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Security forces eliminate 15 terrorists in successful clearance operation in Ziarat

Nine police personnel martyred in terrorist attack on police post in Ziarat

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Security forces in Balochistan have successfully completed a clearance operation against terrorists belonging to Fitna al-Khawarij in Ziarat district, killing 15 militants.

The operation was jointly conducted by Frontier Corps (FC), Balochistan Police, and other law enforcement agencies.

Shahid Rind, Aide to the Chief Minister on Political and Media Affairs, confirmed the success of the operation, saying that the terrorists paid a heavy price for attempting to disrupt peace in the province.

"The state is responding with full force, and the nefarious designs of terrorists have been crushed," he said.

Shahid Rind emphasized that Balochistan will not serve as a safe haven for terrorists. He assured that every attack will be met with a decisive response, and intelligence-based operations will continue with greater effectiveness to ensure lasting peace.

"Elements challenging the writ of the state will be brought to justice. The war against terrorism is being pursued with full strength," he added.

Paying tribute to the police officers and personnel martyred in the Ziarat attack, Shahid Rind said their sacrifices will never be forgotten and their blood will be avenged. He reaffirmed that the government of Balochistan salutes the courage of the martyrs and remains committed to supporting their families.

He concluded by stressing that there will be no compromise on the province's peace, stability, and the protection of its citizens. "The complete eradication of terrorism is the government's top priority," Rind declared.

Meanwhile, Advisor to the Chief Minister on Political and Media Affairs, Shahid Rind, confirmed that nine officers and personnel of Balochistan Police embraced martyrdom during the terrorist attack. Among the martyrs were SHO of Mangi Police Station, SHO of Kawas Police Station, ATF In-charge Head Constable Saifullah, and several other officials.

He further said that DSP Ghulam Sarwar, along with eight police personnel, managed to reach Kach Police Station safely through difficult mountainous terrain. Constable Rizwan was also recovered unharmed during the operation.

The bodies of the martyrs are being shifted to District Headquarters Hospital Ziarat for legal formalities and post-mortem.

Shahid Rind emphasized that the sacrifices of the martyrs will never be forgotten.



ZIARAT: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti addressing the protestors during his visit to Ziarat Cross.



ISLAAMABAD: A delegation of Polio Oversight Board calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

Balochistan govt to continue full-Scale operations against terrorists: CM Bugti

CM Bugti says Balochistan has entered a decisive phase in the fight against terrorism; public will not be left alone under any circumstances

ZIARAT, (VoM Report): Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, reached Ziarat by road in a regular, non-bulletproof vehicle to review the law and order situation in Mangi Dam and other affected areas following the recent terrorist incident, offer condolences to the families of the martyrs, visit the injured, and express solidarity with the security forces.

The Inspector General (IG) of Police briefed the Chief Minister in Ziarat on the Mangi Dam incident and the overall law and order situation. Provincial Home Minister Mir Zia Langove, members of the Provincial Assembly, senior civil and military officials, and local administrative officers were also present.

IG Police Balochistan Muhammad Tahir Khan gave a detailed briefing on the Mangi Dam incident, the ongoing operation against terrorists, the security situation, and the future strategy. The Chief Minister directed that the ongoing operation against terrorists and their facilitators must be taken to its logical conclusion under all circumstances. He said anti-state elements should not be given any opportunity to reorganize, and all law enforcement agencies should continue their operations in a coordinated, more effective, faster, and decisive manner.

Speaking while departing for Ziarat, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said Balochistan has entered a decisive phase in the fight against terrorism.



President Asif Ali Zardari being welcomed by President Sadyr Zhaparov at a formal reception held at the Rukh Ordo Cultural Complex in Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, celebrating the enduring friendship between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan

Pakistan supports formulation of AI safety norms through inclusive multilateral processes: Shaza

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Tuesday said artificial intelligence (AI) systems must be developed and used in full compliance with international law and the United Nations Charter, with meaningful human oversight in both civilian and security domains.

Addressing the thematic discussion on "Safe, Secure and Trustworthy AI: Interoperability and Compatibility of Approaches" during the Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence Governance in Geneva, the minister said AI safety was a shared global interest but stressed that the process of defining safety must be transparent, inclusive and representative of all nations.

She said safety standards and benchmarks for trustworthy AI were increasingly being shaped by a limited number of countries and technology firms through national frameworks that excluded much of the developing world.

"Safety is not a purely technical matter. Language, culture and local realities shape it," she said, adding that standards developed without the participation of developing countries risked being imposed rather than collectively adopted.

Shaza Fatima said Pakistan supported the formulation of AI safety norms through inclusive multilateral processes under the United Nations, where all countries could contribute as equal partners.

Highlighting the importance of interoperability, she said Pakistan supported compatible AI governance approaches, as envisioned in the Global Digital Compact, noting that interoperability promoted cross-border trade, research and data flows while allowing different national regulatory systems to coexist.

However, she cautioned that interoperability should serve as a bridge between governance systems rather than becoming a mechanism through which the rules of a few countries were imposed on others.

The minister emphasized that global AI standards should be developed through open and collaborative standard-setting bodies, ensuring safety, reliability, respect for human rights.

President, PM strongly condemns terrorist attack on Police Check Post in Ziarat

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday strongly condemned the attack by Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists on a police check post in Ziarat.

In a statement, the prime minister paid tribute to the police personnel, including SHOs, who were martyred in the attack.

He prayed for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks in Jannah and for patience and strength for their bereaved families.

The prime minister also commended the security forces for killing 15 terrorists during a clearance operation.

The prime minister said that the attack by Fitna al-Khawarij once again demonstrated that the group was an enemy of the people's prosperity and of peace and development in Balochistan.

He emphasized that the sacrifices of the martyrs would not go in vain and vowed that those responsible would be brought to justice.

The prime minister also reaffirmed the government's resolve not to allow anyone to undermine peace in the province.

"The war against terrorists will continue until the complete elimination of these enemies of peace," he said.

Menawhile, President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday strongly condemned the attack carried out by Fitna-al-Khawarij terrorists on a police check post in Ziarat.

Governor vows to crush nefarious designs of terrorists

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Governor of Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail praised the timely action and efforts of all law enforcement agencies in the successful operation against terrorists in Ziarat.

He said that the officers and personnel of the Balochistan Police, by sacrificing their precious lives, not only eliminated 15 terrorists but also saved the entire area from a major disaster. Governor Mandokhail said that through national unity and solidarity, "we will crush the nefarious designs of all saboteurs and terrorists."

He urged the public to fully cooperate with the government's efforts for the complete eradication of terrorism.

Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail also prayed for the elevation of the ranks of all police officers and personnel who lost their lives, and for the speedy recovery of those who were injured.

Syedaal Khan strongly condemns all forms of violence against women

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI (ANN): Acting Chairman of the Senate Syedaal Khan visited Aga Khan University Hospital in Karachi and inquired about the health of Dr. Mah Noor Nasir, who was injured in a tragic acid attack.

During the visit, he met Dr. Mah Noor Nasir and her family, expressed complete solidarity and sympathy, and wished her a speedy and full recovery. He assured the family that the entire nation stands with them during this difficult time.

