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Every penny of Balochistan's development resources to be spent on public welfare, sustainable development: CM Bugti

Says timely completion of development projects is the result of good governance, effective monitoring, and a strong oversight system

QUETTA, (VoM Report): For the first time in the history of Balochistan, the Government of Balochistan successfully achieved its development targets during the previous fiscal year by ensuring the completion of all development projects included in the budget.

On one hand, the government saved Rs. 28 billion in non-development expenditures, while on the other, it completed 2,966 development projects, setting a new example of the effective, transparent, and result-oriented utilization of development resources.

This was disclosed during a meeting of the Secretaries Committee chaired by Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, where detailed progress on development projects for the previous and current fiscal years was reviewed. The meeting was attended by Provincial Minister for Planning and Development Mir Zahoor Buledi, Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan, the Secretary of Planning and Development, secretaries of the relevant departments, and senior officials. Provincial Minister for Planning and Development Mir Zahoor Buledi presented the performance report for the previous fiscal year to the Chief Minister, while Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan gave a detailed briefing, stating that the government had fully achieved its development project completion targets during the previous fiscal year. He said that, for the first time in the province's history, the completion of all development projects approved in the budget had been ensured. Along with saving Rs. 28 billion in non-development expenditures, 2,966 development projects were successfully completed. The meeting was informed that work is currently underway on 2,280 development projects during the current fiscal year, and an effective monitoring and strict oversight mechanism has been established to ensure their timely completion.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti appreciated the performance of the Provincial Minister for Planning and Development, the Chief Secretary, the Secretary of Planning and Development, and the relevant officers for successfully achieving the development targets.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti chairs the meeting of Secretaries Committee to review the progress of development porjects.



KARACHI: Chief Justice of Pakistan in a meeting with women representatives from Sindh High Court Bar at the Supreme Court Branch Registry.

Reliable air connectivity essential for Balochistan: Governor

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Governor of Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail welcomed South Air Pakistan for providing air travel facilities and services to the people of Balochistan's remote districts and emphasized that reliable air connectivity is essential for the province. Governor Mandokhail urged the airline to launch South Air flights on the Quetta–Zhob route and to enhance air connectivity from Zhob to Multan and Islamabad, noting that land travel presents numerous challenges. He expressed hope that improved air travel facilities and opportunities would boost economic activity, create employment opportunities, promote tourism, and benefit local communities.

He expressed these views while speaking during a meeting with a delegation of South Air Pakistan led by its Chief Operating Officer, Air Vice Marshal (Retired) Ijaz Malik. Chief Commercial Officer Siraj Anwar Qazi and Regional Head Abdul Sattar Achakzai were also present.

The delegation briefed the Governor on the airline's flight operations, safety standards, passenger services, and future expansion plans, highlighting its commitment to providing safe, comfortable, and affordable air travel.

On the occasion, Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail urged South Air Pakistan officials to play an active role in connecting more districts of Balochistan, saying that enhanced air connectivity is urgently needed for the province's economic and social development and prosperity. The South Air Pakistan delegation thanked the Governor for his support and encouragement and assured him that the airline would continue working to expand its services to other major cities.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Planning and Development Department Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi addressing a press briefing regarding development projects.

Balochistan achieves record 114% development fund utilization: Zahoor Buledi

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Provincial Minister for Planning and Development, Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, said that historic reforms have been introduced in Balochistan's development planning, monitoring, and implementation system over the past two years. As a result, transparency, speed, and quality in development projects have improved significantly, while the province has, for the first time, achieved 114 percent utilization of development funds, which he described as clear evidence of Balochistan's growing implementation capacity. He expressed these views while addressing a press briefing on Tuesday regarding the performance of the Planning and Development Department. Provincial Minister for Home Mir Ziaullah Langove and Additional Chief Secretary (Planning and Development) Zahid Saleem were also present.

Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi said that, for the first time in its history, the Planning and Development Department has published an Annual Progress Report, documenting the development programs of the past two and a half years, achievements, institutional reforms, policy initiatives, and regulatory reforms to inform the public and relevant institutions about the province's development performance.

He said that during the past year, the department has fully automated the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). Development projects are now submitted online, approvals are processed automatically, and data integration and all related procedures are carried out through a digital system. A dedicated mobile application has also been developed through which Planning and Development officials and other authorities can instantly access complete information about any development project while visiting its site.

He added that geotagging of nearly all development projects has been completed down to the Union Council level, making project monitoring more effective.

The minister said that the Bureau of Statistics has also been modernized. In the past, weak feasibility studies often prevented projects from achieving the desired outcomes.

COAS Asim Munir visits NDMA, receives briefing on Pakistan's disaster preparedness

RAWALPINDI, (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ visited the National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) at the Headquarters of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), where he received a briefing on Pakistan's disaster preparedness and coordinated response arrangements for the ongoing monsoon season.

Chairman NDMA briefed the COAS & CDF on the operational capabilities of NEOC and its technology-enabled response mechanisms including "Disaster Lens 2026," that showed the prevailing monsoon situation and multi-hazard monitoring mechanisms, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR). The COAS & CDF commended NDMA's efforts to strengthen Pakistan's national disaster management capacity.

He emphasized readiness, effective inter-agency coordination and swift response to safeguard lives and critical infrastructure.

Peaceful, just resolution of Jammu & Kashmir dispute cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy: PM

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Today, on Youm-e-Istehsal, the people and the Government of Pakistan stand in unwavering solidarity with our Kashmiri brothers and sisters. We solemnly observe this day to remind the world of the grave consequences of India's illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019, which sought to alter the internationally recognized disputed status of Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK), in flagrant violation of international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. Seven years on, these unlawful measures have neither changed the legal status of Jammu and Kashmir nor diminished the legitimate aspiration of its people. Instead, they have deepened repression, undermined fundamental freedom, and accelerated attempts to alter the demographic composition of the occupied territory through unlawful legislative and administrative measures. The continued suppression of the genuine Kashmiri political leadership, restrictions on civil liberties, and curbs on independent media, remain a matter of serious concern. Despite these challenges, the courage, resilience and steadfastness of the Kashmiri people remain unshaken. Their peaceful and just struggle for the realization of their unalienable right to self-determination continue to inspire generations and commands the respect and support of all those who believe in justice, human dignity and the rule of international law.

