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Erdogan Demands Immediate Gaza Reconstruction

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told the UN General Assembly that the world must immediately begin rebuilding the devastated Gaza Strip. He urged global leaders to exert greater pressure on Israel and condemned the ongoing situation, saying no one with humanity, compassion, mercy, justice or conscience could turn a blind eye to Gaza's suffering.



Finance Ministry Tightens Rules for Supplementary Grants, Links Funds to Fiscal Space

Pakistan's Ministry of Finance has tightened procedures for supplementary grant requests, tying additional fund releases more closely to available fiscal space. According to new instructions issued by the ministry, the revised guidelines impose stricter conditions on the reallocation of funds and the provision of additional amounts to government departments.

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Called on

RAWALPINDI: France's Secretary General for Defence and National Security, Nicolas Roche, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.



Pakistan, France reaffirm commitment to deepen defence ties

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: France's Secretary General for Defence and National Security, Nicolas Roche, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. French Ambassador to Pakistan Jean-Noël Poirier accompanied Roche during the visit. The two sides discussed

regional security and bilateral cooperation in defence and security.

Field Marshal Asim Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening ties with France and expanding defence and security cooperation.

Roche acknowledged Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and stability. He said France was keen to expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Trump Praises PM Shehbaz Sharif as 'Terrific Man' for Pakistan-India Ceasefire Role

Agencies

UNITED NATIONS: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, calling him a "terrific man" while highlighting his own direct intervention in brokering the May ceasefire between Pakistan and India, which he said saved 30 million lives.

Addressing the opening session of the 81st UN General Assembly, Trump reflected on his foreign policy achievements over the past year, placing special emphasis on his medi-

ation between Islamabad and New Delhi. He revealed that PM Shehbaz personally acknowledged his decisive role in saving over 30 million lives.

Trump told world leaders, including Shehbaz who arrived in New York on Monday, that he had settled eight wars since taking office—some spanning decades—through his "very, very special" relationships. These included conflicts between Cambodia and Thailand, Kosovo and Serbia, DR Congo and Rwanda, Pakistan and India, Armenia and Azer-



baijan, and Gaza, including the return of all hostages.

"Almost every one of these countries wrote me a letter of

thank you. The Prime Minister of Pakistan—terrific man—said that Donald Trump was responsible for saving 30 million lives," Trump said.

This is not the first time Trump has publicly praised Shehbaz; he previously called him and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir "two fantastic people," also describing Munir as a "highly respected general" and "great fighter." Shehbaz has reciprocated by calling Trump a "man of peace" for helping "avert a major catastrophe in South Asia" during the May conflict.

DPM Calls for Palestine-Led Governance, Accountability for International Law Violations

News Desk

NEW YORK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Tuesday expressed serious concern over the situation in Gaza and the West Bank, calling for Palestine-led reconstruction and governance arrangements with a central role for the Palestinian Authority, and demanded accountability for violations of international law.

Addressing the OIC Committee of Six on Palestine on the sidelines of the 81st UN General Assembly session, Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people. He appreciated mediation efforts by the US, Egypt, Qatar



and Türkiye in advancing the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, as endorsed by

UN Security Council Resolution 2803.

The Deputy PM strongly condemned continued Israeli violations at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif and voiced concern over illegal settlement activity, settler violence, and annexationist measures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, calling for renewed and coordinated OIC diplomatic action. He stressed the need for full and faithful implementation of the Gaza Peace Plan and Resolution 2803.

Dar reiterated Pakistan's support for an independent, sovereign and contiguous State of Palestine based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, and backed Palestine's full UN membership.

Interior Minister Condemns Firing on Polio Team in Nushki, Mourns Two Constables' Martyrdom

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday strongly condemned the firing incident on an anti-polio team in Nushki, expressing grief over the martyrdom of Constables Muhammad Yasir and Abdul Rauf, who lost their lives while protecting the vaccination mission aimed at safeguarding children's future.

Naqvi paid tribute to the two policemen for their sacrifice in the line of duty and extended heartfelt condolences to their families, saying the nation recognizes and values the services of security personnel performing their duties under difficult circumstances.

Condemning the attack, the interior minister termed targeting a team working to secure children's future a heinous and unforgivable act, adding that those responsible had committed a serious crime against a national public health effort. He said the attackers deserve a severe and exemplary fate, reiterating that such attacks on personnel protecting children from disease cannot be justified under any circumstances.

PM Shehbaz meets Kuwait's Crown Prince on UNGA sidelines

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait, on the sidelines of the High-Level Segment of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York today.

The Prime Minister conveyed warm greetings to the Crown Prince and reaffirmed Pakistan's strong and brotherly relations with Kuwait.

The two leaders reviewed bilateral ties and discussed avenues for further strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

The Prime Minister empha-



sised the importance Pakistan attaches to its relations with Kuwait and highlighted the potential for enhanced cooperation in trade, investment, energy and human resource development.

The two leaders also exchanged views on regional and international developments and reiterated their shared commitment to promoting peace, stability and prosperity.

DPM meets Libyan FM; urges all parties to return to Islamabad MoU for peace

News Desk

NEW YORK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Tuesday calling dialogue and diplomacy the only viable means for addressing regional challenges, stressed the need for all parties to return to the Islamabad MoU for advancing regional stability.

He was talking to Acting Minister of

Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Libya Al-Taher Al-Baour as they met on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly here.

The two sides expressed interest in further strengthening friendly ties between Pakistan and Libya across diverse fields, particularly trade, education, and business-to-business exchanges.

The ministers exchanged views on regional and international developments, including the evolving situation in the Middle East, as well as the implications for regional peace, energy supplies, and the global economy, particularly for developing countries.

The Libyan foreign minister appreciated Pakistan's constructive diplomatic efforts for regional peace and stability.

PM Gilani urges IT team to expedite launch of AJK Digital Portal



Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Ifikhar Gilani has directed officials of the IT department to redouble their efforts to make the official portal of the government of the AJK operational at the earliest, ensur-

ing access to all services being provided digitally.

He said this while addressing a meeting, which was convened here today, to review matters related to operationalizing the official portal. The prime minister said the government was moving towards modern, transparent,

and accessible digital services.

He emphasized that the experience and expertise of the Punjab IT Board should be utilized to strengthen digital governance in Azad Kashmir. During the meeting, officials of the IT department briefed the PM on the establishment of the portal, progress made so

far, and plans for providing government services online. The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary Adnan Khurshid, Secretary IT and Information Muhammad Rashid Hanif, Additional Director General Punjab IT Board Muhammad Kashif Farooq, Programme Manager Noreen Anwar, and Waqar Ali.

Rathore Reaffirms PPP's Commitment to Democracy, Rule of Law

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Azad Kashmir Central Secretary General and former Prime Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that protection of the state's identity, national dignity, constitutionalism, rule of law and democratic institutions has remained central to the PPP's political struggle.

Speaking to media after returning to Muzaffarabad, Rathore thanked the people for their support and said public service would remain his foremost political commitment. He said the PPP's founding leaders, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto, had dedicated themselves to democracy and the Kashmir cause.

PPP workers warmly welcomed Rathore upon his arrival in the capital. He recalled the party's role in supporting the 1973 Constitution, national defence, the Kashmir cause and Pakistan's nuclear programme.

Rathore said strong democratic institutions and constitutional governance were essential for protecting fundamental rights. He also called for a peaceful and durable settlement of the Kashmir dispute, saying its unresolved status had implications for regional and global peace. He criticized the detention of Hurriyat leaders and civilians in Indian-administered Kashmir.



Raja Shahid Hussain Appointed Director General Tourism and Archaeology Department

Bureau Report



MUZAFFARABAD: The Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD), Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has issued Notification No. S&GAD/A-1(40)/XVII/2026 (Gazetted-I), appointing Senior-most Additional Secretary (BS-19) Raja Shahid Hussain as Director General, Tourism and Archaeology Department, under a relaxation of the existing transfer and posting rules.

Raja Shahid Hussain was previously serving as Additional Secretary in the Higher Education Department. He has also held key administrative positions, including Additional Secretary in the Home Department, and has served as head of a department attached to the Information Department.

The notification further states that the incumbent Director General of the Tourism and Archaeology Department, Shaukat Ali (BS-20), has been transferred and attached to the Services and General Administration Department until further orders.

Society Cannot Progress Without Empowering Women, Says Asma Butt

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: President of Pakistan Awami Quwat Punjab, Ms. Asma Butt, said that a strong, developed and prosperous society cannot be built without empowering women. She said providing women with equal opportunities in education, healthcare, employment and modern technology is an urgent need of the time.

In her statement, she said utilizing women's potential can strengthen not only families but also the national economy and social development. The government and society must take practical steps to ensure safe, dignified and equal opportunities for women. Asma Butt said young women can be made economically independent by providing them with quality education, vocational training and access to modern technology. She added that effective representation of women in decision-making is also essential for building a strong and balanced society.



