision in the case of Zaitoon Bibi, who had allegedly remained deprived of her share in her father’s property since his death in 1976.

Justice Panhwar authored the judgment.

The apex court expressed strong displeasure over the failure to implement its earlier orders and stressed that compliance with judicial directions was fundamental to the administration of justice.

The court observed that the judicial system rested on certainty, discipline and the sanctity of court orders, and



that compliance with such orders was mandatory.

It said treating judicial indulgence or concessions granted by a court as a mere procedural formality undermined the seriousness and sanctity of judicial orders.

According to the judgment, a conditional adjournment had been granted in the review proceedings on March 4,

2024. However, when the matter subsequently came up for hearing on Sept. 12, another adjournment was sought.

The review petition was consequently dismissed for non-prosecution after the request for another adjournment.

The opposing party later sought restoration of the review petition, but the Supreme Court rejected the request.

The court held that recalling the order

dismissing the review petition would effectively amount to undoing its March 4, 2024 order under which conditional indulgence had already been extended to the party.

The judgment stressed that litigants and lawyers could not treat concessions extended by courts as routine procedural opportunities while disregarding conditions attached to them.

The underlying inheritance dispute stretches back approximately half a century.

According to the case record, Zaitoon Bibi’s father died in 1976, but she remained deprived of her inheritance in the property thereafter.

The dispute eventually reached the Supreme Court, which ruled in her favour in 2022. The subsequent review petition challenging that outcome was dismissed in 2024.

By rejecting the latest attempt to have the dismissal recalled and directing implementation of its 2022 judgment, the Supreme Court has now cleared the way for enforcement of the relief previously granted to Zaitoon Bibi.

UK Labels Israel ‘Genocidal’ and Bans Its Products

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The UK’s leadership in this matter provides an opportunity for Muslim countries to take decisive action. While individual boycotts have existed in some Muslim nations, coordinated government-level sanctions would send an even stronger message. Islamic countries should follow the British example by imposing comprehensive bans on Israeli products, regardless of how they are branded or marketed. They should also consider severing diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties with Israel until it complies with international law.

This is not about targeting Jewish people—a charge that Israeli leaders cynically weaponize to deflect legitimate criticism. It is about opposing a state that has institutionalized discrimination, collective punishment, and territorial expansion. The vast majority of pro-Palestinian advocates, whether Muslim, Christian, Jewish, or secular, are motivated by a commitment to human rights, not by prejudice.

No discussion of Israel’s accountability would be complete without addressing the United States’ role as its primary enabler. For decades, the US has provided Israel with billions of dollars in annual aid, diplomatic cover at the United Nations, and military support that has been used to commit atrocities against Palestinians. This relationship has not only facilitated Israeli aggression but has also undermined US credibility in the Middle East and the global South.

The American people, who are hard-working, peace-loving, and committed to justice, must pressure their representatives to end this unconditional support. Individual Americans can participate in boycotts, campaign for congressional action, and raise their voices in solidarity with Palestinians. The Israeli government’s increasingly extreme rhetoric, including calls for a “greater Israel” from the Nile to the Euphrates, should alarm all Americans who value stability and international law.

The South African anti-apartheid movement demonstrated that sustained international pressure can bring about change. Sanctions, boycotts, and diplomatic isolation were instrumental in forcing the apartheid regime to negotiate an end to its discriminatory system. The same strategy can and must be applied to Israel.

Making Israel a pariah state serves multiple purposes. First, it strips away the illusion that Israel’s actions are legitimate, forcing the Israeli public to confront the reality of their government’s policies. Second, it creates tangible consequences for continued occupation and settlement expansion. Third, it signals to the world that the era of unconditional tolerance for Israeli atrocities is over.

The UK’s sanctions against Israeli settlements are not an act of hostility but an expression of hope—hope that international law can be restored, hope that justice can prevail over might, hope that the Palestinian people will finally receive

the recognition and rights they have been denied for three generations.

Justice for Palestinians is not about choosing sides in a conflict; it is about upholding fundamental principles of human dignity, equality, and the rule of law. Israel must now confront the fact that its political establishment has become a pariah in the community of nations. The question is not whether Israel will change—it is whether the world will have the courage to demand that change. History will judge us all by our response to this defining moment. The time for action is now, and the world must recognize Palestine as a state and ensure its borders are protected. Only through collective action can we ensure that justice, truth, and humanity prevail.

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

Auqaf Punjab Directs Promotion of Historical Galleries at Model Shrines



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Secretary/Chief Administrator Auqaf Punjab Dr. Ehsan Bhutta has directed officials to promote extensive visits to newly established historical galleries at Auqaf model shrines, aiming to acquaint devotees, students, teachers, government employees and the public with Sufi teachings, Islamic heritage and Punjab’s spiritual history. Addressing a Zonal Administrators conference in Lahore, he instructed officers to engage educational institutions in organized visits, calling shrines custodians of centuries-old heritage that should be presented in an engaging, accessible way.