People of Balochistan express complete solidarity with Kashmiri brothers, sisters: CM Bugti

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, in his special message on Kashmir Exploitation Day, said that the illegal action of August 5, 2019, was a blatant violation of international law, United Nations resolutions, and the fundamental principles of human rights. He said that India's unilateral move to alter the disputed constitutional status of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir was not only illegal but had also severely undermined peace and stability in the region.

The Chief Minister said that Kashmir Exploitation Day is observed to express complete solidarity with the people of Kashmir, pay tribute to their great sacrifices, and draw the attention of the international community to the grave human rights violations being committed in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

CS orders strict monitoring of food prices to ensure organized relief for public

QUETTA, (VoM Report): A conference of Deputy Commissioners was held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan, during which public welfare, provision of basic facilities, speedy completion of development projects, and the repatriation of illegally residing foreign nationals across the province were reviewed in detail.

Relevant secretaries, deputy commissioners, and commissioners attended the meeting.

The Chief Secretary directed all officers to remain available at all times for public service and to make their departments more responsive in addressing public complaints promptly. He said that the provision of basic facilities, including water, health, education, and roads, remains among the provincial government's top priorities.



THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Wednesday August 05, 2026

Balochistan's vast mineral potential

The recent meeting of the Mineral Investment Facilitation Authority (MIFA), chaired by Provincial Finance and Minerals Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani, reflects a decisive and forward-looking approach by the Balochistan government to unlock the province's vast mineral potential while safeguarding the interests of its people. At a time when economic resilience and sustainable development are paramount, this initiative signals both clarity of vision and seriousness of purpose.

Balochistan's mineral wealth has long been recognized as one of its greatest assets, yet for years it remained underutilized due to outdated frameworks and inconsistent policy direction. The government's renewed focus on reforming the mining sector demonstrates a clear commitment to turning this potential into tangible prosperity. By prioritizing mining as a cornerstone of economic policy, the provincial leadership is not only acknowledging its importance but actively working to modernize and strengthen it.

A particularly noteworthy aspect of the meeting was the discussion on revising mineral royalty rates and associated fees, which have remained unchanged since 2017. Updating these rates is both timely and necessary. It reflects an understanding that economic conditions evolve, and policies must adapt accordingly to ensure fairness, competitiveness, and increased revenue generation. The unanimous recommendation by MIFA to move forward with these adjustments underscores a rare and commendable consensus among stakeholders.

Equally important is the government's balanced approach toward growth and responsibility. The emphasis on developing a comprehensive strategy to protect mine owners and workers highlights a progressive shift toward inclusive development. Economic expansion without worker safety and welfare is unsustainable, and the government's recognition of this reality strengthens confidence in its reform agenda. By integrating labor protection with economic planning, the authorities are laying the foundation for a more stable and equitable mining ecosystem.

The presence of key policymakers, technical experts, and industry representatives at the meeting further reinforces the credibility of this initiative. It reflects a collaborative governance model where decisions are informed by diverse perspectives, ensuring that reforms are both practical and impactful.

This session of MIFA marks more than just a routine policy discussion—it represents a meaningful step toward institutional reform and economic transformation. By modernizing regulatory frameworks, enhancing revenue streams, and prioritizing the well-being of workers, the government is positioning Balochistan as a more attractive and responsible destination for investment in the mining sector.

In a province where a significant portion of the population relies on mining for their livelihood, such reforms carry profound implications. They promise not only increased economic activity but also improved living standards and greater social stability. If implemented effectively, these measures could serve as a model for resource management across the country.

The government's proactive stance deserves recognition. By aligning economic ambition with social responsibility, it is charting a path that is both pragmatic and visionary—one that holds the promise of long-term prosperity for Balochistan and its people.

US-Iran stand-off: conflicting perspectives

INAM UL HAQUE

The impasse in the second round of peace talks stems from Iran exhibiting intransigence and the US considering these parleys as a waste of time, for Iran not conceding on the core demand of halting uranium enrichment. The US proposals envisage a concurrent two-stage process, including ending the war first, and simultaneously addressing more contentious issues, like Iran's nuclear programme.

The Iranian proposition spans a sequenced framework; ending hostilities first, followed by CBMs like removing the maritime blockade, and thereafter the broader negotiations. Tehran wants the removal of the blockade as a precondition for further talks. Its approach comprises immediate de-escalation, while preserving the leverage (SoH) for the longer-term settlement.

Contrarily, the US considers postponement of nuclear discussions a risk, which weakens its centrality. Washington also cites 'tremendous infighting and confusion' within Iranian leadership, where the IRGC/Pasdaran is considered to be calling the shots, and not the political leadership, after the killing of the country's civil and military leadership. In a nutshell, Tehran seeks phased relief and recognition of its position, whereas Washington requires comprehensive guarantees upfront. Pakistan is trying hard to 'narrow the differences' before a second formal meeting. However, there seems to be an agreement on keeping the ceasefire open-ended, allowing time for diplomats to address complex issues.

President Trump cancelled a planned Islamabad trip by envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, announcing that Iran could call, once ready. Iran has, for now, shunned a face-off with the US and instead prefers dealing through intermediaries, due to a trust deficit and President Trump's eroding credibility. Consequently, the SoH remains closed in double blockade by US CENTCOM and IRGC, choking most of the Gulf LNG supply and around 20% of the global oil shipments, destined mainly for Asia, comprising 85% of its energy needs.

In global markets, major US stock indices (S&P 500 and Nasdaq) have hit record highs, due to robust energy trading, whereas the broader global market is pressured because of supply inconsistency and risks. With global oil prices hovering over $100-$109 a barrel, companies like Exxon and Aramco have reaped hefty profits; however, gas station inflation has hit international and US consumers hard.

Defence stocks have surged, and companies like Lockheed Martin, Raytheon and Boeing are primary beneficiaries of this conflict. Chip stocks have registered gains for AI firms like Intel. Likewise, yields on the 10-year US Treasury bonds have risen. Gold has edged higher, as investors are increasingly shifting towards safer stocks.