PMML extends National Day Greetings to Saudi Arabia

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Markazi Muslim League (PMML) leaders have extended greetings to the people of Saudi Arabia on the Kingdom's 96th National Day, praying for its security, progress and prosperity.

PMML President Khalid Masood Sindhu, Secretary General Saifullah Qasuri and other senior leaders said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoyed longstanding brotherly relations rooted in shared faith and mutual respect. They described the friendship between the two countries as a bond that had stood the test of time.

The leaders said Pakistan, as a nuclear-armed country, regarded the security and protection of the Haramain Sharifain as an important responsibility. They expressed hope that Pakistan would continue playing its role in supporting the security and stability of Saudi Arabia.

They said both countries shared a bond based on the Kalima, noting that Pakistan was created in its name while Saudi Arabia was home to the sacred Haramain. The PMML leadership congratulated the Saudi people and prayed for continued peace, prosperity and development in the Kingdom.

Attock Police Arrest Accused in Alleged Attempt to Assault Woman, Four Gamblers

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Bahtar police took prompt action on a complaint filed by a woman and arrested a nominated suspect for allegedly entering her house and attempting to sexually assault her. In a separate action within the same police station limits, police also arrested four alleged gamblers and seized Rs93,200 allegedly staked on gambling.

According to details, a woman approached Bahtar police and stated that she was at home with her two daughters when Bilal Afzal, a resident of Dhok Baloch, Tehsil Fateh Jang, allegedly entered the house by scaling the boundary wall and attempted to sexually assault her. She said she raised an alarm, following which the suspect fled from the house.

On receiving the complaint, Bahtar police acted promptly and arrested the nominated suspect, Bilal Afzal, within a short period. Further investigation into the incident is underway.

Carelessness

ISLAMABAD: A man is riding motorcycle along with his woman relative as carrying cocking pots (Daig) at a road in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

Muslim Conference Leadership Mourns Death of Raja Abrar Abbas Dogalvi

Bureau Report

RAWALPINDI: The leadership of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference has expressed deep grief over the sudden death of Raja Abrar Abbas Dogalvi, former AJK Assembly candidate and Vice Chairman of the party's Awami Rabita Board.

Party President and former AJK Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan paid tribute to Dogalvi, also Central Vice Chairman of the Muslim Conference Public Relations Board, describing him as a sincere, dedicated and ideologically committed worker whose death is a significant loss for



the party. He prayed for the deceased's elevation in the hereafter and for patience and strength for his bereaved family.

Other party leaders, including Secretary General Mehr-un-Nisa, Youth Wing Chairman Sardar Usman Ali Khan, Additional Secretary Raja

Lateef Hasrat, Public Relations Board Chairman Chaudhry Khizar Hayat, former Assembly candidate Malik Muhammad Rizwan, Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan, Sardar Ajmal Naqvalvi, Haroon Azad and Rana Ghulam Hussain, also mourned his passing.

The leaders praised his political and social services, calling him a sincere and active colleague whose loss leaves a void in the Muslim Conference. They conveyed condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for the departed soul's forgiveness and peace, as well as strength for the family during this difficult time.

Mother of Maj Gen (retd) Muhammad Arif Malik Laid to Rest in Pindi Gheb

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The mother of Pro-Rector NUST Major General (retd) Muhammad Arif Malik, former Director General ANF, and Malik Tariq Ejaz, and sister-in-law of former MPA Haji Gulab Khan (late) and contractor Mian Muhammad (late), passed away due to natural causes.

Her funeral prayer was offered at the ancestral graveyard in Pindi Gheb, with renowned religious scholar Professor Bashir Ahmad Rizvi leading the prayer.

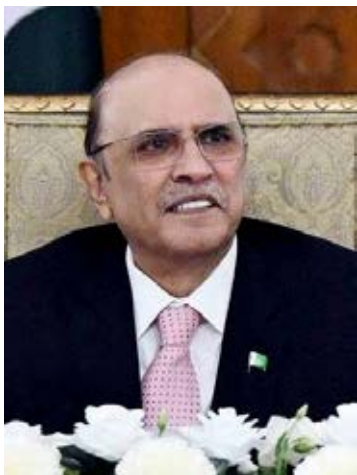
Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, General Nadeem Zaki Manj, General Naeem Ashraf, General Wasim Ashraf, General Asghar, defence analyst Major General (retd) Zahid



Mahmood Malik, former provincial minister Colonel (retd) Malik Muhammad Anwar Khan, former

provincial parliamentary secretary and Supreme Court advocate Asif Ali Malik, Malik Amir Ali Khan, Malik Asfandiyar

Khan, Malik Amanat Khan, former Municipal Committee chairman Aftab Haideri, former Bar Association president Sheikh Aftab Hussain, Malik Hassan Dera, Amir Shehzad, Tariq Mahmood, Malik Faisal Munir, Malik Kamran Munir, Malik Adnan Sadiq, Advocate High Court, former Municipal Committee chairman Ubaidullah Tahir, Malik Muhammad Imran Gharibwal, Khawaja Shehzad Hassan, Malik Ahmed Raza and former councillor Haji Abdul Ghaffar, besides senior administrative officials associated with NUST, senior military and civil officers, and a large number of political, social, journalistic and business personalities and local residents attended the funeral.



President Zardari felicitates Saudi leadership and people on 96th National Day

President Asif Ali Zardari has extended heartfelt felicitations to the leadership and brotherly people of Saudi Arabia on the occa-

sion of the Kingdom's 96th National Day, saying the signing of the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement and the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement have further strengthened the strategic dimension of the longstanding Pakistani-Saudi partnership.

In his letters to Custodian of the Two

Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the President said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia share deep-rooted ties of faith, shared history, friendship, mutual trust and solidarity.

The President said the two coun-

tries greatly value their close relations, marked by strong cooperation and mutual support at bilateral, regional and international fora. He said the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement and the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement mark important milestones in the longstanding partnership, contrib-

uting to peace, stability and security in the region. President Zardari expressed confidence that the fraternal relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia would continue to deepen and expand across diverse areas of mutual interest for the mutual benefit of the two coun-

tries and peoples. In his message to the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, President Zardari said he looks forward to welcoming him to Pakistan at an early and convenient date and to working closely with him to further deepen and broaden bilateral cooperation.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's 96th National Day: A Celebration of Unity and Brotherhood



On September 23, 2026, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia marks its 96th National Day, commemorating the historic moment in 1932 when King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud united the various regions of the Arabian Peninsula into a single sovereign state. This annual milestone is far more than a date on the calendar — it is a celebration of national identity, heritage, and the remarkable transformation the Kingdom has undergone over nearly a century.

The Legacy of Unification

The story of modern Saudi Arabia begins with King Abdulaziz's decades-long campaign to bring together scattered tribal territories under one flag. His vision culminated in the formal proclamation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on September 23, 1932, a date that has since become the country's most cherished national occasion. What started as a unification of desert regions

has grown into one of the most influential nations in the Middle East, home to Islam's two holiest sites — Makkah and Madinah — and a key player in global energy markets and regional diplomacy.

This year's celebrations carry the theme "Our Pride Lies in Our Nature," a slogan first introduced in 2025 and continued for the 96th anniversary, highlighting authenticity, courage, determination, generosity, hospitality, and vision as core Saudi values. The occasion is celebrated across the Kingdom each year with fireworks, air shows, concerts, traditional dances, and family outings, along with parades, live performances, and special programs hosted at museums and heritage villages. In the lead-up to the day, buildings and streets across the country are often illuminated in green, the color of the Saudi flag.

Wednesday, September 23, 2026, which corresponds to Rabi Al Thani 12, 1448 AH, has been declared an official public holiday for both public and private sector employees by the Kingdom's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development.

Vision 2030 and a Modern Kingdom

Beyond the festivities, National Day has increasingly become a platform to showcase Saudi Arabia's ambitious Vision 2030 program — the sweeping reform agenda aimed at diversifying the economy away from oil dependency, expanding tourism, empow-



ering women in the workforce, and modernizing infrastructure through mega-projects like NEOM, the Red Sea Project, and Qiddiya. Each passing National Day serves as a checkpoint for the Kingdom to reflect on the progress of this transformation while looking ahead to the goals still to be achieved.

Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Relations: A Bond of Brotherhood

No account of Saudi Arabia's national celebrations would be complete without recognizing its deep and historic relationship with Pakistan — a partnership rooted in shared faith, mutual respect, and decades of strategic cooperation. The two countries have maintained close ties since Pakistan's early years, built on the reverence Pakistanis hold for the land of the two holy mosques



and Saudi Arabia's consistent support for Pakistan during times of economic and political need.

In recent years, this relationship has moved decisively toward greater strategic depth. On September 17, 2025, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia signed a landmark Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement in Riyadh, declaring that any aggression against either country would be considered an aggression against both. The pact was signed during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit at the invitation of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, building on a historic partnership extending nearly eight decades between the two nations.