Bhutta also directed timely completion of development projects on Auqaf land, disposal of Waqf land through auction, faster resolution of property transfer issues, and achievement of monthly performance targets, alongside regular updating of the Litigation Portal. On dengue prevention, he ordered daily monitoring, larvae eradication and intensified awareness campaigns. He further instructed installation of specially designed boxes for preserving sacred papers at shrines and mosques, and directed Data Darbar Hospital to offer free treatment to deserving patients while charging others reasonable fees.

He emphasized monitoring major shrines through Lahore’s Command and Control Centre, and took notice of underperforming zones—Rawalpindi, Multan, Lahore East, Lahore West, Pakpattan and Dera Ghazi Khan—warning of disciplinary action for failing to meet targets, while stressing regular performance reviews to boost departmental efficiency.

Nazeer Hussain Gymkhana and Abu Rehan CC Secure Victory in Muhammad Zameer Khan Zone-I Inter Club Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Two more matches were decided in the Muhammad Zameer Khan Memorial Zone-I Inter Club Cricket Tournament here at various Grounds of the City.

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Century 131 by Hammd Mughal, 88 by Muhammad Bilal Khan, 80 by Jamshed Iqbal and some good bowling by Anas Ali 4/41, Syed Hussain Haider 4/70, Inshal Nawab 3/25.

Scores in Brief: Nazeer Hussain Gymkhana Gulberg beat Al-Karam Sports Cricket Club by 5 Wickets. Al-Karam Sports cricket club 251 all-out in 34.4 overs. Hammd Mughal 131,16x4 3x6, Orang-zailab 41 5x4 1x6, Muhammad Uzair Faisal 18. Anas Ali (rlb) 4/41, Syed Hussain Haider (lls) 4/70.

In reply Nazeer Hussain Gymkhana Gulberg 253/5 in 38.3 overs. Muhammad Bilal Khan 88 12 x4 2x6, Jamshed Iqbal 80, 11x4 3x6, Muhammad Ashbal Niazi 24, Anas Ali 22 not out. Muhammad Faish Khan 2/48.

In the 2nd Match Abu Rehan Cricket club beat Rafiq Shirazi Memorial Cricket Club by 5 Wickets. Rafiq Shirazi Memorial Cricket Club 124 all out in 27.1 overs. Saif ur Rehman 37, Mohsin Hussain 29, Syed Hafeez ullah 25, Uzair Khan 18. Inshal Nawab (ob) 3/25, Noor Alam 2/16, Muhammad Shan 2/20, Abdul Rafay 2/24.

In reply Abu Rehan Cricket Club 129/5 in 25.3 overs. Ahmed Raza 41 7x4, Muhammad Ahmad 23 2x4 2x6, Noor Alam 18 not out. Saif ur Rehman 2/6, Muhammad Rasheed 2/27.



Field Marshal Underscores Youth’s Responsibility in the Digital Age

Continued from Page 4

The piece highlights existing youth-led initiatives promoting interfaith harmony, environmental sustainability, and social justice as evidence that young Pakistanis are already proactively building a better future despite facing economic hardship and societal resistance. It frames the meeting with Harvard students as demonstrating Pakistan’s willingness to engage with the global community while main-

taining its own national interests and values.

The article closes on an optimistic note, characterizing Munir’s message as one of empowerment rather than alarmism. It concludes that Pakistani youth have already shown maturity and readiness to counter false propaganda, and that as they continue developing their skills and embracing fact-based thinking, they will become architects of a more peaceful, secure, and prosperous Pakistan.

New Provinces Debate: Governance Reform or Restructuring Pakistan?

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The issue is also complicated by the fact that Pakistan’s four provinces have different political histories, geographical conditions, demographic patterns and understandings of provincial identity. A proposal that may be regarded as an administrative solution in one province could be viewed elsewhere as a threat to political identity or territorial integrity. Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Sindh therefore approach the question from different perspectives. Sindh’s position is particularly sensitive because debates over administrative division are connected with historical unity, geographical integrity, resources, water, political representation and

the future governance of Karachi.

Another major question concerns public consent. If new administrative units are to be created with public approval and political consensus, there must be a clear mechanism for determining that consent. Possible methods include elections, referendums, resolutions of provincial assemblies or the constitutional amendment process. The article stresses that public opinion, although extremely important, cannot replace constitutional procedures.

According to the article, Pakistan’s Constitution provides a specific procedure for altering provincial boundaries. Article 239(4) requires a constitutional

amendment concerning provincial limits to receive approval from at least two-thirds of the total membership of the concerned provincial assembly. Consequently, any proposal for creating new provinces must operate within the constitutional framework.