Speaking on the occasion, Syedaal Khan strongly condemned all forms of violence against women, particularly heinous crimes such as acid attacks. He said such barbaric acts are unacceptable in any civilized society and constitute a serious violation of human dignity and fundamental rights.

As a gesture of encouragement and solidarity, he presented Dr. Mah Noor Nasir with a bouquet of flowers and gifts, praising her courage, resilience, and determination.

He described the attack as deeply tragic and condemnable, adding that the attacker had met his fate and that justice had been delivered to the victim's family. He stressed the need for continued vigilance and effective enforcement of the law to prevent such crimes.

Mir Saleem Khosa for timely completion of development projects in remote areas

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Provincial Minister for Communications and Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa directed that construction work on the Zamri–Plaseen Road in Musa Khel district, an important inter-provincial highway, must resume within the next ten days under all circumstances.

He issued these directions while chairing a review meeting on the Zamri–Plaseen Road project. The meeting was attended by Provincial Assembly member Zarak Khan Mandokhail, Communications and Works Secretary Babar Khan, SE Musa Khel Circle Abdul Razzaq Mandokhail, Executive Engineer Roads Musa Khel Jandad, Technical Advisor Ehsanullah Khan Dautani, consultants, contractors, and other senior officials.

PM Shehbaz vows to protect Pakistan's children from polio

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the government was taking every possible measure to protect Pakistan's children from the debilitating disease of polio and secure their future.

Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to achieving a polio-free future, the prime minister emphasized that polio eradication remained a key national priority and urged all stakeholders to further intensify their collective efforts.

He was talking to a delegation of Polio Oversight Board which called on him at the PM House. The delegation included Mike McGovern, Chair of Rotary's Polio Oversight Board; Chris Elias, President of Global Development at the Gates Foundation; Dr. Hanan Balkhy, Regional Director of WHO EMRO; and representatives from UNICEF, Gavi, and other partners supporting Pakistan's polio eradication efforts. The prime minister welcomed the delegation and thanked all partners for their continued cooperation with the Government of Pakistan in the fight against polio.

He directed that special attention be given to polio hotspots in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and called for the adoption of an effective strategy to address the challenge. The prime minister expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Rotary International, the Gates Foundation, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and all other partners for their valuable contributions to Pakistan's polio eradication campaign.

He also commended the Federal Minister for National Health Services, the Minister of State for Health, the Prime Minister's Focal Person on Polio Eradication, the National Polio Coordinator, and all members of the government team for their dedicated efforts in combating polio.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail inquires about health of people injured in recent Hanna Urak attack.

Political leadership demands effective action against terrorism

QUETTA (ANN): Leaders of political and religious parties have said that the continuous incidents of terrorism over the past two days clearly show that the government's writ does not exist anywhere. They said the government is limited to issuing condemnation statements, but no practical measures have been taken to provide protection and guidance to the public.

They said the need of the hour is for all institutions, including the government, to utilize all state resources to ensure public safety and bring the real facts before the people; otherwise, the situation may deteriorate further. These views were expressed by Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) provincial chief and Senator Maulana Abdul Wasey, Awami National Party (ANP) provincial president Asghar Khan Achakzai, Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party provincial president Abdul Qahar Wadan, and Jamaat-e-Islami provincial chief and Member of the Provincial Assembly Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman while reacting to the incidents in Hanna Urak and Ziarat.

They said they fully support the ongoing protests and sit-ins in both areas and urged the government to address the protesters' demands and take effective measures to ensure public security in the future. They also called for a policy that would remove the concerns and fears currently prevailing among the public and demanded that those responsible for the incidents be exposed.

They further stated that while the government is quick to label those involved as enemies of the country, it must also pursue and arrest such enemies so that the public can know who they are and where they come from.

They strongly condemned the tragic incidents in Hanna Urak and Ziarat, describing them as deeply regrettable, and expressed solidarity with the affected families and areas while announcing full support for the protests and sit-ins.

SCP acknowledges UN partnership in advancing justice sector reforms

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Chief Justice of Pakistan, Tuesday received Mr. Mohammed Yahya, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, on his farewell call at the Supreme Court of Pakistan, marking the successful conclusion of his tenure. The meeting underscored the enduring partnership between the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the United Nations in advancing judicial reform, strengthening the rule of law, and promoting equitable access to justice.

The Chief Justice of Pakistan appreciated Mr. Yahya's constructive engagement with Pakistan's justice sector and acknowledged the United Nations' continued support for initiatives aimed at strengthening access to justice, institutional capacity, and the rule of law.

He commended the spirit of partnership that has characterized the collaboration between the United Nations and the judiciary during Mr. Yahya's tenure.

The meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on the progress achieved through joint engagement in areas of mutual interest, including judicial reform, gender-responsive justice, legal empowerment, and institutional capacity building.

Both sides reaffirmed the importance of sustained cooperation in advancing a people-centred, inclusive, and responsive justice system aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Pakistan's significant role in US-Iran mediation process

On June 15, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced via the social media platform X that a peace deal between the US and Iran had been reached, following over two months of mediation by his country. Sharif expressed gratitude to Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkiye for their significant contributions, stating that the official signing ceremony would take place on June 19 in Switzerland. Following this announcement, a memorandum of understanding was signed electronically by US President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance on the US side, and by Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf on the Iranian side. The reported agreement is characterized as a framework peace deal aimed at ending the 2026 Israel/US-Iran war and transitioning the current ceasefire into a broader diplomatic process. Although the text of the agreement has not yet been published, key reported elements include immediate cessation of military operations, reopening of the Strait of Hormuz to international shipping, and a 60-day negotiation period to address unresolved issues, particularly Iran's nuclear program, alongside discussions on sanctions relief and access to frozen Iranian assets during follow-up negotiations. This agreement follows two significant developments. First, Israel conducted military strikes on Iranian targets in western and central Iran around a week ago, marking the first such actions since April. Explosions were reported in Tehran, Tabriz, Isfahan, and other cities in response to Iranian missile launches that were highly performative. Second, Trump warned that Iran would "pay the price" for what he described as slow progress in negotiations to end the conflict, indicating that the US could resume strikes against Iranian infrastructure.

Although the agreement does not necessarily mean that the root causes that prompted the war have fully disappeared, a few observations are worth mentioning and analyzing.

First, a lot of narrative spinning is occurring publicly at the moment. While the main parties are trying to sell the agreement as a victory, there are factions within the broader regional camps (such as hardliners in both Iran and Israel) that oppose it. Critics in Iran have labeled the agreement a "humiliating capitulation," arguing that it involves unjustified concessions. Hardline opponents have publicly criticized the negotiating team, with Iranian MP Mahmoud Nabavian stating that the latest draft is "more damaging" than previous versions. Similarly, Israeli officials emphasized that Israel was not directly involved in negotiating the US–Iran deal and does not necessarily consider itself bound by its provisions. Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz declared that Israel would not withdraw from territory seized in Lebanon and would continue to act against threats from Hezbollah and Iran if necessary. Second, the timing of the agreement suggests that Iran was running out of options. As the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) focused on messaging and performative measures, the gap between their narrative and reality widened, with Iran's ability to endure further pressure significantly diminishing. Trump's counter-blockade against Iran's restriction of the Strait of Hormuz imposed significant economic costs on Iran, leading to the decision to sign the agreement. It is estimated that the blockade could have cost Iran over $24 billion in just two months — almost equal to Iran's reported total reserves of foreign currency — leaving the regime with little choice but to agree to the terms or face economic collapse.