This defense pact has continued to shape bilateral engagement throughout 2026. Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar has described



the agreement as having elevated Pakistan's brotherly ties with the Kingdom to "new heights," emphasizing that close relations with Arab and Islamic nations remain a vital pillar of Islamabad's foreign policy. Military and security cooperation has also deepened, with Saudi Defense Minister Khalid bin Salman meeting Pakistan's Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir in February 2026 to reaffirm the strategic defense partnership. Pakistan's Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry also visited Riyadh the same month, where both countries

agreed to boost security and counterterrorism cooperation.

Beyond defense, economic ties are expanding as well. In October 2025, the two nations agreed to launch a new economic cooperation framework aimed at strengthening trade and investment links. Pakistani leadership has also invited Saudi investors to explore opportunities across trade, economy, and culture, reflecting a broader push to diversify the relationship beyond traditional labor migration and remittances.

Conclusion

As Saudi Arabia celebrates its

96th National Day, the occasion stands as a testament to nearly a century of nation-building, resilience, and forward-looking ambition. For Pakistan, the day also serves as a reminder of a friendship that has weathered decades of regional change — one now reinforced by a formal defense pact, growing security cooperation, and expanding economic ties. As both nations look to the future, the Pakistan-Saudi relationship remains a cornerstone of stability and brotherhood in the wider Islamic world.

Saudi National Day: Pak-Saudi Brotherhood and Strong Partnership

Every year on September 23, the Saudi nation celebrates its National Day. On September 23, 1932, King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud announced the unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This year, Saudi Arabia is celebrating its 96th National Day. Pakistan's relations with Saudi Arabia, established from the early days of Pakistan, are based on religious devotion, defence cooperation, economic interests and historic links. Saudi Arabia is an important spiritual centre of the Muslim world, while Pakistan is the only nuclear-armed country in the Muslim world. For Pakistanis, the relationship with Makkah and Madinah is not merely a matter of foreign policy; it is linked with faith and belief. This religious bond makes Pak-Saudi relations unique.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia established relations soon after Pakistan's independence, and gradually developed into a strong partnership. Saudi Arabia was among the first countries to welcome the emergence of Pakistan as a new Muslim state. In 1951, the two countries signed their first treaty of friendship and cooperation. In 1954, King Saud visited Pakistan and described it as his second home. While looking at the Pakistani flag, he reportedly said, "This flag is mine. It is my country." The era of King Faisal later became another chapter in bilateral relations, particularly in promoting bilateral ties and Muslim unity. Faisalabad and Shahr-e Faisal in Karachi carry his name,

while Faisal Masjid in Islamabad remains a symbol of his support.

Writing more, the deep attachment to the Two Holy Mosques gives special importance to facilities provided to Hajj and Umrah pilgrims. Smart Hajj applications, electronic services, medical facilities and modern monitoring systems have further organized Hajj arrangements. Saudi Arabia has rendered a major service in the publication and distribution of the Holy Quran. The King Fahd Complex in Madinah has a production capacity exceeding 18 million copies of various publications, while translations of the meanings of the Quran have been published in more than 78 languages.

Saudi Arabia has stood with Pakistan during difficult times. During the wars of 1965 and 1971, it extended political, diplomatic and financial support to Pakistan. After Pakistan's nuclear tests in 1998 and the resulting international sanctions, Saudi Arabia supplied oil to Pakistan on deferred payments. After the 2005 earthquake, floods and other disasters, Saudi assistance continued to reach Pakistan. Support for reconstruction and financial deposits also provided assistance to Pakistan's economy during difficult periods.

Defence and security cooperation is another important pillar of Pak-Saudi relations. In 1967, a military agreement assigned the training of Saudi armed forces to Pakistan. This cooperation has continued for decades. More recently, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye signed the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement in Makkah on

August 7, 2026. The agreement states that an armed attack against any one of the three countries shall be regarded as an attack against all, and emphasizes collective security, peace and regional stability. Pakistan's Foreign Ministry has described the accord as defensive in nature and not directed against any country.

Concluding more, Pak-Saudi relations are now moving beyond religious and defence cooperation toward economic partnership. Through the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), cooperation is expanding in agriculture, information technology, renewable energy, minerals and other sectors. Saudi interest in projects such as Reko Diq reflects this direction. Saudi Vision 2030 is also creating opportunities for Pakistani engineers, IT professionals, skilled workers and other professionals. Millions of Pakistanis live and work in Saudi Arabia and contribute to its development, while their remittances remain important for Pakistan's economy.

On the diplomatic level, Saudi ambassadors in Pakistan have contributed to strengthening economic, cultural and educational links. The bond between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia continues to develop. On the 96th National Day of Saudi Arabia, the Pakistani nation extends heartfelt congratulations to the people of Saudi Arabia and prays for the security, progress and prosperity of the Kingdom. May Allah Almighty further strengthen the bonds of brotherhood, cooperation and mutual trust between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Ameen.

Note: The writer is a freelance journalist, based in Lahore, can be reached at rashid.vap@gmail.com



Congratulations

on

96th National Day,
Kingdom Saudi Arabia

May this special day bring continued prosperity, progress and peace to the Kingdom and its people.

Stronger ties, brighter future!



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JKLF Condemns False Implication of Incarcerated Party Chairman Yasin Malik Languishing in Delhi’s Tihar Jail

The Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF-Yasin) has once again raised its voice against what it calls the politically motivated persecution of its incarcerated chairman, Muhammad Yasin Malik, currently held in Delhi’s Tihar Jail. The party’s central information office, through chief spokesman Muhammad Rafiq Dar, has strongly condemned Malik’s implication by the Indian government in the 36-year-old murder case of Sarla Bhat, a Kashmiri Pandit woman.

The timing of this case — surfacing decades after the alleged crime, and coinciding with Malik’s continued incarceration on separate charges — raises legitimate questions that deserve scrutiny rather than dismissal. According to the JKLF, Malik’s advocate, Abu Adil Pandit, sought the court’s permission to withdraw his power of attorney on his client’s explicit instructions. Malik, the party maintains, has chosen not to contest the case at all, not out of guilt, but out of principled defiance toward what he views as a judicial process designed to serve a political agenda rather than deliver justice.

The 25-page affidavit Malik submitted to the additional sessions court in Srinagar is, by the JKLF’s account, a damning indictment of India’s administrative and legal machinery. If the allegations against him were credible, the party asks, why did the Indian state wait 36 years to file charges? This question, whatever one’s position on the broader Kashmir dispute, is not an unreasonable one to pose, and it deserves a substantive answer from New Delhi rather than silence.

It should be noted that Indian authorities and the family of Sarla Bhat maintain that the case reflects genuine, long-pursued accountability for an unresolved killing, and that Malik was separately convicted in 2022 on terror-financing charges — a conviction the JKLF and Malik’s supporters have consistently disputed as well. Readers should weigh both narratives against the broader, contested history of the Kashmir dispute.

Beyond the individual case, the JKLF’s statement carries a wider message that merits attention: its expressed alarm over the deepening stalemate in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and its call for dialogue over the use of force. The party’s offer to mediate between the concerned parties, if genuine, is a constructive gesture in an otherwise hardened standoff. Whatever one’s view of the JKLF’s political program, its insistence that force will not resolve the Kashmir question, and that continued confrontation serves neither Pakistan nor the Kashmiri people nor the cause of self-determination, is a sentiment worth taking seriously.

How Politicians in the U. S. and Europe Are Weaponizing Sharia

Across the United States and Europe, political rhetoric has turned “Sharia” into a weapon of suspicion, transforming a Muslim neighbor’s faith into an imagined threat to national institutions. Prayer, charity, dietary observance, and personal ethics disappear behind warnings of an approaching theocracy.

This confusion encourages fear and has made exclusion appear defensive while deliberately ignoring that voluntary religious observance does not itself override courts, displace legislatures, direct public administration, or replace constitutional government.

Bringing back religion into politics is contrary to the long and arduous efforts of both American and European societies to finally culminate in developing protections against religious coercion and for individual conscience.

The law and constitution of the USA and Europe protects religious liberties and provides freedom to believe, worship, change faith, or have no faith. However, by weaponizing Sharia to cast collective suspicion on Muslims undermines these protections by turning religious identity into a test of belonging.

That contradiction gives Jessica McDonald’s inquiry its significance. McDonald, a Christian a renowned and accomplished lawyer in her social media broadcasts, countered these alarming claims she had heard about Islam.

Rather than accepting inherited assumptions, she opened the Quran

and examined its language and context. Her account offers a response to political fear: understand a religious tradition before treating its followers as dangerous. She asks Christians to extend to Muslim scripture the interpretive care they expect for the Bible.