Against this backdrop and despite no immediate prospects of direct talks, backchannel diplomacy remains active. Iran's FM Abbas Araghchi returned to Islamabad on April 25 after visiting Oman, travelling on a Pakistani aircraft, and later meeting Gen Asim Munir. Araghchi carried written messages outlining Tehran's position on key issues, like its 'nuclear red lines and SoH'. He later travelled to St Petersburg, where he met President Putin, Iran's close ally. Several regional countries are also actively involved in de-escalation. Araghchi also made separate contacts with Qatari and Saudi counterparts. GCC and Saudi Arabia want their concerns to be 'reflected' in the peace process. Turkey is also engaging the US, Iran and Oman.

President Trump has desisted from incendiary posts on social media, and has not indicated resuming hostilities; and the fragile ceasefire is so far holding. It seems that, given the stakes, both sides do not want to return to a shooting war – the US for domestic political costs, due to depleting ammunition stocks, and given the world reaction; and Iran because of attrition it has suffered and the economic fallout from the maritime blockade.

Although Iran publicly sticks to defiance and declares not to enter 'imposed negotiations' under threats or blockade. As a side development, Hezbollah in Lebanon refuses to be part of the ceasefire with Israel, brokered last week in Washington. Hezbollah's five peace conditionalities include: a) halt to Israeli aggression; b) withdrawal from occupied lands; c) prisoner release; d) displaced Lebanese returning to their homes; and e) reconstruction.

This seemingly is an over-ask, given the military situation on the ground, and the crushing blows suffered by Hezbollah in this war. Hezbollah, as an indispensable powerbroker, is trying to raise the 'stakes for parties mediating the conflict' and is simply bypassing the Lebanese government, which is eager for a settlement with Israel. That conflict, hence, will likely complicate the US-Iran mediations.

On the Iranian side, the sentiment seems more confident, hawkish and understandably angry. After absorbing and retaliating to the US-Israeli onslaught for over a month, the IRGC, with residual military capability, could perhaps continue the combat for up to three more months. Besides, the IRGC and most of the world consider restoration of peace squarely a US responsibility which, along with its protégé Israel, started this unnecessary war of choice.

Internally, IRGC is in the driving seat; however, ironically, generals are not known as great peacemakers and compromisers, given their training and outlook. Their world is a binary of black and white, with little or no shades of grey, and that remains the hallmark of politicians. Aligning the IRGC's worldview and conflict outlook with political reality would be a tough ask and lengthy process, especially after the stalemate that the IRGC has imposed on the mighty US-Israel coalition.

Ayatullah Mojtaba Khamenei was severely wounded on the first day of the war, suffering injuries to one hand and one leg and burn wounds to the face and lips. He is now awaiting a prosthetic leg. He reportedly speaks with difficulty and will eventually need to undergo plastic surgery. His own ties to the IRGC, his appointment as an IRGC favourite, his health, his reclusiveness due to security concerns, and the imperatives of regime survival bring the IRGC to the forefront as a lead player in deciding strategy and resource allocation.

Attacks on Israel and US interests in the Arab world, besides the blockade of SoH, are the Guards' strategic interests. Additionally, the generals reckon that they have contained the threat, hence the continued defiance. It was they who agreed to the ceasefire and who prevailed upon the Iranian government not to send their delegation to the Islamabad Peace Talks 2.0. Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, too, has an IRGC background, and several Guard generals participated as delegates in Islamabad Talks 1.0. Some fringe firebrands, like the ultra-hardline Saeed Jalili, continue to influence the media.

So, fingers are still crossed!

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Skills, not slogans: rethinking Pakistan's education divide

MEHAK ANWAR

Pakistan's education crisis no longer hides behind dense policy documents or statistical abstractions; it is laid bare in a stark and persistent divide. While urban literacy rates have climbed past 70%, rural Pakistan continues to fall dangerously behind. This is more than a disparity; it is a structural failure that speaks of years of uneven governance, weak delivery mechanisms, and policy priorities that rarely translate beyond paper. Successive governments have pledged reform, backed by rising allocations and an expanding institutional footprint.

Yet in districts like Tharparkar, the ground reality remains stubbornly unchanged. Access to education particularly for girls is still uncertain, shaped by geography, poverty and systemic neglect. Schools may exist in official records, but meaningful opportunity remains out of reach for many.

The issue, therefore, is not a shortage of policy ambition. It is the chronic failure of implementation, the absence of sustained follow-through, and an inability to convert investment into measurable, lasting impact.

Pakistan produces thousands of graduates each year, yet far too many remain unemployed or underemployed.

According to recent labour force estimates, youth unemployment in Pakistan hovers around 8–10%, with the rate significantly higher among young women.

The problem is not simply job scarcity, but a system that continues to prioritise degrees over skills. Technical and vocational education has yet to receive the sustained attention it demands. And despite Pakistan requiring nearly two million skilled workers annually, formal training systems produce only a fraction of that, leaving a widening gap between education and employability.

Provincial bodies such as STEVTA and federal initiatives under PSDP continue to receive funding.

However, structural inefficiencies, weak oversight and a disconnect from market realities limit their effectiveness.

The result is a cycle where investment does not translate into employability, particularly in rural and underserved regions.

And yet, within this broader failure, there are signs of what works.

In Tharparkar, a targeted intervention funded by a private firm and implemented by Thar Education Alliance, is quietly challenging this status quo. The Girls Pathway to Skill Development programme focuses on something many public initiatives overlook: practical, market-relevant skills for young women who would otherwise remain excluded from economic participation.

By training girls in computer graphic design, sewing and embroidery, the programme goes beyond conventional literacy.

It equips participants with tools to earn, contribute to household income, and, crucially, shift longstanding social dynamics that have historically limited women's roles in such communities.

What sets this initiative apart is not just its intent, but its design. It is localised, outcome-driven and directly linked to economic opportunity.

Participants are not merely trained; they are prepared for independence, with tangible support such as equipment and continued mentorship.

This is where the contrast with public policy becomes stark.

While government programmes often struggle with scale and delivery, this collaboration demonstrates the effectiveness of focused, well-executed interventions. It shows that when funding is paired with accountability and on-ground understanding, results follow - even in the most challenging environments.