The idea of a referendum also raises difficult questions. It must be determined whose opinion would be sought, whether voting would take place across an entire province or only in the proposed territory of a new province, and how conflicting regional results would be handled. Therefore, simply proposing a referendum does not resolve the issue. What is needed is a transparent, constitutional and broadly acceptable

mechanism for determining public consent.

The article further questions whether new provinces would actually solve Pakistan’s administrative problems. Other countries have often addressed similar challenges through stronger local governments, regional administration, metropolitan systems and improved financial decentralisation rather than by creating additional provinces. Pakistan should therefore first determine whether existing administrative structures can be made more effective without changing provincial boundaries. If new provinces are ultimately considered necessary, the government would need to provide a strong administrative, economic, financial and consti-

tutional justification.

Such restructuring would involve complicated questions concerning provincial revenues, resources, government institutions, capitals, territorial boundaries, water, public property, employees, policing, the judiciary and fiscal arrangements. Population growth or geographical distance alone would not provide a sufficient justification for such a major constitutional change.

The article argues that the real test is federal trust. Pakistan is a federation whose stability depends not only on Islamabad’s authority but also on confidence between the federal government and the provinces. If provinces believe that major administrative changes are being planned

without adequate consultation, an initiative presented as administrative reform could instead create political suspicion.

The recommended approach is therefore broad consultation. Parliament should debate any major proposal, provincial governments should be consulted, constitutional experts should participate, and administrative specialists should conduct studies. Most importantly, the public should be clearly informed about what the government means by “new administrative units.”

The article gives special attention to Sindh’s reaction. A Sindh Assembly debate on September 3, 2026, followed by formal notification of a resolution on

September 7, reaffirmed the protection of Sindh’s existing geographical unity and referred to earlier resolutions. This demonstrates that the debate has moved beyond a simple discussion of administrative efficiency and has become connected with Sindh’s history, identity and collective future.

Ultimately, the article suggests that the future of this debate depends not only on what Islamabad proposes but also on how the provinces, particularly Sindh, respond. The central challenge is to develop an approach that improves governance while respecting constitutional requirements, provincial sensitivities, democratic consent and the federal character of Pakistan.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, meeting with High Commissioner-designate of New Zealand to Pakistan, H.E. David Pine, at the Finance Division on Wednesday to discuss bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation.



Photo: PID

NZ High Commissioner-Designate Meets Finance Minister, Vows to Boost Economic Ties with Pakistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: New Zealand's High Commissioner-designate, David Pine, met Federal Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in Islamabad to discuss bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation. Pine congratulated Pakistan on its successful

Eurobond issuance and praised its progress toward macroeconomic stability, while Aurangzeb stressed that sustaining reform momentum, fiscal discipline and policy continuity remain government priorities. Both sides focused on strengthening business-to-business engagement, with Pine calling for more

regular bilateral trade discussions and direct commercial linkages. Aurangzeb said the private sector should lead expansion of commercial ties, with government support providing the enabling ecosystem, and noted that formal trade agreements could accelerate existing business activity.

The discussion also touched on the large number of Pakistani students in New Zealand, particularly in agriculture, with Aurangzeb emphasizing the need to translate such opportunities into practical outcomes at home. He highlighted potential cooperation in digital services and technology, citing Pakistan's growing IT and free-

lance sector. Pine expressed interest in agri-tech and broader private-sector collaboration. Aurangzeb welcomed the renewed engagement, while Pine reaffirmed New Zealand's commitment to deepening economic relations and continued dialogue between the two countries.

Turn Knowledge into Practical Solutions, Says Federal Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Investment Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh addressed the concluding ceremony of the PUAN Economic Policy Challenge 2026 in Islamabad, organized by the U. S. Embassy, USEFP, PUAN, and Accountability Lab Pakistan. He stressed that knowledge becomes valuable only when applied to practical problems, urging participants to use their expertise for real-world policymaking. Sheikh highlighted government reforms under PM Shehbaz Sharif, including IMF-linked economic



measures, Board of Investment regulatory reforms, the Business Facilitation Centre,

and Special Economic Zones offering tax incentives. He noted Pakistan-U. S. bilateral trade stands at roughly \$10 billion, with the U. S. remaining Pakistan's largest export market. He cited foreign exchange reserves of around \$18 billion, while cautioning that global conflicts were affecting investment and trade. Sheikh reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to constructive ties with both the U. S. and Iran, and praised Field Marshal Asim Munir's diplomatic efforts. U. S. Chargé d'Affaires Andy Halus also spoke, and winning teams received shields and certificates.