The politicians are weaponizing Sharia not due to fear of Sharia itself but to stop and put an end to economic prosperity and social recognition achieved by the Muslim community in all aspects of national life. Their visibility has unsettled those who regard professional opportunity or national belonging as the preserve of a white majority.

McDonald explains that Sharia encompasses far more than criminal punishment. Associated with a path or way, it refers broadly to divine guidance for Muslim life: prayer, fasting, charity, family duties, honesty, and ethical commerce. It also encompasses legal subjects. Fiqh is the human work of interpreting and applying that guidance. Different scholarly traditions can produce different conclusions. Her essential point is that no single universally accepted rulebook explains everything every Muslim means by following Sharia.

McDonald specifically emphasizes that Quranic teachings teaches Muslims living in non-Muslim countries to obey the laws of the country where

they have chosen to live and not impose their religion on others. In her explanation, following Sharia through worship, charity, and ethical conduct does not mean seeking to replace the American or European government.

She places this alongside the Quran’s rejection of forced conversion as a starting point for discussion. Her argument challenges the conflation of personal Muslim observance with a campaign to take control of society.

Her account helps distinguish five overlapping subjects: worship, personal and family ethics, scholarly interpretation, voluntary religious dispute resolution, and state enforcement.

These distinctions expose the weakness of sweeping accusations.

A Muslim refusing pork, seeking marriage advice, or donating to the poor is not thereby demanding governmental power. A government enforcing religious criminal penalties raises different questions. Serious debate must identify the practice, whose interpretation governs it, whether participation is voluntary, and whether anyone’s rights are infringed.

For Christian audiences, McDonald makes the comparison familiar. Biblical faith also addresses marriage, money, sexuality, generosity, and duties toward neighbors. Christians disagree over interpretation while recognizing their scriptures as sacred. Most do not understand

every ancient Israelite punishment or ritual requirement as binding today.

Christianity and Islam differ, but the comparison exposes an inconsistent standard: expecting distinctions within one’s own tradition while accepting the harshest representation of another. Fairness requires comparable care.

Her reading of Quran 2:190–194 applies that principle to warfare. McDonald recalls hearing “kill them wherever you find them” presented as an instruction to attack Christians. She asks who “them” refers to and what the surrounding verses say. She emphasizes that the passage begins with fighting those who fight you and prohibits transgression. It discusses expulsion, restricts fighting at the sacred mosque unless attacked there, includes cessation clauses, and limits retaliation. Removing those features creates the impression of an unrestricted command.

These conditions matter. In McDonald’s reading, persecution and expulsion do not authorize unlimited revenge. Permission to fight carries boundaries; retaliation must remain proportionate, and the text repeatedly addresses cessation. Its appeal to taqwa, or consciousness of God, places moral accountability inside warfare itself. Even when people have suffered injustice, she stresses, they remain responsible for their response. Her explanation therefore challenges the portrayal of Muslim scripture as offering indiscriminate permission for violence against people of other religions.

Continued on Page 7



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

The Unseen Hands Behind Luxury: Kashmir’s Female Artisans and the Price of a Single Stitch

In the high-fashion capitals of Milan, Paris, and New York, a Kashmiri Pashmina shawl or a hand-embroidered Sozni garment is hailed as the ultimate symbol of quiet luxury. Retailing for thousands of dollars, these pieces are celebrated by the global elite for their timeless elegance, their generational craftsmanship, and their breathtaking detail. But I want you to close your eyes and look past the glowing runways, past the glossy magazine covers, and past the air-conditioned boutiques. Look thousands of miles away to the domestic courtyards and cramped, dim rooms of the Kashmir Valley. There, sitting on the floor for hours on end, hunched over fine fabrics with aching backs and strained eyes, are the women who actually bring these masterpieces to life.

They are the invisible backbone of a multi-million-dollar luxury export market. Yet, in the cruel gears of the global luxury economy, they are systematically left behind, trading weeks of grueling, painstaking labor for wages that barely secure a daily survival. How is it possible that the hands weaving the world’s most expensive garments are trembling in poverty? To understand this tragedy, we have to look honestly at how the supply chain is built. The Kashmiri handicraft sector relies almost entirely on a decentralized, home-based production model. These women handle the foundational, intensely delicate work, spinning raw cashmere fibers, cleaning them, and executing complex needlework like Sozni and Aari embroidery.

Because they work from home, often bound by traditional social norms, heavy domestic care

duties, and restricted mobility, they are structurally isolated from the world. They never sit across a table from an exporter; a major brand representative, or an international buyer. Instead, a long, predatory chain of middlemen, brokers, and master-craftsmen stands squarely between the artisan and the global market. By the time a shawl travels from a woman’s modest home workshop in Srinagar to a velvet-lined retail rack in London or New York, its price has multiplied exponentially. But almost none of that staggering value inflation ever trickles back down to the woman who poured her soul and eyesight into every single stitch. Her vulnerability is further crushed by two relentless pressures: exploitative piece-rate wages and the flood of cheap industrial imitation.

The middlemen who hold the monopoly on raw materials know these women are desperate. They know that isolation, a lack of alternative income, and the immediate need to put food on the table strip away all bargaining power. So, they pay them pennies. A piece of embroidery that demands weeks of back-breaking handwork yields a payout that amounts to a meager fraction of a dollar per hour. It is modern exploitation masked by the romantic label of “traditional art”. And if that weren’t enough, there is the devastating shadow of mechanization. Power looms and mass-production machine-embroidery units churn out cheap, synthetic knock-offs of traditional Kashmiri designs at lightning speed. Global brands market these machine-made shortcuts as “ethnic fashion,” completely undercutting the authentic handcrafts in the open market. Consumers abroad buy them, completely unaware

that the “luxury” item in their hands is a mass-produced imitation, while the true artists are being starved out of their own heritage.

Defenders of the current global luxury model argue that international brands and middlemen provide essential market access that isolated home-based artisans could never achieve alone. Yet this argument collapses under the weight of wealth disparity and systemic exploitation. Market access does not justify monopolistic control over raw materials, sub-minimum piece-rate wages, and a lack of transparency. True market integration should empower artisans rather than trap them in poverty while luxury houses reap enormous profits.

Historically, this craft was more than a livelihood. It was a source of financial independence and cultural pride for Kashmiri women, allowing them to support their households and preserve a priceless legacy. Today, insulting returns are driving younger generations away, leaving centuries of knowledge at risk of extinction.

If the global luxury economy wants to claim ethical integrity, its romanticized marketing of “heritage” and “artisanal craft” must be matched by action. Direct-to-consumer digital cooperatives can help women bypass exploitative middlemen. Stronger Geographical Indication protections can defend authentic Kashmiri craftsmanship, while fair-wage mandates can hold luxury brands accountable for paying living wages throughout their supply chains. Until this gap is closed, every intricate stitch adorning high fashion will remain stained by the silence surrounding the women whose labor makes that luxury possible.

The author is an International Relations student at International Islamic University Islamabad and currently serves as a researcher at Kashmir Institute of International Relations.

Economic Independence for Pakistani Women Remains Incomplete Without Safety and Dignity

For Pakistani women, economic independence is no longer simply a question of finding a job. It is also a question of whether they can work, run a business or use digital platforms without having to constantly negotiate harassment, social prejudice and unwanted interference.

A woman may enter the workforce with professional qualifications and ambitions, only to discover that her biggest challenge is not always the work itself. It may be the behaviour of a colleague, a superior, a customer or even a stranger. Some women respond by changing jobs, shifting to home-based work or reducing their presence on social media. But an important question remains: have they escaped harassment, or have they merely changed the place where they encounter it?

Pakistan has a legal framework against workplace harassment. The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, was significantly expanded through amendments in 2022. The amended law covers a much broader range of workers, including contractual, part-time, freelance, gig, domestic and home-based workers. It also requires organisations to establish internal inquiry mechanisms and display the relevant code of conduct. (Fospah)

The existence of a law, however, does not automatically create a safe working environ-

ment.

Research has previously documented that harassment can affect women across different professions and social backgrounds. A World Bank study involving educated women in several Pakistani cities found that fear of harassment could influence career decisions, while some women responded through silence, self-censorship, quitting or changing jobs. The study also identified concerns about cyberstalking, unwanted messages, public harassment and the fear of social blame. (World Bank Blogs)

This is where the issue of economic empowerment becomes particularly important.

Pakistan’s female labour-force participation remains low. A World Bank report puts the rate at around 25 percent and estimates that approximately 47 million Pakistani women are outside the labour force. The report also points to major differences between men and women in earnings, employment patterns and the scale and formality of businesses. (The World Bank)

The International Labour Organization reported in 2025 that women in Pakistan earn about 25 percent less per hour than men, identifying discrimination, weak compliance with labour laws and inequalities in the informal economy among the factors contributing to the gap. (International Labour Organization)

Continued on Page 7

Apex Committee Reviews Punjab Security Situation

 Bureau Report

LAHORE: The provincial Apex Committee, chaired by Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, on Tuesday reviewed law and order and security arrangements in Punjab. The meeting expressed satisfaction over inter-agency coordination and praised the AI Hub established at the Provincial Intelligence Fusion and Threat Assessment Centre (PIFTAC) for enhancing timely information sharing.