However, isolated success stories cannot carry the weight of a national crisis.

Pakistan's youth bulge often described as a demographic dividend will become a liability if the country fails to invest in skills at scale. Bridging the rural-urban divide requires more than budget increases; it demands systemic reform, stronger monitoring, and a shift in priorities from access alone to employability.

Public-private partnerships offer a practical way forward. Initiatives like this one provide a blueprint that the state can learn from and replicate.

For millions of young Pakistanis, the cost of inaction is measured in lost opportunities, constrained choices, and unrealised potential.

And unless that changes, Pakistan will not just fall short of its ambitions, it will actively hold back the very generation meant to achieve them.

The writer is a Mass Communication graduate and a human rights activist

Self-inflicted energy crisis

BENAZIR SAMAD

In the Karimabad valley of Chitral, Abdul Rahim's monthly electricity bill came to Rs1,500. The power comes from a community hydropower project run by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in Pakistan's Hindu Kush mountains. Some 20 kilometers down the valley, families on the national grid pay between Rs6,000 and Rs7,000 for the same month. In that short stretch of road, Pakistan's energy crisis stops being a mystery.

The Economist recently ranked Pakistan among the world's biggest losers from the Gulf energy shock. Fossil fuels account for more than 30% of its total import bill, nearly 90% of that oil sourced from the Middle East, making energy shocks a direct trigger for current account crises. We saw this after the Ukraine war.

We're seeing it again after the Iran war. That chronic vulnerability points to a deeper question: how did a country with 60,000 MW of untapped hydropower potential, Chinese investment on its doorstep, and rivers, sun and wind in abundance, end up this exposed? The answer isn't resource scarcity. Political economy already determined the investment – and it chose wrong.

When China arrived with CPEC, a $60 billion infrastructure programme with energy at its centre, Pakistan had a once-in-a-generation opportunity. CPEC's first phase poured more than $33 billion into the energy sector. Nearly two-thirds of that generation capacity went to coal. Coal dominated CPEC not because it was the best energy solution or Pakistan lacked alternatives but because coal served a different purpose entirely.

Nawaz Sharif won the 2013 election on a promise to end load-shedding - coal could be built within an election cycle. Hydro couldn't. Punjab was the electoral base; hydro potential sat in smaller regions like Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan. Sindh was no different. The PPP government, sitting on one of the world's great wind corridors in Jhimpir-Gharo, also prioritised coal. Both major parties, both major provinces, made the same calculation.

Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan together hold over 45,000 MW of identified hydropower potential, which is 75% of Pakistan's total. Both received a fraction of CPEC's energy investment. In Gilgit-Baltistan, the shelving of a single $14 billion hydropower plant wiped out 98% of CPEC funds to the province – the same region that holds Pakistan's greatest hydropower potential.

Poor planning is another key factor. Even where the national grid did arrive, it arrived badly. Grid connectivity in topographies like Chitral, with its narrow valleys, is uniquely challenging. It needed to be done once, with proper planning. Chitral's Golan Gol project feeds 436 million units annually into the national grid, but captures only a fraction of the valley's actual estimated hydropower potential of 6,000 to 7,000 MW. To go back now means new transmission towers, new environmental disruption, new costs that careful planning could have avoided entirely.

The consequences are already being lived. Chitral residents took WAPDA to court over high-tension transmission lines running directly over their homes - a safety and health hazard that made the property beneath them worthless. They won. WAPDA was ordered to move the lines. It couldn't. The lines had been laid without accounting for what surrounded them, and there was no viable path to correct the mistake. A court order remains unimplementable. That is what short-term or bad planning looks like.

Meanwhile, the Sahiwal coal plant, CPEC's flagship energy project built in Punjab on imported coal, today operates at 41% utilisation while consumers pay for electricity it isn't producing. According to a CSIS analysis of CPEC's first five years, only 34% of energy projects were completed overall, and wind and solar received just 8% of generation capacity. Pakistan chose this.

The numbers make the case. Pakistan has a 10 to 12 GW surplus of generation capacity. Consumers pay Rs2.5 to 2.8 trillion every year for idle plants not producing a single unit of electricity. Yet millions of households remain without electricity, and millions more face 12 hours or more of daily load-shedding.

The rapid rise of solar in Pakistan is often celebrated as progress, but the boom is not a policy success story either. It is what happens when a state fails so completely that people opt out of it entirely. Electricity tariffs rose 155% in three years. People bought solar panels in desperation. Pakistan became the world's third-largest market for Chinese solar panels almost overnight, as solar became affordable for the middle class.

Now the government is cutting buyback rates and imposed an 18% import tax on panels, which was later reduced to 10% after public backlash, to protect the broken grid those same people abandoned. Also, there were reports of the government going further, requiring licences for solar users and introducing additional fees, even for smaller systems that were previously exempt. The Ministry of Power Division has, however, denied such reports. Anyway, as a matter of fact, the state built overcapacity with the wrong technology, priced people off the grid, watched them leave, and is now penalising them for leaving. That is not a solar success story. It is a governance failure in another form.

Pakistan's energy crisis is self-inflicted, a clear example of how short-sighted government policies play politics with essential human needs instead of solving them. The Pakistani government cynically used coal as a primary energy source despite the fact that it was polluting and required coal imports. The contracts that govern Pakistan's LNG terminals follow the same logic and so does every other energy decision Pakistan has made in the last two decades.

The government apparently felt that a longer-term strategy, properly communicated, which gives greater emphasis to renewables will not work politically because people want more power now regardless of the cost or inefficiencies. That is not mismanagement. That is a choice about who the system is designed to serve. It is time for the government to realise that decades of neglect cannot be addressed through short-sighted fixes that often create more problems than they solve. Pakistan cannot afford to abandon the pursuit of a sustainable energy future built on hydropower, solar and wind, even as it works to meet immediate demand. Pakistan will never get out of its "developing country" status unless it learns, as Americans say, to walk and chew gum at the same time.

India's unilateral actions undermining int'l laws, water weaponization risks regional peace

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The speakers including the national political leadership, international legal experts, and policy analysts on Tuesday strongly condemned India's unilateral and illegal decision to place the historic Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in abeyance, warning that New Delhi's actions threaten the foundation of the international legal order and risk triggering a severe strategic conflict in South Asia.