Third, despite the negative reactions from hardliners in both Iran and Israel, the agreement highlights Trump's genuine interest in reaching a resolution with Iran, especially following last year's swift 12-day war between Israel and Iran. However, radical elements in Israel seem intent on using procrastination, escalation, or military actions to sabotage meaningful attempts to achieve peace. Given that there is reportedly a 60-day negotiation period following the signing of the agreement, it is likely that these factions will continue to work against a comprehensive resolution. Fourth, while Pakistan played a significant role in the mediation process, Qatar's involvement was also crucial, as acknowledged by American, Pakistani, Saudi, and Turkish officials. Notably, neither the Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesman nor the ministry itself reported any independent measures taken by Qatar, apart from endorsing Pakistan's mediation efforts. In fact, a Qatari spokesman denied any independent role in the mediation at this stage. Qatar's involvement appears to have been executed at the request of the United States and had several dimensions.

Primarily, Qatar facilitated technical issues between the US and Iran, such as enabling the transfer of Iranian funds without direct US involvement, thereby avoiding the perception of it being a US initiative or taxpayer-funded. Additionally, Qatar played a role in establishing a communication channel between the United Arab Emirates and Iran, which emerged later in the mediation process. Finally, Qatar aligned itself with Saudi Arabia's position, providing support for the Pakistani initiative. Fifth, two awkward positions regarding the agreement can be highlighted. Firstly, the Europeans have been largely inactive in resolving the crisis yet somehow managed to host the official signing ceremony between the Americans and Iranians. Instead of crediting Pakistan, Switzerland offered to host the ceremony, which can be seen as an act of opportunism. Secondly, Oman, historically a favored mediator between the US and Iran, has been notably absent from this current arrangement. Oman's position during this war was not popular in the Gulf Cooperation Council and beyond. According to a senior US administration official, Oman was removed from its mediation role in negotiations with Iran after the US concluded that Muscat had acted "very duplicitously" during the talks. Finally, we must approach the prospects of the agreement with caution. It is essential to recognize that this is not a comprehensive peace agreement but rather a transitional framework. The future of the agreement will largely depend on the outcomes of negotiations in the next 60 days. Given that several factions within Iran and Israel are opposed to the agreement, we should not dismiss the possibility of sabotage, particularly from Israel.

While Atlas stands

Aqdas Afzal

This is a story about a government that collects more money every year and yet can't build anything that works. Govern-ment schools are abandoned for private alternatives, while people only visit government hospitals when they have no choice. Meanwhile, the salaried class pays taxes with mathematical precision, while big land--lords, traders and property dealers con--tribute almost nothing. This is Pakis-t-a--n's story, where the salaried class has be--come the nation's Atlas, bearing the entire fiscal burden on its shoulders, while the elites walk free beneath it.

Will this budget finally say something honest? Consider what has happened to Pakistan's economy over the last two decades. Remittances, which stood at around $6 billion in 2007, have risen to over $38bn in FY25. This steep rise enabled Pakistan to reduce poverty on paper without transforming the structure of its economy. It did not build competitive industries. It did not develop an export base. For a while, this arrangement worked.

Then came the rupture. Inflation peaked at nearly 38 per cent in May 2023. Food prices rose 30-40pc. The rupee fell from 160 to above 280. Real incomes collapsed for the bottom half of the population. Pakistan today is not simply a poor country; it's an economically fragile country with millions hovering just above subsistence, one life shock away from falling back. This is the economy the budget must address.

Sadly, the government seems only focused on stabilisation and IMF compliance. We are told that the IMF programme is on track. Pakistan's external position is stable. Reserves rebuilding has exceeded projections. The current account is balanced and inflation has retreated from its peak. And yet the IMF's own documents acknowledge that poverty remains elevated and growth subdued. The Middle East conflict adds fresh risks in the shape of upward pressure on inflation and a weaker balance-of-payments. The fact is that stabilisation is not the same as recovery. A country's economy can stabilise, even as its middle class quietly disappears.

In FY2024-25, the salaried class paid Rs606bn in taxes, a 55pc increase in a single year. FBR collection rose from Rs4.7 trillion in FY21 to Rsl 1.7tr in FY25. Still, the tax-to-GDP ratio barely moved. More money is being collected from the same people. The tax base has not broadened. The burden has only deepened.

A salaried worker cannot hide income. Employers deduct taxes before the salary is credited. Each year, tax authorities return to the same well, not because it is the most productive well, but because it is the easiest one to find. The Rs600,000 annual tax-free threshold has become a symbol of this failure. Fifty thousand rupees a month in most urban centres in Pakistan is not prosperity. It is barely subsistence. When a salary increase is granted merely to keep pace with 30pc inflation, the tax system treats it as additional income. Taxing it is not a revenue policy. It is penalising people for remaining in the formal economy.

Meanwhile, the agricultural income of large landowners enjoys near-total protection. Speculative real-estate gains move largely outside the documented net. Informal wholesale and retail sectors operate in comfortable obscurity.

The im--balance is not incidental. It is structural.

Budget FY2026-27 has a narrow window to begin correction. Six things must happen.

First, the tax-free threshold must be raised substantially and indexed to inflation going forward — automatic ind-e-xing, not ann-ual po--litical discretion. Seco--nd, the tax base must be genuinely broadened to include agricultu-ral income, real-estate gains and the informal economy. Third, energy circular debt, now Rs5tr across the power, petroleum and gas sectors, must be subjected to an in--de--pend-ent audit as the current arran-gem-ent is fiscally uns-ustainable and po--litically protec-ted. Fourth, the fiscal de--ficit must be bro-ught to zero over three years through Rs3-4tr reductions in current expenditure, cabinet ratio-nalisation, pensio--ns reform and PSDP cleansing. Fifth, commercial bank lending to the government must be repriced away from Kibor-plus commercial rates.

Three crises, one silence

DR RAKHSHINDA PERVEEN

Suicide

May 18, 2026. The Federal Shariat Court restored Section 325 of the Pakistan Penal Code. No protests. No emergency session. No coalition demanding reversal. A law that criminalises surviving a suicide attempt came back with less noise than a routine budget notification and that quietness tells you everything about whose lives this country considers worth protecting.

Section 325 was never Islamic in origin. It was lifted from British colonial legislation in 1860, inherited at Partition, and never examined because the people it harms have never been a constituency worth fighting for – those in psychiatric crisis, women with nowhere to go, transgender persons surviving without documents or shelter, men undone by debt. The court said decriminalisation was against the Quran and Sunnah. Classical Islamic jurisprudence says otherwise: legal responsibility requires sound intellect, severe mental illness suspends accountability, and preservation of life is a foundational obligation of the law. None of that was apparently the point.

The law does not fall on everyone the same way. Women facing domestic violence and/or workplace harassment and torture, transgender people with no institutional safety net, men without social capital or legal recourse – all they meet this law at their most exposed. For a woman already running from her home, surviving now carries a criminal charge. That is not protection. That is the state deciding her crisis is her fault.