DPM Dar, NA Speaker discuss matters regarding parliamentary affairs, pending govt legislative business

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Speaker, National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Wednesday discussed matters relating to the Parliamentary Affairs and the pending government and private members legislative business in the National Assembly. The speaker National Assembly and the deputy prime minister met at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a DPM's Office news release said. The DPM/FM underscored the importance of a strong & effective Parliament in strengthening Pakistan's democratic institutions and highlighted the need for close coordination among the parliamentary parties on the matters of national interest

ECP Disqualifies Three Former Opposition MNAs for Failing to Declare Assets

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has disqualified three former National Assembly members — Zartaj Gul, Sahibzada Muhammad Hamid Raza, and Abdul Latif Chitrali — for failing to submit their statements of assets and liabilities (Form B). Under an order dated August 7, 2026, the ECP ruled that all three will remain barred from contesting elections until they submit the required documentation. Zartaj Gul, who represented Dera Ghazi Khan and served as the Sunni



Ittehad Council's parliamentary leader, had earlier been disqualified in August 2025 following a 10-year prison sentence handed down by a Faisalabad court over her alleged role in the May 9, 2023 riots.

Hamid Raza, founder and chairman of the Sunni Ittehad Council since 2013, served in the National Assembly from February 2024 until his disqualification in August 2025 over the same May 9 riots case. He was arrested in November 2025 after his conviction and sentencing. Abdul Latif Chitrali, who served as an MNA from February to July 2025, had already been disqualified once under Article 63 of the Constitution in July 2025. The latest ECP order adds a fresh disqualification tied specifically to non-disclosure of assets.

PM Shehbaz to address UN General Assembly on September 25

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: According to sources, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will arrive in New York on September 20. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar will also accompany the premier during the visit. Sources said a high-level delegation will accompany the prime minister, which will also include Information and Broadcasting Minister Atta Tarar.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is scheduled to address the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 25, where he is expected to highlight Pakistan's position on key regional and international issues. The prime minister will also attend a reception hosted by US President Donald Trump. Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar is expected to hold several important meetings with his counterparts during the visit.

Two Pakistan Navy personnel martyred during maritime patrol



Bureau report

KARACHI: Two Pakistan Navy personnel were martyred while performing maritime patrol duties to ensure security at sea, the Navy's Directorate-General of Public Relations (DGPR) said on Wednesday. In a statement posted on X, the Navy identified the martyred personnel as Shoaibur Rehman (PMA-IV) and Ghufraan Nasar (PMT-II). The DGPR said both personnel "embraced martyrdom" while carrying out their duties. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naved Ashraf expressed deep sorrow over the loss of the two sailors and paid tribute to their service and sacrifice. Senior Pakistan Navy officials attended the funerals of the martyred

personnel and met with their families, according to the statement. The incident comes as the Pakistan Navy continues efforts to safeguard the country's maritime interests amid a changing regional security environment. In March, the Navy launched Operation Muhafizul Bahr to counter what it described as "multidimensional threats" to national shipping and maritime trade. The operation was launched in response to evolving maritime security conditions and concerns over potential disruptions to critical sea lanes. Around 90 per cent of Pakistan's trade is conducted by sea, making the security and uninterrupted operation of maritime routes vital to the country's economy and national interests.

Aimal Wali, Abid Sher Ali Clash Over Punjab Govt's Suthra Punjab Programme

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A parliamentary committee dispute between ANP President Aimal Wali Khan and Senator Abid Sher Ali escalated into a public spat outside Parliament. Aimal said he had questioned Punjab police over a labourer's alleged suicide linked to unpaid wages under the Suthra Punjab Programme, a cleanliness initiative led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. He claimed his questioning had upset Abid Sher Ali and accused government officials of

frustration, saying "these helpless people have to cry even after taking the government." Abid Sher Ali rejected the characterization, saying his remarks were taken out of context and accusing Aimal of targeting his leadership and the Punjab government by criticizing Maryam Nawaz's projects. He warned Aimal against "shouting" at him or the provincial government, denied being aggressive, and, when asked about Aimal's "meter reading" jibe, quipped that as a former power minister, he was "a mechanic."

CM Maryam Nawaz's daughter Mahnoor nikkah ceremony to be held on Sept 12



Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Nikkah ceremony of Mahnoor Safdar, the younger daughter of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, has been finalized. According to sources, the Nikkah ceremony will be held on September 12 on Saturday at 5pm at Jati Umra, Lahore. The ceremony will be a private family affair, with only members of the Sharif family and close relatives invited. Around 100 guests are expected to attend the Nikkah ceremony.

Mahnoor Safdar recently graduated from SOAS University of London with a degree in Anthropology. Maryam Nawaz also attended her daughter's graduation ceremony in London, sharing her joy and pride as Mahnoor completed an important milestone in her life. As Mahnoor now steps into a new chapter of her life, Maryam Nawaz is said to be equally emotional and happy about her daughter's upcoming Nikkah ceremony. The family has extended prayers and best wishes for Mahnoor praying that her new journey brings her happiness, love.