Addressing an international seminar on "Indus Waters Treaty: An Instrument of Peace and Regional Stability" held here the speakers emphasized that the 1960 treaty was an internationally binding pact that cannot be suspended or revoked unilaterally.

Organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the seminar brought together federal ministers, diplomats, and international experts who viewed that India's suspension of crucial hydrological data flows and mandated inspections amid an ongoing global climate crisis amounts to the dangerous weaponization of water and a direct threat to the lives and livelihoods of over 240 million people in Pakistan.

The experts highlighted that the Treaty is one of the world's most consequential transboundary water agreements, sustaining a predominantly irrigation-based economy and the livelihoods of over 240 million people as more than 80% of Pakistan's arable land depends on Indus waters, making predictability, data sharing and routine Treaty procedures vital for human security, food security and disaster preparedness.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Ishaq Dar, stated that by illegally holding the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in abeyance, New Delhi had undermined the international legal system and put the region under risk of conflict. He was speaking at the concluding session of the international seminar titled "Indus Waters Treaty: An Instrument of Peace and Regional Stability" organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

He called for viewing transboundary rivers as instruments of bringing countries closer to each other rather than becoming sources of discord.

He added that it was in this spirit that Pakistan signed the IWT with India, despite the fact that it demanded significant concessions from Pakistan. Islamabad, he said, believed that the treaty would provide long-term predictability on the use of one of the most significant shared regional resources.



Survivors of the fire on the KM Mutiara Sentosa II ship, carrying 238 people, near Madura Island in Surabaya, East Java province, Indonesia, arrived at Tanjung Perak Port after their evacuation. Five people died in the fire.



Thousands of Iranians take part in Arbaeen commemorations, marching toward the Shah Abdol-Azim Shrine in the southern part of the city while chanting elegies on the 40th day after the martyrdom of Prophet Muhammad's grandson Imam Hussein and his 72 companions in Tehran

Any cut in Pakistan's water flow to hit economy hard: Dr Zigón

Water cooperation is essential for ensuring lasting peace and stability in the region

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Dr. Roxolana Zigón, Head of the Scientific Centre for International and Strategic Studies at UWC, Moscow, on Tuesday said any reduction in water flows to Pakistan would have serious consequences for the country's agriculture, food security and overall economy.

Addressing the international seminar on Indus Waters Treaty titled "IWT 2026: An Instrument of Peace and Regional Stability," she said Pakistan has repeatedly lodged protests with India over unusual fluctuations in the flow of the Chenab River.

She noted that the construction of dams in India's upper riparian areas could contribute to regional instability if concerns over water management are not addressed through established treaty mechanisms.

Presenting Pakistan's perspective, Dr. Zigón said the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 remains fully valid and legally binding. She warned that any continued unilateral suspension of the treaty could have serious security and humanitarian implications not only for Pakistan and India but for the wider South Asian region. She described the Indus Waters Treaty as one of the most successful and durable transboundary water-sharing agreements in history, adding that it continues to serve as a global model for the peaceful management of shared water resources.

Dr. Zigón also highlighted the importance of the Permanent Indus Commission, describing it as an effective institutional mechanism for dialogue, cooperation and the peaceful resolution of disputes between the two countries.

She emphasized that water cooperation is essential for ensuring lasting peace and stability in the region.



The premiere of "Masters of the Universe" was held at Cineworld Leicester Square cinema in London

Gaza holds mass funeral for 112 killed nearly 3 years ago by Israel

GAZA CITY, (Monitoring Desk): Palestinians in Gaza held a mass funeral on Tuesday for 112 people, whose bodies were finally recovered from under the rubble of homes destroyed in Israel's genocidal war on the enclave.

Thousands of Palestinians took part in the funeral in Gaza City's Sabra neighborhood, where the bodies were draped in Palestinian flags and placed near the ruins of the destroyed homes, according to media.

The victims are set to be buried at the Baptist Cemetery in the Zeitoun neighborhood, south of Gaza City, after the funeral procession.

The victims were members of the al-Hasayneh and Abu Sharia families, who were killed when the Israeli army bombed their homes while they were inside on Nov. 23, 2023.



The funeral is considered one of the largest in Palestinian history due to the high number of victims.

The bodies were retrieved from the rubble by civil defense teams on Saturday.

"The victims included 40 children, 38 women and seven people with disabilities," the Civil Defense said in a statement. "The teams were unable to find 157 bodies still missing under the rubble," Civil Defense official Mohammad Abu Dan said.

Israel has killed more than 73,000 people and injured over 174,000 others in a brutal war in Gaza since October 2023.

Despite the ceasefire agreement in effect since Oct. 10, 2025, Israel has continued its attacks across the enclave, killing 1,250 Palestinians and injuring 4,110 others, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

Palestinian authorities in Gaza estimate that around 9,500 people remain under the rubble of buildings destroyed by Israel across Gaza.

North Korea fires projectiles, including short-range ballistic missile

SEOUL, (Agencies): North Korea fired several projectiles, including at least one short-range ballistic missile, toward waters off the country's west coast on Tuesday, South Korea's military said.

They were launched at around 1 pm (0400 GMT) fromnear Chongju in North Korea's North Pyongan Province, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said in a statement.

The missile flew about 80 kilometres, the JCS said.

It is North Korea's first known missile launch since April 19, when the country test-fired several short-range ballistic missiles, which it said were equipped with cluster bombs.

In early April, Pyongyang also said it tested a new cluster-bomb warhead on a ballistic missile and an electromagnetic weapon, in a move that analysts said was part of efforts to showcase the North's capacity to fight a modern war.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said in March that his country's status as a nuclear-armed state was irreversible and that expanding a "self-defensive nuclear deterrent" was essential to national security.

Despite UN sanctions on its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs since 2006, North Korea has accelerated efforts in recent years to build up its arsenal under Kim, drawing condemnation from South Korea, Japan and the US.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry spokesperson urged North Korea to respond to Seoul's peace overtures and efforts to reduce tensions in a press briefing on Tuesday.