Femicide

We are not short of coverage. Femicide appears on Instagram, in television segments that run the story for two days and move on, in donor reports that circulate at hotel conferences and then get filed. What it almost never appears in is a parliamentary debate where someone actually has to answer for the numbers, or a meeting of lawyers and judges asking why conviction rates are so low that most perpetrators walk free, or a civil society campaign that does not shut down the moment the donor money runs out. Femicide in Pakistan is not hidden. It is managed. Women and girls are disproportionately its victims. The attention spikes when a case is upsetting enough to hold an audience and evaporates when it is not. The institutional response in between is silence the kind that gets called normalcy.

Filicide

This is where the failure is most complete and most invisible because we have not even built the language for it. A parent kills a child. Our vocabulary gives us qatl, gives us saffak in a headline, gives us a moral verdict applied almost exclusively to mothers, and stops there. The word filicide, as used in psychiatry and law, demands a different set of questions: what broke down, and when, and who was supposed to notice and did not?

Pakistan has no postpartum mental health screening system. The Thinking Healthy Programme – developed and clinically tested here, endorsed by the World Health Organization as part of its global mental health programme, proven to achieve remission in three out of four women with perinatal depression – is not systematically implemented in the country that produced it. Women in postpartum psychosis, women ground down by domestic violence and economic dependence, women with no shelter bed and no helpline that answers they become the headline. Saffak. The headline does not ask what came before. Neither does the planning commission. Neither does the funded project that will close regardless of what the data is still showing.

We built a programme the world adopted and did not use it ourselves. That is not an oversight. That is a decision about whose suffering counts.

I have worked on these three issues for over thirty years. Most of that work has been done outside funded projects, outside donor priority lists, outside the rooms where decisions get made. I am not saying this for sympathy. I am saying it because the pattern matters. All three crises share the same mechanism of neglect. Attention arrives when there is a project behind it. The project has a three-to-five year life. When it ends, data collection stops, coalitions disperse, recommendations sit in reports no ministry requested. The problem continues on its own schedule. So here is what needs to happen, and none of it requires a new idea. Lawmakers need to stand on the floor of the National Assembly and name femicide as a legislative emergency not in a press release, on the floor, with conviction data demanded from the relevant ministries. Benches and Bars need to publicly examine why perpetrators of gender-based violence routinely avoid punishment. Section 325 needs to be repealed and replaced with mandatory psychiatric evaluation and care for anyone who survives a crisis, regardless of gender. Postpartum mental health screening needs to be mandated through the lady health worker network that already reaches rural communities. A national database on femicide, filicide and suicide - disaggregated by sex, gender identity, relationship to the perpetrator and province - must exist, be publicly accessible, and be updated annually.

These are not proposals. They are the minimum. The question is not whether anyone in a position of power knows they are needed. The question is whether anyone in that position will act when there is no grant cycle, no donor delegation, no conference deadline making it temporarily convenient to care.

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Regulation and deregulation

ISHRAT HUSAIN

Time has shown that the ideological debate between regulation and deregulation is largely misplaced. Governments and regulators have different roles under varying market structures and circumstances. In some areas, they regulate more actively; in others, they oversee operation of market forces. Evidence and outcomes, not ideology, should determine the state's role. In Pakistan, the formal sector is often overregulated and burdened by procedures and discretionary powers that discourage innovation, investment and technological adoption. Regulatory enforcement is weak. Quacks, unsafe buildings, counterfeit drugs, etc, escape oversight.

Excessive regulation in the formal sector and lax enforcement elsewhere encourages informality. Hence, thousands of enterprises prefer to remain outside the documented economy. Had they not had to face needless constraints, many could have grown into medium-sized firms, increasing output, employment, tax revenues and efficiency, while reducing the informal economy.

Why is regulation required? In a mixed public-private economy, regulation is essential to ensure fair competition and protect consumers.

Until the early 2000s, the same ministry made policies, owned enterprises and regulated the sector in which those enterprises operated. Recognising the inherent conflict of interest, the government initiated reforms to separate the functions. Ministries were assigned responsibility for policy formulation, SOEs for commercial operations and independent regulators for oversight and consumer protection.

The logic was simple. A private firm can't compete fairly with an SOE if the regulating ministry also owns one of the competitors. The ministry can alter policies, provide subsidies, absorb losses, grant tax concessions or create barriers that disadvantage private firms. Hence independent regulators were set up to create a level playing field and encourage competition. Have the aims of reform been achieved 25 years later?

Take the energy sector. Though it has specialised regulators, we still face high energy tariffs, unaffordable electricity, poor service delivery and a circular debt running into trillions. One reason is that ministries and bureaucracies never fully accepted the transfer of authority to regulators and SOEs; conflicts between ministries and regulators weakened regulatory autonomy. The regulators' governance structures, too, have been problematic.

Appointments to bodies such as ene-rgy sector regulators Nepra and Ogra have often been influenced by considerations of loyalty and post-retirement accommodation, instead of exper-tise. Many positions are occupied by retired bur-e-aucrats, instead of specialists in economics, fin-a-n--ce, engineering, law or energy markets. Ro--l-es and responsibilities are blurred. Regulators make po--licy and regulatory decisions while exercising ope--rational oversight over management, thus weaa--kening accountability and creating confusion. Experience of over two decades suggests that Nepra and Ogra need significant restructuring.

Removing direct price determination from their mandates is the first step. The SBP provides a model. It regulates the banking system and enforces prudential standards but doesn't directly determine banking services prices. Similarly, petroleum and gas prices should gradually be deregulated and determined through market competition. Ogra should evolve into a modern supply-chain regulator, ensuring efficient utilisation of refineries, storage facilities, pipelines, terminals, etc. It should facilitate investment across the value chain, support development of strategic reserves and promote digitalisation of the fuel supply ecosystem. Ogra needs strong legal powers to act against hoarding, cartelisation, collusion, market manipulation and non-compliant OMCs, which requires a clearer demarcation of responsibilities between Ogra and the CCP.

The Directorate General Petroleum Concessions' regulatory functions should also be separated. Contract administration and compliance with concession agreements may remain with the concessionaire authority, while regulatory oversight should be transferred to Ogra. The Department of Explosives should also be integrated into Ogra. Power sector reform must begin with dismantling the single-buyer model and implementing the CTBCM, allowing multiple buyers and sellers to participate in electricity markets. The government would continue to own the transmission network and recover wheeling charges, while suppliers compete for customers.

At an appropriate stage, Pakistan should gradually replace the uniform national tariff with targeted subsidies for remote, disadvantaged reg-ions. Such a system would improve efficiency, re--duce leakages and manipulation, lower end-user prices, encourage higher consumption and reduce capacity charges.

Privatising Discos should not merely replace public monopolies with private monopolies. The underlying assets, including surplus land, should remain publicly owned and be leased to competitively selected operators. This would promote competition and safeguard public assets.