The CM welcomed successes against terrorism and lauded the Pakistan Army's operations against Fitna al-Hindustan, paying tribute to martyrs including Captain Abu Zarr Farooq and Lt Shiras Babar. The Lahore Corps Commander praised institutional performance as satisfactory.

The committee was briefed on 93 development projects in riverine areas, including smart police stations, a Rs620 million steel bridge, and skill-development programmes, alongside efforts to remove illegally residing foreign nationals from Punjab.

Maryam Nawaz said coordinated institutional efforts had reduced street crime, with 718 police personnel



dismissed for corruption. She highlighted a Rs30 billion development package for riverine areas covering health, education and security, and welcomed a cricket tournament held there.

She credited proactive policing, expanded Safe City systems, and body-worn cameras for improved security, stressing continued vigilance and preventive measures. The CM also praised the armed forces' leadership

under the Field Marshal, noting Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos had boosted Pakistan's international image, and said the government remained focused on shielding citizens from inflation alongside security concerns.

Traders Urge Immediate Opening of Rs15 Billion Blue Area Parking Plaza

 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The All Traders Welfare Association Blue Area has called upon the Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to immediately make the newly constructed parking plaza in Blue Area operational for the public and business community, saying the facility is essential to address persistent parking shortages and improve traffic flow in the capital's main commercial district.

The demand was made during a meeting of the association chaired by Traders Welfare Association President Yousaf Rajput. The meeting was attended by Opposition Leader Tariq Mahmood Khokhar; Blue Area General Secretary and newly elected Executive Member of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Imran Bukhari; ICCI Executive Member Muhammad Khurshid;



as well as Malik Asad, Ishtiaq Bangash, Muhammad Abbas, Sherzada, Jameel Abbasi, Abdul Rashid, Muhammad Tariq, Muhammad Arif, and other representatives of the business community.

Participants observed that Blue Area is Islamabad's principal commercial and

business hub, attracting thousands of visitors daily for shopping, trade and other economic activities. They said the absence of adequate parking facilities has created serious inconvenience for both traders and the general public, while also contributing to traffic conges-

tion in the area.

The meeting noted that despite substantial public expenditure on the construction of the parking plaza, the facility has yet to be made fully operational. The participants stressed that any further delay would continue to aggravate parking and traffic-related problems and urged the CDA to open the plaza without delay.

Speaking on the occasion, Yousaf Rajput said that the immediate operationalisation of the parking plaza would significantly ease traffic pressure in Blue Area and provide much-needed relief to traders, shoppers and other visitors.

He also drew attention to the parking plaza at Jinnah Super Market, which, he said, has yet to become operational. He urged the authorities to open that facility as well so that residents and visitors could benefit from improved parking arrangements across Islamabad's major commercial centres.

Devotional Service to Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh (RA) Reflects the Spirit of Love: Dr. Ehsan Bhutta

 Bureau Report

LAHORE: Secretary/Chief Administrator Auqaf Punjab Dr. Ehsan Bhutta said the teachings of Hazrat Ali Hajveri (Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh RA) embody love, fraternity, tolerance and selfless service to humanity, calling service to pilgrims during the Urs a profound spiritual privilege. He was addressing a ceremony at Hajveri Hall, Data Darbar, honouring individuals, philanthropists and institutions who supported arrangements during the 983rd Annual Urs.

Dr. Bhutta appreciated contributions in milk Sabeel, lighting, cleanliness and security, noting that quality facilities for pilgrims—including drinking water, Langar, medical assistance, sanitation



and guidance—remain a top priority, ensured through coordinated efforts

of Auqaf Department, police, district administration, rescue agencies, volunteers and philanthropists.

Shields and certificates of appreciation were presented to numerous individuals and philanthropists, including Mansoor Rizvi, Tariq Aziz, Manzoor Gujar, Mian Imran, and others, alongside various lighting and welfare contributors.

Participants expressed pride in serving the Urs and pledged continued cooperation. Dr. Bhutta thanked all contributors, calling service to Data Darbar a collective responsibility. Administrator Data Darbar Muhammad Ali Khan and Auqaf managers Gohar Mustafa, Hassan Rizwan and Shahbaz Hussain also attended.

TMUC School of Law and Islamabad High Court Bar Association Forge Strategic Partnership to Advance Legal Education and Professional Practice



 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: TMUC School of Law has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA), reinforcing its commitment to progressive, practice-oriented legal education. Signed at The Forum, TMUC Islamabad, the partnership strengthens the interface between legal education and professional practice through practitioner-led learning, mentoring, moot court training, legal clinics, court exposure, internships, and law-firm placements.

Dr. Faisal Mushtaq TI, Chairman & CEO TMUC Higher Education Group, emphasized reimagining legal education beyond the classroom to build institutional bridges with professional practice, producing graduates who are academically strong, professionally confident, and globally aware.

Ambassador Masood Khan, President of the Centre for Law and Security (CLAS), attended the ceremony, alongside Muneez Muzaffar, Head of Institute TMUC Islamabad, who reaffirmed the campus's commitment to a rigorous, professionally enriching environment.

The partnership emphasizes experiential learning, with moot court coaching, guided court visits, and internships offering students first-hand exposure to legal practice. Students from TMUC's University of London and University of Hertfordshire programmes attended, reflecting the School's international academic environment and focus on preparing students for a connected global legal profession.

PANAH Conducts CPR Training for Doctors and Nursing Staff at Benazir Hospital



 City Desk

RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) organized a CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) training session for doctors and nursing staff at Benazir Hospital, Rawalpindi, following a request from Dr. Lubna Miraj, Head of Medical Unit-II at the hospital. A PANAH team, led by Secretary General Sana Ullah Ghumman, provided hands-on CPR training to the hospital's medical staff.

Speaking on the occasion, Ghumman emphasized the importance of CPR training, noting that PANAH has been providing such training to individuals from various institutions and segments of society for the past 40 years. He said the primary objective of the training is to enhance people's ability to provide immediate and appropriate medical assistance during emergencies and to help protect human lives.

Ghumman reaffirmed PANAH's commitment to continuing its efforts to promote CPR awareness and training among healthcare professionals, institutions, and other segments of society, enabling more people to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to deliver effective first aid during emergencies and contribute to saving precious human lives.

UK-Backed AI System Strengthens Tax Compliance Across Pakistan's Cement Sector

 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Digital Eye system, a UK-backed AI technology, is now tracking production at all 27 cement factories in Pakistan, helping the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) strengthen tax compliance and improve revenue collection. First piloted in 2023, the system uses advanced video analytics to monitor production lines in real time, working alongside FBR's Track and Trace System to enhance visibility while reducing manual inspection.

British High Commissioner Jane Marriot visited Fecto Cement with senior FBR officials to observe the technology, calling it a strong example of UK-Pakistan collaboration that strengthens tax compliance, fair competition and transparency through technical expertise and institutional capacity-building.

Dr. Najeeb Ullah, FBR's Chief Reforms & Modernization, said real-time monitoring had already improved compliance in cement and sugar sectors without burdening honest taxpayers, adding that the FBR now aims to consolidate the system, improve accuracy, and extend it to more sectors with continued UK support through REMIT.

Developed by a Pakistani tech company and scaled nationwide with UK assistance, the system is drawing interest from African countries seeking similar tax reforms. It complements Track and Trace by independently verifying production data. The government reported recovering Rs32 billion from the cement sector and a 31 percent increase in recorded sugar production, attributing these gains to a combination of reforms including Digital Eye.



Bull & Bears

PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
171,402.08	171,153.16
Day's High	Day's Low
171,680.73	170,866.93
Index Value	Change
9,173,253,023	+248.92
Percentage	Time
+0.15%	22 Sept, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,708.33	-30.68
Percentage	Time
-0.29%	22 Sept, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
51,819.69	-229.14
Percentage	Time
-0.44%	22 Sept, 1:30 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
65,018.95	+882.70
Percentage	Time
+1.38%	18 Sept, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	196.73	201.15
Bahrain Dinar	735.70	745.78
Canadian Dollar	196.88	201.70
China Yuan	38.25	38.97
Danish Krone	42.85	43.45
Euro	319.00	323.98
Hong Kong Dollar	34.94	35.94
Indian Rupee	2.60	2.95
Japanese Yen	1.7339	1.8337
Kuwaiti Dinar	886.75	897.65
Malaysian Ringgit	68.10	68.90
NewZealand \$	158.31	162.05
Norwegians Krone	28.35	28.70
Omani Riyal	722.85	734.85
Qatari Riyal	75.20	76.40
Saudi Riyal	73.95	74.50
Singapore Dollar	216.63	222.50
Swedish Korona	28.50	28.95
Swiss Franc	338.50	343.85
Thai Bhat	8.30	8.80
U.A.E Dirham	75.75	76.40
UK Pound Sterling	373.20	377.61
US Dollar	278.00	278.30

SECP Proposes Measures to Strengthen Insurance Grievance Redressal



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has recommended increasing the number of Insurance Tribunals and Small Dispute Resolution Committees (SDRCs) and establishing an integrated digital complaint system to improve policyholder grievance resolution nationwide, according to its report "Strengthening Insurance Grievance Redressal in Pakistan: Current Status and Strategic Way Forward," which reviewed existing mechanisms that received 37,029 complaints in 2025.