Iran hangs another protester as dozens more risk execution: rights groups

PARIS (Agencies): Iran executed a man on charges related to protests this year, the latest in a spree of hangings on political or security accusations since the start of the US-Israeli war with dozens more risking execution, rights groups said.

Some three dozen men have been hanged on charges related to protests, membership of banned opposition groups, or espionage since wartime executions resumed in March, according to rights groups.

The latest man to be hanged was Abbas Akbari, who was accused of attacking an official building in Nain in the central province of Isfahan during the peak of the protest movement in January. "The primary purpose of these executions is to instil fear in society and prevent future protests," said the director of Norway-based NGO Iran Human Rights (IHR) Mahmood Amiry Moghaddam. He added the surge in executions has resulted in no "serious political consequences for the Islamic Republic".

"Unless the political cost of executions increases, we are likely to witness the continuation, and even escalation of daily executions in the weeks and months ahead," he said.

The Hengaw group, also based in Norway, described the execution as "a clear example of state-sanctioned killing aimed at intimidating society and suppressing the people's legitimate right to protest".

The judiciary's Mizan Online website described Akbari as "one of the armed leaders" of protests in his region.

IHR and Hengaw said Iran has now executed 15 people on charges related to the 2026 protests since the war began. Another man was also executed in the same period on charges connected to protests in 2022. Thirteen men have also been hanged over links to banned opposition groups including the outlawed People's Muhajedin of Iran (PMOI or its Persian acronym MEK) but also proscribed Kurdish and Sunni Baluch organisations.

Wastewater treatment plants to be installed in every city of Punjab: Marriyum

LAHORE, (APP): Punjab Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that waste water treatment plants will be installed in every city of Punjab.

Expressing her views on the budget approval in the Punjab Assembly, Marriyum Aurangzeb congratulated the Speaker and the government and appreciated the ongoing development projects under the leadership of CM Maryam Nawaz.

She said that a major project to replace 70 to 75-year-old underground water and sewage lines is underway in Punjab, on which work is being done in 84 cities of the province. This program also includes improving the underground sewage system, construction of underground tanks and recharge wells (underground water wells).

The senior Punjab minister said that the Punjab Chief Minister will inaugurate the Sargodha Cardiology Hospital in the first week of July, where all the machinery installation and construction work has been completed on time.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said that WASA agencies are active in 41 districts of Punjab, while more than 1500 machines have been provided to various local government institutions, water mapping has been completed in DG Khan, Multan, Bahawalpur and adjacent areas and work is underway on various clean water projects in these areas at a cost of Rs 42 billion.

She said that clean water is being provided in different areas through 5800 water filtration plants in the province, while under the project of 2400 model villages in Punjab, provision of water supply, sewage, sanitation and basic infrastructure without discrimination will be ensured.

The senior Punjab minister, while criticising the opposition, said that if even a single wastewater treatment plant was built during its tenure, it should be reported, while the current government plans to set up wastewater treatment plants in every city of Punjab.

Suspected Ebola deaths at 220, epidemic 'outpacing us': Tedros

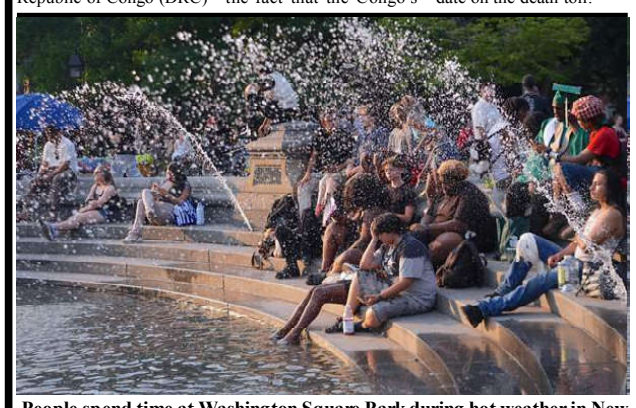
NORTH KIVU, (Monitoring Desk): World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Monday that there had been 220 suspected deaths in the current Ebola outbreak and that delays in detecting cases meant responders were now "playing catch-up".

"We are urgently scaling up operations, but at the moment the epidemic is outpacing us," Tedros said, adding that countries bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) — the epicentre of the outbreak — should take immediate action.

Earlier on Monday, Uganda reported two more Ebola cases, taking its total number of confirmed cases to seven. The World Health Organisation has declared the outbreak of the rare Bundibugyo strain of Ebola a public health emergency of international concern.

Tedros said he would travel to the Congo on Tuesday and that addressing the fast-moving outbreak was complicated by the fact that the Congo's Ituri and North Kivu provinces were highly insecure. There were no approved vaccines for the Bundibugyo virus.

More than 900 suspected Ebola cases have been identified in the conflict-hit DRC, the WHO chief has said. "As surveillance efforts have been scaled up in the DRC Ebola response, more than 900 suspected cases have been identified so far, including 101 confirmed cases," he said in a Sunday social media post that gave no update on the death toll.



People spend time at Washington Square Park during hot weather in New York City

Australia-India-Japan-US Quad to build port, unveil deal on critical minerals

NEW DELHI, (Monitoring Desk): The foreign ministers of Australia, India, Japan and the United States agreed to jointly build a port in Fiji and signed pacts covering critical minerals and energy security, as they sought to inject fresh energy into their grouping known as the Quad.

The brief meeting between the countries' top diplomats — Australia's Penny Wong, India's S Jaishankar, Japan's Toshimitsu Motegi and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio — was the third such gathering of the Quad since September 2024.

The group unveiled its first joint infrastructure project, a port in Fiji.

"We are going to be partnering on issues of port infrastructure, in particular in response to insufficient port capacity in the Pacific Islands, we are announcing plans to work with Fiji," Rubio said. The four-nation group had lost some momentum last year after failing to hold a leaders' summit, amid tensions between US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi over Washington's tariffs and other matters.

"We are beginning to show real achievements and real accomplishments," Rubio said. "We are deeply committed to this partnership. It is a linchpin and a cornerstone of our global strategy as a nation in the United States." He said the group agreed to launch an initiative on Indo-Pacific Energy Security and a critical minerals framework.