Under this framework, Nepra's role would shift from price setting to market surveillance, consumer protection, prevention of anti-competitive behaviour, enforcement of grid neutrality and promotion of transparent governance. It would focus on reliability, loss reduction, digitisation and service quality rather than tariff determination. The National Grid Company must also expedite investment in transmission infrastructure, especially removing bottlenecks between southern generation centres and northern demand hubs. Governance structures needed corresponding changes. Provincial representation should continue, but board members must focus on oversight, policy, transparency, audit, accountability and approval of plans and budgets. Once they become members, they can't take directives implicitly or explicitly from the centre or provincial government to preserve neutrality and objective decision-making. Operational management should report to a professional CEO rather than directly to board members. Board composition should be broadened to include independent experts in energy, law, economics, finance, technology and information systems. Finally, recruitment and promotion within the regulators must be merit-based. Professional staff should be selected through open competition, while advancement should depend on performance. Continuous training and exposure to international regulatory best practices should be an integral part of capacity building.

Pakistan's real challenge is not to choose between regulation and deregulation, but to regulate intelligently, promote competition and enforce rules impartially. Strong, independent and professionally managed regulators are essential for attracting investment, protecting consumers and ensuring affordable, reliable energy supplies. Only then can regulation become an instrument of economic efficiency, instead of remaining an obstacle to growth.

Pak-Russia relations entering new phase of pragmatic cooperation: Leghari

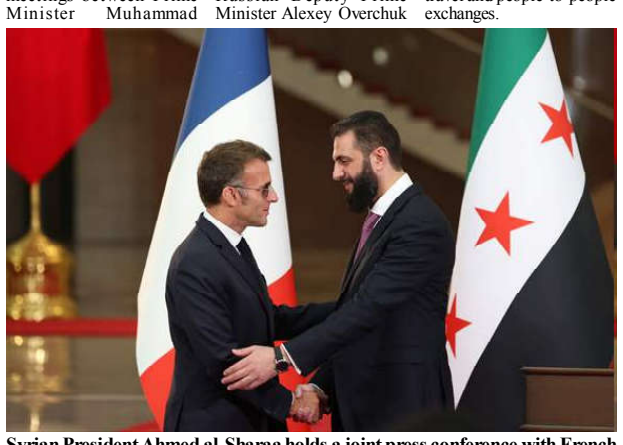
ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Tuesday said that Pakistan-Russia relations had witnessed a highly positive and pragmatic trajectory over the past two decades, transforming the two countries into trusted partners amid a rapidly evolving global order.

Delivering a keynote address at a webinar titled "Pakistan-Russia Bilateral Relationship at the Cusp of Shifting Global Order," the minister said the residual distrust from the Soviet era had faded, elevating the partnership from an "unfriendly country" to a "trusted friend" across sectors including trade, energy, defense, and technology, said a press release release.

He said this diplomatic momentum is driven by high-level leadership, underscored by four recent meetings between Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

As Co-Chairman of the Russia-Pakistan Intergovernmental Commission (IGC), the Minister emphasized regular engagements with his counterpart, Russian Energy Minister Sergey Tsivilev, describing the IGC as the foundation of their multi-faceted ties. Bilateral cooperation has expanded through structured frameworks, including consultations on security, strategic stability, and counter-terrorism, alongside mutual alignment at the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to advocate for an inclusive, multipolar international order. A key focus of the address was regional connectivity, with Pakistan signaling its intent to join the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). The minister welcomed the statement by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk regarding connecting the INSTC with Pakistan's Gwadar Port, which would bridge a crucial link in China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Awais leghari also highlighted that Russian leadership has praised Pakistan's recent diplomatic role in mitigating conflicts between Iran and the United States, further validating President Putin's acknowledgement of Pakistan as a genuine global stakeholder. To unlock the substantial potential for bilateral trade and address structural hurdles like payment mechanisms, both nations have agreed to sign the Program of Economic Cooperation between the Russian Federation and Pakistan for the Period until 2030. Furthermore, the recent signing of the long-pending Russia-Pakistan Readmission Agreement in Bishkek will ease visa regimes, facilitating business travel and people-to-people exchanges.



Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa holds a joint press conference with French President Emmanuel Macron at the People's Palace in Damascus.



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez arrives at Ankara Airport ahead of the 36th NATO Heads of State and Government Summit in Ankara, Turkiye

Govt to support NTUF-KOICA partnership to strengthen textile innovation, research: Rana

FAISALABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister (PM) for Trade Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan said on Tuesday the government was committed to supporting international academic and technological partnerships.

He also emphasized the importance of strengthening collaboration between the National Textile University Faisalabad (NTUF) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to boost innovation, research and capacity-building in Pakistan's textile sector. The PM's Coordinator expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation from National Textile University Faisalabad led by its Vice Chancellor/Rector Prof Dr. Rashid Masood.

The delegation also included NTUF Registrar Salman Saif, Project Coordinator Dr. Qamar Khan and representatives of Korea International Cooperation Agency. The meeting reviewed the ongoing cooperation between NTUF and KOICA and discussed future avenues for collaboration aimed at enhancing educational excellence, technological advancement and industrial competitiveness.

During the briefing, the NTUF delegation apprised Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan of the current status of projects being implemented with KOICA's support and highlighted progress made in various academic and technical initiatives.

The participants also exchanged views on strategies to further strengthen institutional cooperation and maximize the benefits of international partnerships.

PM directs to accelerate privatisation process of power DISCOs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the relevant authorities to accelerate the privatisation process of electricity distribution companies (DISCOs), reiterating that offloading loss-making State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) was a priority for the government.

Chairing a high-level review meeting here, the prime minister instructed officials to ensure complete transparency throughout the privatisation process and establish a robust regulatory framework immediately following the transition of the DISCOs to the private sector. During the briefing on the progress regarding the privatisation of DISCOs, it was told that in the first phase, Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO), and Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) would be privatised as the Expression of Interest (EOI) for the purpose had already been published in national and international newspapers.

It was told that the Cabinet Committee on Privatization had approved the transaction structure regarding the privatisation of the said three DISCOs.

The international roadshows are being organized starting this month to attract investors from Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and China. The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, federal ministers Azam Nazeer Tarar, Ahad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, and Sardar Awais Leghari, Adviser to the Prime Minister Muhammad Ali, Minister of State Bilal Azhar Kayani, and relevant senior government officials.



In France, an appeals court sentenced politician Marine Le Pen, who was found guilty of corruption, to one year of house arrest with an electronic ankle monitor, a 15-month ban from politics, and a €100,000 fine.

Adviser says: Govt focusing on agriculture, exports to strengthen economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Adviser to the Finance Minister Khurram Shehzad on Tuesday said the government is prioritizing the promotion of agriculture and enhancement of exports to further strengthen the national economy.

Speaking to a private television channel, he said the farming community is being provided with loan facilities to support agricultural growth and improve productivity.

He said financial assistance is being extended to small and medium-scale farmers under the "Zarkhizi" programme.

Responding to a question, he said the manufacturing sector is also playing a significant role in supporting economic growth and strengthening the country's financial outlook.

Commenting on the federal budget, he said extensive consultations were held with all relevant institutions and stakeholders before its preparation to ensure a comprehensive and balanced fiscal plan.