SECP recommended the Ministry of Law and Justice expand Insurance Tribunals based on geographical needs, publish a list of designated Sessions Courts, and ensure timely tribunal appointments. It also called for expanding SDRC coverage, reviewing financial thresholds, and digitising operations through online complaint submission.

To improve coordination, SECP proposed formal information-sharing among SECP, the Federal Insurance Ombudsman, Wafaqi Mohtasib, tribunals, SDRCs and insurers, alongside including complaint data in the Insurance Industry Statistics Report. The report also suggested transferring public-sector insurer complaints to the Federal Insurance Ombudsman and mandated clearer disclosure of grievance procedures.

SECP Chairman Dr Kabir Ahmed Sidhu said stronger coordination and technology use would reduce resolution times, improve accountability, and ensure policyholder access to effective redressal forums.

Chairman FBR holds meeting with Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry at LTO Lahore

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Following directives of the Prime Minister, Chairman FBR Rashid Mahmood Langrial visited the Large Taxpayers Office Lahore and met a Lahore Chamber of Commerce

and Industry (LCCI) delegation led by President Faheem ur Rehman Saigol to discuss taxation, trade, and business facilitation. The meeting included Member IR Operations, Member Customs Operations, Chief Commissioners, and senior FBR officials.



authority responsiveness, industrial concerns, duties on paper, electronic items and spare parts, and misuse of tariff provisions.

Chairman FBR said FBR was continuously resolving genuine taxpayer issues, stressed broadening the tax base, and noted progress required business community cooperation. He directed officers to prioritize income tax refunds and timely resolution of taxpayer concerns, calling administrative and operational fixes a top priority. He also urged LCCI to support the national tariff policy for a fair, transparent trade and taxation environment. The delegation welcomed the initiative and pledged continued cooperation.

Participation

NEW YORK: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, participating in the World Economic Forum's high-level dialogue on "Powering Growth in the New Economy," highlighting energy security, renewable energy and the importance of resilient energy systems for Pakistan's economic resilience.



Insurance Sector Growth Could Boost Actuarial Careers in Pakistan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan's insurance penetration stands at around 0.7 percent of GDP, indicating significant potential for growth and creating opportunities for actuarial professionals, speakers said at the Society of Actuaries' (SOA) Actuaries Connect event in Karachi.

The event brought together actuarial students, university faculty and industry experts from insurance, finance and consulting. SOA Regional Director Zain Ibrahim said limited awareness of actuarial science remained a key challenge despite improved access to education and information. He said the SOA was working to help students and institutions understand the career opportunities available in the profession.

Pakistan Society of Actuaries President Usama Dangra said actuarial science offered strong career prospects, with professionals applying their expertise across STEM, finance and other fields.

Speakers highlighted opportunities in

product development, risk assessment, life and health insurance, motor insurance, mergers and acquisitions, climate risks and sustainability. They also discussed the growing role of artificial intelligence in

modelling and risk assessment.

The event provided guidance on SOA's ASA and FSA qualification pathways and highlighted global opportunities for qualified actuaries.



ICCI to Host 'Islamabad Governance and Provincial Status Convention' on Sept 25

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Sardar Tahir Mehmood has announced that the ICCI will hold an "Islamabad Governance and Provincial Status Convention 2026" on September 25, 2026, to initiate an inclusive consultation on the future governance structure and status of Islamabad.

Addressing a hugely attended Press Conference here on Tuesday at the Chamber House, he said that Islamabad remains governed under the 1960 ordinance, introduced when the federal capital was new and largely unde-



veloped. With its population approaching 2.5 million, the system can no longer meet the city's growing administrative, urban, and service-delivery needs.

Sardar Tahir Mahmood said citizens of Islamabad lack an elected, effective forum to seek answers on sanitation, water supply, traffic management, infrastructure, taxation, and municipal services. Members of the National Assembly also lack authority over several key matters, while overlapping federal and administrative institutions have created unclear accountability. The absence of an elected Mayor since 2021 further highlights the weaknesses of the current local government system.

SE Fruits and Vegetable IPO Oversubscribed 1.6 Times

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The book-building portion of SE Fruits and Vegetable Limited's Initial Public Offering (IPO) closed at a strike price of Rs40 per share, with demand reaching 1.6 times the shares offered.

The company is offering 30 million ordinary shares, representing 32.01% of its post-IPO paid-up capital, and expects to raise Rs1.2 billion through the IPO. Of the total issue, 22.5 million shares, or 75%, were offered through book building, raising Rs900 million.

The remaining 7.5 million shares, representing 25% of the issue, will be offered to the general public at Rs40 per share on September 28 and 29, with the public portion



expected to raise Rs300 million.

The book-building process was fully subscribed within two hours of opening on Monday, reflecting strong demand from institutional and high-net-worth investors.

The IPO proceeds will mainly strengthen working capital, allowing the company to increase seasonal procurement, processing capacity and exports. Based in Sargodha, the company has nearly three decades of experience processing and exporting kinnow, mangoes and potatoes.

FESCO, University of Faisalabad Hold Four-Day Workshop on Procurement Life Cycle

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO), in collaboration with the Centre for Executive Learning at The University of Faisalabad, organized a four-day training workshop on the "Procurement Life Cycle" to train FESCO officers on legal and regulatory requirements of public procurement, modern tendering procedures, contract management, and use of the e-PAD system.

Held under the supervision of FESCO's Organizational Development Directorate, the workshop was conducted by Dr. Irfan Mahmood, who covered the PPRA legal framework, procurement planning, procurement methods, quotation documents, bid evaluation, contract awards, performance guarantees, contract amendments, time extensions, claims, audits, and contract close-out.

Participants were briefed on how e-PAD can digitize procurement and how PPRA compliance ensures procedural transparency.

Officers from Material Management, Technical Services, the Project Management Unit, Construction, Grid Station Construction, Finance, Administration, Civil, and Audit departments attended.

FESCO Director General (HR) Ghulam Mujtaba Khan said continuous capacity building is essential for aligning procurement with modern standards, adding that e-PAD supports the government's "Digital Pakistan" vision.

Senior attendees included Chief Engineer (Development) Waqas Baig, Additional Chief Engineers Rana Muhammad Afzal, Misbah-ul-Islam and Ahmed Ali Shah, along with directors, deputy directors, and engineers from various FESCO departments.

CCP Imposes PKR 10 Million Penalty on 3M Pakistan for Deceptive Marketing of Scotch-Brite

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has imposed a PKR 10 million penalty on M/s 3M Pakistan (Private) Limited for deceptive marketing through a false or misleading comparison of its Scotch-Brite product with Colgate-Palmolive Pakistan's Max Scrub, violating Section 10 of the Competition Act, 2010.

The case stemmed from a complaint by Colgate-Palmolive, alleging a Scotch-Brite marketing video showed Max

Scrub deteriorating significantly after 20 minutes of washing while Scotch-Brite remained in better condition. 3M challenged the video's authenticity, claiming an employee conducted the demonstration in his personal capacity. However, the Commission found that Muhammad Imran, then Regional Sales Manager, had acknowledged making the comparison, and since it occurred within a company-commissioned marketing campaign, his conduct was attributable to 3M.

Education Must Prepare Youth for Skills, Innovation and Future of Work: Gillani

Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani has called for greater emphasis on skills, innovation, technology and employability in Pakistan's higher education system, stressing that academic qualifications must translate into real economic opportunities for young people.

Speaking as Chief Guest at the Beaconhouse International College Convocation in Islamabad, Gillani said Pakistan's higher education sector must ensure graduates are prepared for a rapidly evolving global economy. "A degree is a foundation for the future, not the destination," he told graduates, urging continuous learning and adaptability.

He noted that advances in Artificial Intelligence and digital technology are reshaping the nature of work, and that



Pakistan's youth—over 60% of whom are under 30—must be prepared not just as job-seekers but as entrepreneurs, innovators and researchers. He called for increased investment in education, skills development and innovation, alongside wider access

to quality education regardless of socio-economic background.

Congratulating the graduates, Gillani urged them to combine professional excellence with integrity and social responsibility, and to use their knowledge to contribute to

national development. He added that Pakistani graduates abroad could strengthen international links through cooperation, investment and knowledge exchange, expressing hope they would serve society with confidence and purpose.