The 2026 Freestyle and Greco-Roman Wrestling Super League Finals have begun in Hakkari's Cennet Cehennem Valley

98pc of hate crimes against Muslims reported in BJP ruled states in April 2026

NEW DELHI (INP): Since the BJP-led government took power in 2014, incidents of hate crimes targeting Muslims across India have shown a marked increase, according to monitoring reports from human rights organizations and civil society trackers.

A vast majority of anti-Muslim hate incidents—including hate speech, vigilantism, and violence—occur in states governed by the BJP. However, civil society monitors note that there is no official government data confirming that exactly 98% of physical hate crimes occurred in BJP-ruled states in April 2026.

Reports indicate that approximately 85% of these incidents involve individuals affiliated with the BJP or its allied Hindutva organizations. In many cases, Indian police and agencies have responded with indifference or hostility toward victims seeking help.

The reports are dedicated to systematically documenting all hate crimes committed against Muslim community in BJP-ruled India. Independent monitoring groups and human rights trackers have documented recurring patterns in recent years. Organizations like the India Hate Lab have previously reported that a large majority of hate speech and intimidation incidents (often around 88% to 93% depending on the period) take place in states ruled by the BJP.

Lasting peace in South Asia closely linked to peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute: President

Pakistan remains unwavering in its moral, political and diplomatic support for the people of IIOJK

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Today, we observe Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir to reaffirm our unwavering solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). We pay tribute to their courage, resilience and commitment to their just struggle for the realisation of their inalienable right to self-determination.

Seven years have passed since India's illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019, which sought to alter the internationally recognised disputed status of Jammu and Kashmir in violation of international law and the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. These actions cannot change the legal status of the dispute, nor can they weaken the resolve of the Kashmiri people. For seven years, millions of Kashmiris have continued to live under severe restrictions that have affected every aspect of daily life. Families have endured uncertainty, young people have seen their opportunities constrained and entire communities have continued to bear the burden of prolonged conflict and instability. Despite these hardships, the people of Jammu and Kashmir have remained steadfast in their pursuit of justice and their legitimate right to determine their own future. Pakistan remains unwavering in its moral, political and diplomatic support for the people of IIOJK. We will continue to raise our voice at every international forum until the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is resolved in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. A just and lasting peace in South Asia is closely linked to the peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.



QUETTA: MPA Dr Abdul Malik Baloch called on Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan holds a bilateral meeting with Iran's Minister for Industry, Mine and Trade Dr. Mohammad Atabak in Islamabad on the sidelines of the 10th Pakistan-Iran Joint Trade Committee (JTC).

NAB recovers record Rs2.45 Trillion, reclaims over a million acres of state land in Q2 2026

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan's National Accountability Bureau (NAB) said on Tuesday that it achieved record direct and indirect recoveries worth Rs2.45 trillion during the second quarter of 2026, while reclaiming more than 1.078 million acres of valuable state-owned land across Balochistan, Sindh, Punjab and Islamabad.

According to a NAB press release, total recoveries during the first half of 2026 reached Rs5.414 trillion, the highest six-month recovery figure in the bureau's history.

The bureau also announced the initiation of measures to introduce an artificial intelligence (AI)-based accountability system aimed at enhancing transparency and improving the efficiency of investigations.

NAB Sukkur recorded the largest recovery, reclaiming 853,678 acres of land belonging to the National Highway Authority (NHA), the Forest Department and the Irrigation Department.

People of Pakistan stand shoulder to shoulder with Kashmiri brothers, sisters: Gilani

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Chairman of the Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering, principled, and historic commitment to the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

In his special message on Youm-e-Istehsal, he said that India's unilateral and illegal actions of 5 August 2019 constituted a flagrant violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, international law, and universally accepted principles of human rights.

The Chairman Senate said that Youm-e-Istehsal serves as a solemn reminder of the continued suffering, sacrifices, and resilience of the people of IIOJK. It also calls upon the conscience of the international community to acknowledge the grave injustices being perpetrated in the occupied territory and to fulfill its responsibility towards ensuring justice and lasting peace.

He observed that, in the years following the events of 5 August 2019, India has intensified measures aimed at altering the demographic composition of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, undermining its distinct identity, suppressing the legitimate political leadership, restricting fundamental freedoms, and committing widespread human rights violations.

He emphasised that no amount of coercion, repression, or state oppression can extinguish the legitimate aspirations of the Kashmiri people for freedom, dignity, and the realisation of their internationally recognised right to self-determination.

Gilani reiterated that Pakistan will continue to extend its unwavering moral, political, and diplomatic support to the people of IIOJK in their just struggle.

He stressed that the Kashmir dispute can only be resolved through a peaceful settlement in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people, enabling them to freely determine their own future.

Ayaz urges int'l community to take effective notice of grave human rights violations in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that August 5 reminds the world of India's illegal annulment of Articles 370 and 35-A of its Constitution, through which the special status of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) was revoked, and the fundamental rights and distinct identity of the Kashmiri people were undermined.

In his message on Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir (Kashmir Exploitation Day), he reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to supporting the Kashmiri people in their just struggle for the realization of their right to self-determination.

He expressed solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for their just cause.

Ayaz Sadiq said that Pakistan would continue to raise its voice for the legitimate rights of the people of IIOJK and support their just cause at all regional and international forums.

He said that the Kashmiri people have rendered unparalleled sacrifices for their fundamental right to self-determination, freedom and preservation of their identity.

Ayaz Sadiq recalled that the state and people of Pakistan, despite all political differences within, had stood firmly as one with the Kashmiri brothers and sisters for the last 78 years. This unity remained the key strength of the Kashmir struggle, and it was all the more important at the current critical global times to keep the unity among our ranks.

He categorically said that India's illegal actions on August 5, 2019 were a blatant violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, adding that Pakistan has consistently rejected these unlawful measures aimed at altering the disputed status of Jammu & Kashmir, changing the demographic composition in IIOJK and undermining the identity of the Kashmiri people.

The Speaker said that a just resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir Dispute is indispensable for lasting peace, security and stability in South Asia.

He further stressed the need for resolving the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Ayaz Sadiq urged the international community to take effective notice of the grave human rights violations in IIOJK, attempts to alter its demographic composition and restrictions imposed on Kashmiri leadership.