Gold prices increase by Rs 2,830 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The prices of gold registered an increase in the local market on Tuesday, with 24 karat gold per tola gaining Rs 2,830 to settle at Rs 455,063 compared to Rs 452,233 on the previous trading day, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 2,547 to Rs 389,534 from Rs 386,987, whereas 10 grams of 22 karat gold went up by Rs 2,306 to Rs 357,225 against Rs 354,919.

CPEC can accelerate blue economy growth: PCJCCI

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) Commercial Ambassador Adeel Munawar said on Tuesday that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) can accelerate blue economy growth and regional economic transformation.

Sharing his views in a think-tank session here at PCJCCI Secretariat, he added that maritime stability and regional peace are fundamental prerequisites for the growth of the blue economy. He emphasized, the CPEC as the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), possesses all the characteristics necessary to drive regional economic transformation and sustainable development.

Adeel Munawar remarked that the future of global prosperity lies in cooperation and peace rather than confrontation. He noted that Pakistan is actively advancing initiatives related to the blue economy to enhance livelihoods, create new economic opportunities, and ensure the sustainable management of marine resources while preserving the health of coastal and marine ecosystems.

He highlighted that Pakistan offers the shortest and most efficient trade route for China and the Central Asian Republics through Gwadar Port, strengthening regional connectivity and trade integration. He observed that Pakistan's Indus Delta region holds significant untapped potential in terms of hydrocarbon reserves, presenting promising opportunities for future investment and energy security. Adeel Munawar noted that a joint expedition conducted by Pakistan Navy's Hydrographical Department and the China Geological Survey in 2019 revealed highly encouraging prospects within Pakistan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), indicating the presence of substantial oil and gas reserves in the Indus Delta region. He added that the third survey is expected to be conducted this year, which could facilitate future drilling activities and the eventual extraction of hydrocarbon resources.



Turkish Trade Minister Omer Bolat (L) welcomes Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis (R) as he arrives at Esenboga International Airport to attend the 36th NATO Heads of State and Government Summit in Ankara

Governor, SAPM discuss industrial development in KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday held a meeting with Minister of State and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan to discuss industrial development, investment promotion and economic growth in the province.

Pakistan Peoples Party Central Secretary Information Nadeem Afzal Chan and Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Farzand Ali Wazir were also present during the meeting.

The two sides exchanged views on ongoing and proposed industrial projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, development of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), promotion of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), creation of employment opportunities and modernization of local industries.

Governor Kundi said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa possessed immense investment potential due to its rich natural resources, mineral reserves, agricultural output and strategic geographical location. He emphasized the need to accelerate industrial development projects, strengthen special economic zones and improve business facilitation measures to create new employment opportunities for the youth. He stressed that the early establishment of an industrial zone near the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) route in Dera Ismail Khan was essential and would benefit the entire region.



Residents wait near the rubble of collapsed buildings in the Caribe area of La Guaira state, Venezuela

Irish Envoy visits SCCI

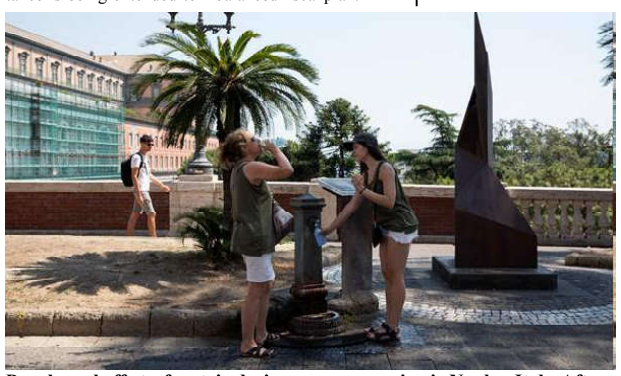
SIALKOT (APP): Ireland Ambassador to Pakistan Mary O'Neill, on Tuesday visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) and met the local business community and discussed the ways to increase bilateral trade. SCCI President Syed Ahtesham Mazhar, Senior Vice President Mohammad Murad Arshad and Vice President Salman Sheikh welcomed the distinguished guest.Briefing the Ambassador, the SCCI President said that trade between the two countries had reached 700 million euros. He proposed setting up direct business-to-business (B2B) links, exchanging trade delegations, and signing an agreement with an Irish chamber to help Sialkot export more sports goods, surgical instruments, textiles, and leather products. Ambassador Mary O'Neill, praised Sialkot's famous self-help industry. She highlighted that many traditional Irish sports items (like hurling balls.

FBR establishes PRAL's front desk at LTO Karachi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has established and operationalized a PRAL's Front Desk at the Large Taxpayers Office (LTO), Karachi on June 5, 2026 headed by the dedicated Chief (Inland Revenue Operations).

The desk set up in line with the directives of the Prime Minister and in response to requests from the business community of Karachi, said a news release.

The office, supported by a specialized team from Pakistan Revenue Automation Ltd. (PRAL) and equipped with the requisite IT infrastructure, will serve as a dedicated facilitation Centre for the Karachi-based business community, providing on-site technical assistance and ensuring the timely resolution of issues relating to IRIS, e-filing, registration, online tax payments, Sales Tax returns, refunds, and other digital tax services.



People cool off at a fountain during a warm morning in Naples, Italy. After a slight drop in temperatures, a new heatwave is hitting all of Italy.

CDNS exceeds Islamic finance target, mobilizes Rs60 billion in 'Shariah-Compliant Investments'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Islamic finance sector continues its impressive growth trajectory as the Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has mobilized Rs60 billion through Islamic investment products during the first eleven months of fiscal year 2025-26 (July 1, 2025, to June 8, 2026), surpassing its annual target of Rs55 billion ahead of schedule.

According to official sources, the achievement reflects growing public confidence in Shariah-compliant financial instruments and underscores the expanding role of Islamic finance in Pakistan's economic landscape.

Officials attributed the strong performance to an increasing preference among investors for interest-free financial products that comply with Islamic principles while offering secure and competitive returns. The rising popularity of Shariah-compliant savings schemes.

CM reviews wheat situation, decides to procure 1m tonnes from PASSCO

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday approved the procurement of one million metric tonnes of wheat from Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) to help stabilize wheat and flour prices across the province. Chairing a special video-link meeting to review the wheat and flour situation, the chief minister approved the purchase plan under which wheat would be obtained from PASSCO and supplied to flour mills at Rs 3,300 per maund to ensure the availability of affordable flour and bread for consumers. The meeting also reviewed concerns regarding reports of restrictions on the supply of wheat from Punjab to other provinces, particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. A detailed report presented during the meeting stated that claims about restrictions on wheat movement from Punjab to any province were not supported by facts. Officials further informed the participants that no complaint had been received regarding the suspension of wheat supplies to Sindh. During the briefing, officials said the process of wheat stock declaration was continuing across the province and comprehensive data collection was underway to assess and meet Punjab's food requirements. They added that grain size of the current wheat crop was comparatively smaller than usual. The meeting decided that after fulfilling its own food requirements, Punjab would continue to discharge its responsibility of supplying wheat to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz directed the relevant authorities to maintain close monitoring of the wheat situation and ensure effective.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships namely, MSC Tampico V, Zhong Gu Kun Ming, Chem Strem, Yasa Pluto, Atlantic Sakura and PGC Patreas carrying Containers, Chemicals, Coal, Canola seeds and LPG, berthed at Container Terminal, Engro Terminal, Bulk Terminal, Garin Terminal and SSGC Terminal respectively on Tuesday.