Kaspersky Uncovers Stealthy 'Payload' Ransomware Campaign Targeting Corporate Networks

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Kaspersky's Global Emergency Response Team (GERT) has published a report analyzing a sophisticated new tactic in the Payload ransomware family, discovered during incident response at a Middle Eastern manufacturing company. The attackers seized control of the network, locking computers, displaying ransom notes, and altering desktop wallpapers—all without deploying a conventional encryptor, reflecting the "encryptionless extortion" trend highlighted in Kaspersky's State of Ransomware 2026 report.

Rather than using malware,



attackers obtained privileged administrator credentials—likely via phishing—and logged in through

standard remote-access and VPN channels, appearing as legitimate IT staff. They then targeted the company's

Active Directory, creating a malicious Group Policy Object (GPO) named "PAYLOAD," which silently disabled administrator accounts and pushed ransom graphics to every workstation simultaneously. Stolen data was later published on the dark web.

Kaspersky expert Elsayed Elre-faei said such attacks require organizations to block malicious policies at the source, lock down credentials, and monitor behavior rather than relying solely on malware scanning. Kaspersky recommends monitoring GPO changes, enforcing phishing-resistant multi-factor authentication, and strictly limiting Domain Admin access to isolated systems.

Asian Games Women's Cricket Championship 2026

Pakistan Women's Cricket Team Win Bronze Medal Match Against Bangladesh in Asian Games Women's Cricket Championship

Asim Tanveer

NAGOYA: Pakistan secured Bronze Medal at the Asian Games women's cricket event 2026 after they beat Bangladesh by 31 runs at the Korogi Sports Park in Nisshin on Tuesday. Fatima Sana starred with yet another all-round performance as her 45 pushed Pakistan to 145 and then right-arm off-spinner Umm-e-Hani took 3-10 to help restrict Bangladesh to 114-7 in the allotted 20 overs.

This is Pakistan's third Medal in Asian Games women's cricket history after they secured Gold in 2010 and 2014 events. In 2022, Pakistan lost the Bronze Medal match to Bangladesh.

Pakistan's opening duo of Gull Feroza (31, 23b, 6x4s) and Shawaal Zulfiqar (17, 27b) provided a 46-run opening stand in 6.4 overs after Fatima won the toss and opted to bat first. Bangladesh then managed to get a grip over the proceedings as they picked up five for 21 in a space of five overs.

It was at this juncture that Fatima Sana – the leading run-scorer for Pakistan in WT20Is in 2026 – came to the team's rescue with the bat in tandem with Aliya Riaz as the duo stitched a game-changing 67-run stand off 43 balls. Fatima took her tally of WT20I runs to 540 in 2026 with a superb 30-ball 45 that included three sixes and as many fours.

Aliya Riaz struck two sixes and a four in her 22-ball 25 before falling in the penultimate over. The duo upped the ante after Pakistan were 90-5 in 15 overs as Fatima struck Rabeya Khan for a six before both the batters struck a six each against Sanjida Akter in the 17th over. Despite Bangladesh giving only seven runs and taking two wickets in the last over, Pakistan managed to score 55 off the last five overs.

Nahid Akter, Shorna Akter and Ritu Moni picked up two wickets each as four off the six Bangladesh bowlers leaked run in excess of six an over.

In turn, Hani and Tasmia Rubab gave

Pakistan the perfect start with the new ball as the former eked out two wickets – removing Juairiya Ferdous and Sobhana Mostary for single digits – while the latter got rid of Dilara Akter for 12. Saira Jabeen took all three catches with the one off Tasmia's bowling being a spectacular grab at cover boundary.

Bangladesh could not recover from being 20-3 in 4.3 overs despite Nigar Sultana's (25, 30b, 3x4s) 56-ball 47-run stand with Sharmin Akhter (46 not out, 45b, 4x4s) for the fourth wicket. Bangladesh required more than 10 runs an over at the halfway mark as Nigar was pinned leg-before in the 14th over off Ayesha Zafar.

Hani registered her best bowling figures of 3-10 when she got rid of Shorna for six surpassing her previous haul of 2-28 against Sri Lanka in Dambulla this year. Her spell also included a wicket-maiden fifth over. Nashra Sundhu grabbed the seventh Bangladesh wicket with the score at 93 before they finished

with 114-7.

Fatima – who is also Pakistan leading wicket-taker in WT20I this year – picked the solitary scalp of Ritu Moni to take her tally to 31 in 2026.

Scores in Brief

Asian Games women's cricket event – Bronze Medal Match – Pakistan beat Bangladesh by 31 runs at Korogi Sports Park, Nisshin

Pakistan 145-8, 20 overs (Fatima Sana 45, Gull Feroza 31; Shorna Akter 2-16, Nahida Akter 2-21, Ritu Moni 2-27)

Bangladesh 114-7, 20 overs (Sharmin Akhter 46 not out, Nigar Sultana 25; Umm-e-Hani 3-10)

Pakistan women at Asian Games (All matches at Korogi Athletic Park in Aichi Prefecture)

17 September–Quarter-final 4 – Pakistan beat Thailand by three wickets

20 September – Semi-final 1 – Sri Lanka beat Pakistan by eight wickets

22 September–Bronze Medal Match – Pakistan beat Bangladesh by 31 runs

Important meeting reviews social welfare and community development initiatives



Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: A meeting was held today at Shabbaz Hall, Shabbaz Building Hyderabad, jointly chaired by Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad Zain-ul-Abideen Memon and Chairman Social Welfare Committee Syed Hussain Tariq. Representatives of relevant government departments, local government institutions and major energy companies attended the meeting.

The meeting was attended by the representative of Member Provincial Assembly Sharjeel Inam Memon, representatives of Town Municipal Corporations Tando Fazal and Tando Jam, Town Municipal Commissioners, Executive Engineer Building Division Hyderabad, Assistant Commissioner Hyderabad Rural Gohar Masroor, Manager Administration and External Affairs of United Energy Pakistan Limited Karachi, Regional Coordinator of OGDCL Hyderabad, representative of Pakistan Petroleum Limited Karachi Imran Noor and other relevant officials.

The meeting reviewed various matters relating to social welfare, community development and public welfare initiatives in Hyderabad. Special attention was also given to effective coordination among government departments, local government institutions and organizations involved in corporate social responsibility.

The Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad and Chairman Social Welfare Committee said that close institutional coordination, transparency and timely action were essential for the effective implementation of welfare projects so that available resources could be utilized more efficiently for the benefit of deserving and needy people.

Participants presented suggestions and views on behalf of their respective institutions. Various matters were discussed to make social welfare initiatives more effective, create new opportunities for mutual cooperation and address community needs in a better manner.

At the conclusion, all relevant institutions were directed to maintain continuous coordination and ensure effective follow-up on the matters discussed during the meeting.

PSW Integrates with NADRA's PakID App for Remote Biometric Verification

City Desk

ISLAMABAD, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026: The Pakistan Single Window (PSW) has integrated with the National Database and Registration Authority's (NADRA) PakID Mobile App, enabling users to complete mandatory biometric verification remotely for PSW subscription, subscription renewal, and profile updates.

Previously, verification required a physical visit to a NADRA e-Sahulat Centre. With the PakID integration, users can now complete biometric verification through their smartphones, subject to NADRA requirements, reducing the need for in-person visits. The facility offers particular convenience for overseas Pakistanis engaged in trade-related activities, who can now complete PSW verification remotely via the app.

To ensure a smooth transition, both verification channels will remain operational during an interim period, with users free to choose between digital verification via PakID or continuing to visit e-Sahulat Centres.

PSW CEO Syed Aftab Haider said the integration reflects the organization's commitment to responding to the needs of the PSW community in Pakistan and abroad, adding that removing this physical step makes the onboarding journey more convenient, accessible, and user-driven.

The integration eliminates the last physical-visit requirement for PSW subscription, making the process fully digital and reinforcing PSW's focus on accessible, responsive digital trade services for businesses and overseas Pakistanis.



Economic Independence for Pakistani Women Remains Incomplete Without Safety and Dignity

Continued from Page 4

These figures suggest that the discussion about women's economic independence cannot be separated from the environment in which women work.

For some women, working from home appears to offer an obvious solution. It can reduce mobility barriers and make employment possible for women whose families may not support conventional workplace participation. But home-based work does not necessarily eliminate vulnerability. Customers, suppliers and online contacts can still cross professional boundaries. A woman selling clothes, food, handicrafts or professional services through social media may

face unwanted personal messages or inappropriate behaviour simply because her business requires communication with the public.

The digital economy has therefore created both opportunity and a new dimension of risk.

The answer, however, should not be to tell women to withdraw from employment, entrepreneurship or social media. Such an approach would place the burden of preventing harassment on those who are already facing it. The responsibility also lies with employers, institutions, families and society.