He said that the Parliament of Pakistan has always supported the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people and has adopted numerous unanimous resolutions condemning human rights violations in IIOJK and drawing the attention of the international community towards the longstanding Kashmir dispute.

Ayaz Sadiq further said that the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir is playing an active role in effectively highlighting the Kashmir issue at the international level and conveying the voice of the Kashmiri people to the international community.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoiab Nosherwani is being briefed about the performance of Balochistan Revenue Authority.



QUETTA: Provincial Advisor for Sports and Youth Affairs Meena Majeed Baloch inaugurates newly constructed indoor cricket ground at Mini Sports Complex Airport Road.

DPM Dar to attend ministerial meeting on Jerusalem in Jordan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister (DPM/ FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar will undertake a visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to attend the Ministerial Meeting on Jerusalem to be held on Wednesday, on the invitation extended by Deputy Prime Minister/ Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan, Ayman Al Safadi. The meeting will bring together the Foreign Ministers from the Arab League and a group of Islamic countries, including Pakistan, with the aim of formulating a unified position on fast-deterioration of situation in the occupied Jerusalem, a DPM's Office news release said.

The attending Foreign Ministers will also call on King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Abdullah-II ibn Al Hussein during the visit.

The deputy prime minister would also hold side-line bilateral meetings with the participating Foreign Ministers to exchange views on regional developments including Palestine, as well as other issues of mutual interest.

DPM/FM Dar's participation in the Ministerial Meeting on Jerusalem is a manifestation of Pakistan's principled support for the Palestinian people.

Pak, Philippines reaffirm commitment to stronger parliamentary ties

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Advisor to the Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Misbah Khar met Senate President of the Republic of the Philippines Sherwin Gatchalian on the sidelines of the UNITE Global Summit 2026 in Manila to discuss ways to strengthen parliamentary and bilateral cooperation. Khar conveyed the greetings and best wishes of Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening its longstanding friendship with the Philippines through closer parliamentary engagement.

The Pakistani parliamentary delegation, comprising Senator Khalida Ateeb, Senator Husna Bano, Senator Rahat Jamali, Advisor to the Chairman Senate Misbah Khar and other members, also visited the Senate of the Republic of the Philippines, where they observed Senate proceedings. The delegation was welcomed by Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian and formally acknowledged during the Senate sitting, reflecting the friendly relations between the two countries and their shared commitment to parliamentary diplomacy.

Khar congratulated the Philippines on the 76th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries and appreciated its continued support for Pakistan's engagement with ASEAN.

Both sides agreed to expand parliamentary exchanges through friendship groups, committee-level cooperation, staff exchanges and participation in regional and international parliamentary forums.

Yousaf vows to promote interfaith harmony, mutual respect, peaceful coexistence

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, here on Tuesday held an important meeting with the Chairman of the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee and Khatib of the historic Badshahi Mosque, Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, along with renowned international preacher and interfaith scholar Dr. Leif Hetland.

The meeting convened to hold comprehensive discussions on promoting interfaith harmony, fostering tolerance, and safeguarding minority rights at both national and international levels.

During the meeting, Federal Minister Sardar Muhammad Yousaf affirmed that the Government of Pakistan remained fully committed to promoting interfaith harmony, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence nationwide.

He emphasized that the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees equal rights and religious freedom to all citizens without discrimination based on faith or creed, highlighting the imperative for collective efforts to spread messages of peace and affection across society.

Elaborating on the ministry's proactive measures, the Federal Minister highlighted that Interfaith Harmony Committees have been reactivated at national, provincial, and district levels to unite religious scholars of all faiths on a single platform.

He further detailed key government efforts, including the official observance of religious festivals for minority communities, the protection and restoration of places of worship, the allocation of special scholarships for minority students, and the active promotion of the "Paigham-e-Pakistan" national narrative to effectively curb hate speech and sectarianism.

Chairman of the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad, stated that the foundational message of Islam is anchored in peace, security, and love for humanity.

SDPI marks completion of Digital Financial Literacy Training for 255,000 BISP beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) held a ceremony on Tuesday to mark the successful completion of the second phase of its Digital Financial Literacy Training (DFLT-II) programme under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). The programme reached more than 255,000 beneficiaries nationwide.

The initiative, supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the European Union in Pakistan, began in 2023 as a small pilot project before expanding into a nationwide effort spanning all four provinces.

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI, described the programme as a landmark in Pakistan's digital payments history, particularly for its scale in training women. He said informal training and capacity building often carry more weight than formal education because they reach diverse groups with varied social backgrounds.



NASEERABAD: SE Irrigation Mudasir Zafar Khosa giving briefing to Commissioner Salah ud Din Noorzai.

All stakeholders should work together in larger national interest: Musadik

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Dr. Musadik Malik and Governor Sindh Syed Muhammad Nihal Hashmi on Tuesday agreed to launch a province-wide tree plantation drive and Urban Forest Programme in Sindh.

The two leaders reached the agreement during a meeting held at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, where they discussed the environmental situation in Sindh, afforestation, climate resilience, environmental protection and other matters of mutual interest.

Atabak reaffirms Iran's commitment to strengthening long-term economic partnership with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan and Iran reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen bilateral economic relations and achieve the shared target of US$10 billion in annual bilateral trade during the 10th Pakistan-Iran Joint Trade Committee (JTC) held in Islamabad. The meeting was co-chaired by Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and Iran's Minister for Industry, Mine and Trade Dr. Mohammad Atabak, followed by a bilateral meeting to review the full spectrum of bilateral trade and economic cooperation, said a release issued here Tuesday. Welcoming the Iranian delegation, Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan said Pakistan and Iran enjoy deep-rooted historical, religious, cultural and geographical ties, providing a strong foundation for expanding economic engagement. He emphasized that while political relations between the two brotherly countries remain robust, economic cooperation must advance at the same pace to fully realize the immense potential of the partnership. The minister said the leadership of both countries has set an ambitious target of increasing bilateral trade to US$10 billion, stressing that this objective requires sustained collaboration, stronger institutional linkages and enhanced engagement between the public and private sectors.



QUETTA: Director General Public Relations Balochistan Askar Khan chairs a meeting regarding departmental affairs.

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