In La Linea de la Concepcion, a border town in southern Spain, traffic jams formed at the border crossing between Spain and Gibraltar due to document and passport checks.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Public Health Engineering E & M Division Quetta are invites the tenders from the approved Government Contractors.

Tender Fee 1000/- and Bid Security 2% in shape of Call deposit for each work

S#	NAME OF WORK		Estimated Cost	TSE NO
1	Lorh Karez WSS Install of Solar Based WSS in Haji Abdul Rauf street near Uzbak Bazar Lorh Karez Quetta			
	i.	Drilling & Development of bore.	7.126 (M)	TSE-26270711115283
	ii.	S/Installation of Solar	9.899 (M)	TSE-26270711115293
	iii.	Providing of Pipeline	0.964 (M)	TSE-26270711115313
	iv.	Civil work	1.817 (M)	TSE-25270711115343

The procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Baluchistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority rules, 2014, **ELIGIBILITY**:- a. Three Years Relevant Work Experience in PHE Department. b. Turn-Over of at least three years showing financial capacity of the firm. c. The contractor must have registration with tax authorities i.e (NTN Sales tax department and Baluchistan Revenue Authority/BSTS) valid registration with Pakistan Engineering council in relevant category who have deposited enlistment/renewal fee for the year 2026-2027. Tender fee deposited in head of account C-02725-02 through green challah form original in State Bank of Pakistan/National Bank of Pakistan Quetta Rs, 1000 each work detail given as above. e. The detail of each works are available on B-PPRA website. **Method of Procurement:-** Single stage, one envelop procedure will be adopted. **Bidding/Tender documents:- Issuance.** The tender form/documents will be issued to bidders/contractors on publishing of notice in newspapers upto 22.07.2026 11:00 A.M from the presentation of requisite documents i.e tender fee (Non-refundable). Bid Security/Earnest money 2% in shape of call deposit. The tenders will be open in presence of all bidders/firms. **Submission:-** Last date for submission is **22.07.2026** at 11:00 A.M **Opening**:- The tender will be opened on **22.07.2026** at 12:00 P.M Place of Issuance, submission, inquiry and opening will be:- **Address:-** office of the Executive Engineer PHE E & M Division Quetta.
E-mail Address:- XEN-pheE&Mquetta@gmail.com.
It may be noted that no pay order will be accepted/entertained and Firm complete title name should be written on call deposit. Only original contractor are allowed to participate in the tenders with original CNIC. Agent/Representative will not be allowed. CONDITIONS. **All the terms and conditions/site of the detail works can be seen/obtain from the office of the undersigned in any office hours.**

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING E&M DIVISION QUETTA.

PRQ No.81/07-07-2026

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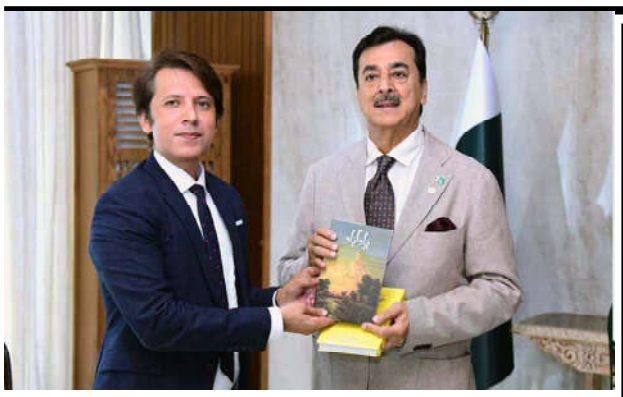
PM Shehbaz directs to ensure transparent, merit-based appointments of Hajj assistants

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday approved Pakistan's first-ever four-year Hajj Policy and Plan (2027-2030), directing authorities to ensure transparent, merit-based appointments of Hajj assistants and third-party validation of both government and private Hajj operations to improve services for pilgrims. The prime minister while chairing a meeting of the federal cabinet here, endorsed the long-term Hajj framework aimed at improving planning, operational efficiency and facilities for intending pilgrims.
The cabinet also commended Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Muhammad Yousaf and his team for what it described as the successful management of Hajj arrangements this year, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.
The cabinet was informed that, unlike previous annual policies, the new framework provides a four-year roadmap to facilitate long-termplanning. Standard operating procedures and other regulations will be developed for its implementation, while amendments will be made whenever necessary to ensure compatibility with Saudi laws and regulations.
Under the approved policy, intending pilgrims will be able to register once for any Hajj season up to 2030 instead of undergoing annual registration, enabling the preparation of a priority waiting list. A Shariah-compliant Hajj savings scheme will also be introduced to help citizens plan financially for future pilgrimages.
The prime minister was informed that the entire Hajj management system, including payments, complaints handling and monitoring, would be digitised to enhance transparency and efficiency. The policy also provides separate quotas for government and private Hajj schemes, introduces both long and short Hajj packages, and includes mandatory pilgrim training, Takaful coverage and emergency response arrangements. During the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed that the appointment of Hajj assistants be carried out through a transparent and strictly merit-based process. He also instructed authorities to ensure independent third-party validation of services provided under both the public and private Hajj schemes.
The cabinet also approved a policy for outsourcing the services of the Isolation Hospital and Infectious Treatment Centre (IHITC) and the Regional Blood Centre (RBC) in Islamabad to improve the delivery of quality healthcare services. The Ministry of National Health Services was directed to complete the outsourcing process in accordance with the prescribed rules and regulations.



CHOLPON-ATA: President Asif Ali Zardari and President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Japarov display the signed Joint Statement


ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani receiving books from Mr Rahman Faras at Aiwan-e-Sadr

Acting President Gilani holds meetings at Aiwan-e-Sadr

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday held separate meetings with religious, political and literary personalities at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Among those who called on the Acting President were Shahzada Murad Nazir, of Darbar Mohra Sharif, Murree, former MPA Mian Jhangir Pirzada Bhutta, Mr Faisal Sakhi Butt and Rao Waqas, a press release issued by the President House Media Wing said. Mr. Gilani also met poet Mr Rahman Faras, who presented copies of his books to him. The Acting President appreciated his literary contributions and wished him continued success. During the meetings, matters of mutual interest, the overall national situation and issues relating to public welfare came under discussion.
Yousuf Raza Gilani also referred to the forthcoming visit of the Secretary General of the Muslim World League (Rabita-e-Alam-e-Islami), Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Al-Issa, later this week.

Cowardly acts of terrorism cannot weaken nation's resolve: NA Speaker

Condemns terrorist attack on police check post in Ziarat

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has strongly condemned the terrorist attack on a police check post in Ziarat, expressing profound grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of Nine police personnel.
While paying heartfelt tribute to the martyred officers, the Speaker said that their supreme sacrifice in the line of duty would always be remembered with honour and gratitude.
He said such heinous attack was part of a nefarious conspiracy orchestrated by enemies of Pakistan to undermine the country's peace and stability.
Ayaz Sadiq said that such cowardly acts of terrorism could never weaken the nation's resolve, nor could terrorists ever succeed in achieving their malicious objectives. He emphasized that the sacrifices rendered by the country's brave security personnel continue to strengthen the nation's determination to eradicate terrorism in all its forms.
The Speaker lauded the unwavering courage, professionalism, and dedication of the police and other law enforcement agencies, stating that the entire nation stands in solidarity with its brave defenders who continue to safeguard the lives and property of citizens at great personal sacrifice.