Workplaces need functioning complaint mechanisms rather than committees that exist only on paper. Employees should know where and how a complaint can be

made, and organisations should ensure that the process is handled fairly and confidentially. FOSPAH itself emphasises awareness of legal rights and accessible mechanisms for addressing complaints. (Fospah) Families also have an important role. When a woman remains silent because she fears that reporting harassment will result in restrictions on her employment, the problem becomes larger than an individual incident. It becomes a social barrier to women's participation in the economy.

Economic independence should not require women to prove that they are willing to tolerate disrespect.

A woman should be able to earn through a job, operate a business

from home or build a career through digital platforms without having to choose between her income and her dignity.

The real test of progress, therefore, is not how many new opportunities are announced for women. It is whether women can actually use those opportunities safely and with dignity.

If a woman changes her job because of harassment, moves her business online to avoid harassment, and then leaves social media because of harassment, we should ask whether she has truly found economic freedom.

Perhaps the real solution is not to keep changing the path for women.

Perhaps it is time to make the path safer.

How Politicians in the U. S. and Europe Are Weaponizing Sharia

Continued from Page 4

McDonald does not pretend that every difficult question has disappeared. She acknowledges uncertainty surrounding fitnah and explicitly declines to conclude that every Quranic warfare passage is defensive.

Other passages, she says, deserve their own examination. This restraint strengthens her argument. Her apology to Muslim neighbors concerns accepting frightening quotations without checking their context. She also turns toward difficult biblical warfare passages, asking whether familiarity has spared her own tradition the scrutiny she applies to Islam.

That same discipline should shape public debate. Allegations of coercion, discrimination, or unlawful religious authority deserve examination through evidence and legal process. They do not justify suspicion of every Muslim household, mosque, or professional. Defending peaceful religious observance does not require endorsing every interpretation or excusing abuse.

It requires distinguishing individual conduct

from collective identity and applying the same standards across faiths. Political leaders should identify specific wrongdoing rather than allow an unfamiliar religious term to stand in for proof.

McDonald's inquiry ultimately asks whether citizens will examine inherited fears before allowing them to shape their treatment of neighbors. Her findings challenge the assumption that Muslim devotion means political disloyalty.

In her account, prayer, charity, ethical responsibility, and respect for the country's laws can belong to the same religious life. That understanding creates room for honest criticism without collective hostility. Americans and Europeans should demand evidence from those who invoke Sharia as a threat, protect equal citizenship, and refuse to let religious difference become a pretext for exclusion.

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

Called on

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the People's Majlis of Maldives Mr. Abdul Raheem Abdulla called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House.



Photo: PID

Finance Minister Highlights Regulated Virtual Assets, Climate Action Priorities

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb highlighted Pakistan's transition towards a regulated virtual-assets framework and reaffirmed the country's commitment to climate action at international events in New York.

Addressing the "UN Digital Cooperation Day 2026 – Blockchain and the Tokenized Future," the minister said tokenization must address real economic needs, including cheaper remittances, SME financing, sovereign debt, and broader financial access. He stressed that private-sector innovation should be backed



by strong state safeguards, inclusive digital infrastructure, and international coop-

eration, with emerging economies fully involved in shaping global standards.

Speaking at the launch of the COP31 Action Agenda, Aurangzeb expressed Paki-

stan's full support, noting its alignment with national climate priorities and NDC 3.0. He highlighted Pakistan's climate vulnerability and shared priorities including clean energy, renewable-energy expansion, energy-efficient buildings, climate-resilient cities, climate education, food security, and resilient agriculture.

Welcoming the proposed Climate Implementation Bridge to turn NDC commitments into bankable projects, he said the main challenge now is effective implementation rather than planning, commending the agenda's clear action points and measurable, impact-oriented approach.

PM Shehbaz arrives in New York to attend 81st UNGA session

City Desk

NEW YORK: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, arrived here on Tuesday to participate in the opening session of the 81st United Nations General Assembly.

The opening session of the UN General Assembly will be addressed by United Nations Secretary-General

António Guterres and US President Donald Trump, a news release issued by the Prime Minister's Office Media Wing said.

During his visit, the prime minister will also hold bilateral meetings with world leaders attending the UN General Assembly session.

The meetings will provide an opportunity for the prime minister



to exchange views with participating leaders on matters of mutual interest

and issues of international importance.

DPM Dar reaffirms Pakistan's commitment to R-4 framework

News Desk

NEW YORK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Tuesday reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to the R-4 framework and expressed the need for continued engagement to enhance regional peace and prosperity.

The deputy prime minister said this at the meeting of the Regional-4 (R-4) group held on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) here.

Besides Deputy Prime Minister Dar, the meeting was attended by the foreign

ministers of Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

The ministers exchanged views on the latest situation in the region and expressed full support for efforts aimed at a peaceful resolution of the situation.

They reiterated their support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their inalienable right to self-determination and to establish an independent, sovereign, viable, and contiguous State of Palestine based on June 4, 1967 lines, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Dar calls for full implementation of Gaza Peace Plan, UNSC Resolution 2803

News Desk

NEW YORK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday participated in the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Eight Arab-Islamic Countries here, wherein he stressed the need for full implementation of the Gaza Peace Plan and UN Security Council Resolution 2803.

The deputy prime minister, in his remarks at the meeting, expressed serious concern over continued ceasefire violations as well as the loss of lives in Gaza.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly being held here.

The deputy prime minister strongly condemned the continued illegal settlement activities and settler violence in the Occupied West



Bank, and called for rejecting any attempts to undermine the historical status of the holy sites.

He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for a sovereign, independent, and contiguous Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

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Pakistan launches joint drills with Russia and Oman



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan launched two military exercises on Tuesday, the ninth edition of Druzhba with Russia, and the second edition of Washaq Al Jabal (Mountain Lynx) with Oman.

Druzhba-IX began at Cherat, while Washaq Al Jabal-II opened at the National Counter Terrorism Centre in Pabbi.

The two-week exercises bring

together Pakistan Army troops with counterparts from the Russian Army and Royal Army of Oman.

Participants will share operational experience, refine counter-terrorism drills and improve interoperability between the forces.

The armies will also exchange best practices to sharpen combat and tactical skills, officials said, further building on existing bilateral defence ties.

PM contacts JI Amir, urges postponement of Islamabad sit-in

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Tuesday, held a telephonic conversation with Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Amir Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman and urged him to postpone his party's planned sit-in in Islamabad.

The prime minister said the government was providing relief on petroleum products to economically vulnerable and middle-class segments of society in these difficult circumstances, PM Office Media

Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister is currently in New York to attend United Nations General Assembly 81st Session.

He further assured that the government would continue to ensure maximum possible relief to the people.

Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman welcomed the prime minister's proposal and said that JI was considering postponement of its sit-in.

The two leaders agreed to meet after the PM's visit abroad and continue consultations on the matter.

PTI Govt lacks will to solve public issues, says Atta Tarar



Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that the PTI government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa lacks political will, not resources, to address people's problems. Accompanied by PM's Coordinator Ikhtiar Wali Khan and former KP governor Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, he visited the Hayatabad residence of PML-N leader Haji Shah Jee Gul Afridi to offer condolences over the death of Haji Jannat Sher Afridi, brother of late senator Taj Muham-

mad Afridi, and attended the Fateha prayer.

Speaking to media afterward, Tarar claimed KP has more funds available than Punjab but that money isn't being spent on the province's people. Referring to PTI's protest march, he said the Islamabad High Court had already ruled on the matter, noting a single day of protest costs Rs120 billion in losses.

He said the federal government has never withdrawn from cooperating with KP, but the provincial government has insisted it doesn't need assistance and hasn't reciprocated positively. Tarar added that law and order isn't solely the federal government's responsibility, urging KP to show seriousness. He said the recent Kohat attack could have been prevented had PTI strengthened its counter-terrorism department, built police capacity, and established a forensic lab in Peshawar.

Better Future Begins With Better Planning: Ahsan Tells Students



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday emphasized the importance of scientific planning for national development, saying decisions based on future requirements were essential for building a better future.

Addressing the graduating ceremony of interns at the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, he said every development initiative required proper scientific planning, using the analogy of a good architect producing a beau-

tiful building even from a temporary structure. He contrasted this with adhocism, which he said hampers scientific progress.

Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan had never lacked the ability to formulate plans, citing Vision 2010, prepared in 1998 to make Pakistan an upper-middle-income country, and Vision 2025, formulated in 2013 amid power outages and terrorism, aiming to place Pakistan among the world's top 25 economies. He noted subsequent CPEC initiatives added \$25 billion worth of projects and over 8,000 megawatts of power generation in three years, demonstrating that consistent planning translates aspirations into results.

He stressed the importance of decision-making, saying a wrong decision was preferable to no decision, as mistakes can be corrected. The minister urged youth to embrace planning and informed decision-making, and distributed certificates to 205 graduating interns.