Peace, stability absolutely critical for regional progress, prosperity, says President Zardari

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan and the Kyrgyz Republic have reaffirmed their strong commitment to establishing a strategic partnership, placing a particular emphasis on the critical importance of deepening trade, economic, and investment cooperation between the two nations.
The bilateral ties and cooperation were discussed during the ongoing official visit of President Asif Ali Zardari to the Kyrgyz Republic from July 6-9, 2026, at the invitation of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Zhaparov.
According to a joint statement encompassing the discussions during the president's visit to the Kyrgyz Republic, the two heads of state held extensive and fruitful talks in an atmosphere characterized by traditional friendship, mutual trust, and deep understanding, noting with immense satisfaction the steady and positive development of Kyrgyz-Pakistani relations. The presidents reaffirmed their shared commitment to further deepening bilateral cooperation and underlined the paramount importance of consistent and timely implementation of the agreements previously reached during the state visit of the Kyrgyz President to Pakistan in December last year.
The two sides noted the essential need to sustain an active political dialogue, further expand official contacts at the highest and high levels, and structurally strengthen interactions between the parliaments, governments, and foreign ministries of the two countries. They instructed their respective governments, relevant ministries, and agencies to intensify joint efforts to implement all agreements and to take immediate, practical measures aimed at developing robust trade, expanding investment activity, and fostering closer business ties.
Both sides underscored the necessity to further enhance inter-agency cooperation mechanisms, specifically highlighting the need to significantly improve the operational effectiveness of the Kyrgyz-Pakistani Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, as well as its relevant Joint Working Groups. They reaffirmed their readiness to provide comprehensive state support for the development of direct contacts between the business communities of the two countries.
A major focal point of the bilateral discussions was the considerable potential for expanding cooperation in the energy sector, particularly through the effective and accelerated implementation of the CASA-1000 Project, which serves as a vital infrastructural link connecting Central and South Asia. Two sides reaffirmed that immense potential exists for expanding bilateral cooperation in the fields of mining, agriculture, textile and light industries, the halal industry, healthcare, and pharmaceuticals. In the pharmaceutical sector, they specifically identified medical education, regulatory harmonization, vaccine and biological product manufacturing, and joint ventures as key areas, agreeing to facilitate smoother market access through closer cooperation between their respective drug regulatory authorities.


QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail talking to media after inquiring about health of people injured in recent Hanna Urak attack during his visit to New Trauma Center.

We moved in right direction, but there's a long, long way to go: Aurangzeb

KARACHI, (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday said that the current account performance remains strong due to record remittance flows.
"We do expect our overall remittances for this year to close anywhere between $41 to $42 billion."
Addressing the second edition of Pakistan Banking Summit 2026 at a local hotel here, he said that the last fiscal year was closed on a strong note across all matrices, starting with the fiscal side, a primary surplus, an all-time low fiscal deficit, debt-to-GDP ratio well below 70 percent, GDP growth closing at 3.7 percent on the back of strong rebound in LSM.
The Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said we talk about the dip in exports and indeed from the good side there is a dip but that dip is concentrated on the food side and value added especially on the textile side has continued to register year-on-year. He believed that the Foreign Exchange reserves will close at about $18.4 billion for this fiscal year, which is higher than the estimates that had earlier.
Aurangzeb said we started with the Eurobond and the most significant trade has been the Panda Bond because we have been at it at least for the last seven to eight years and not tapping the second largest, second deepest capital market in the world, has been a miss on our part.
Speaking about the Pakistan Stock Exchange, he said that the activity drivers are more important than the PSX numbers.


ZIARAT: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti meets the relatives of people martyred in Ziarat terrorist attack.

Sacrifices of martyrs guiding light for nation: Mir Usman Gorgej

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Director General of the International Overseas Economic Corridor and political, tribal, and social leader Mir Usman Gorgej strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Hanna Urak and Ziarat and paid tribute to the police officers, personnel, and civilians who were martyred. In a statement, Mir Usman Gorgej said terrorist elements are making a failed attempt to undermine peace, development, and stability in Balochistan. However, through national unity, the bravery of the security forces, and public cooperation, all their malicious designs will be defeated. He said hostile forces seek to create distrust between the people and state institutions, but patriotic Pakistanis will foil every such conspiracy through unity and national solidarity. He added that the people of Balochistan stand shoulder to shoulder with the police, the Pakistan Armed Forces, and other law enforcement agencies and will continue to extend every possible support in the ongoing struggle against terrorism. Mir Usman Gorgej said terrorism is not the problem of one region or one nation but of the whole of Pakistan, and that national unity, public cooperation, and joint efforts by state institutions are essential for its eradication.


Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal visits a state-of-the-art research laboratory at the University of Illinois Chicago to explore opportunities for collaboration in healthcare, medical research and innovation

Pakistan to develop world-class healthcare infrastructure: Ahsan

CHICAGO, (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday initiated efforts to forge academic, research and healthcare collaboration between Pakistan and the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), with a focus on supporting the prime minister's proposed Jinnah Medical Complex and Research Centre (JMCRC) and the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute and Research Center (PKLI).
During his visit to the University of Illinois Chicago, the minister held detailed discussions with the university's Provost, Vice Provost and Dean of the medical faculty on establishing institutional partnerships in medical education, research, innovation and advanced healthcare, a news release said.
Sharing the Prime Minister's vision for the Jinnah Medical Complex and Research Centre, Ahsan Iqbal said the government was committed not only to developing world-class healthcare infrastructure but also to building strong international academic and clinical linkages to transform the institution into a leading regional medical centre.
Highlighting PKLI's advancement towards cutting-edge robotic surgery, the minister said Pakistan was keen to benefit from UIC's globally recognised expertise in robotic surgery, medical research and innovation.
To initiate institutional engagement, he virtually connected PKLI President Professor Dr. Saeed Akhtar with the university's leadership and medical faculty for preliminary discussions on future cooperation.
The two sides also discussed expanding collaboration under the US-Pak Knowledge Corridor by incorporating medical sciences alongside higher education.
The proposed areas of cooperation included faculty and student exchanges, scholarships, joint research initiatives, advanced surgical training and long-term institutional partnerships.

Arid university, PPAF ink MoU for climate-smart agriculture

RAWALPINDI, (APP): Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) and the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote climate-smart agriculture, strengthen the peanut value chain and improve rural livelihoods.
The signing ceremony was held at the university, where Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan was the chief guest, and Chief Executive Officer of PPAF Nadir Gul Barech attended as the guest of honor, said a press release issued by the university. Addressing the ceremony, Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan said that the government was establishing Digital Youth Hubs across the country to provide modern training and enhance entrepreneurship. Highlighting his recent visit to China, he announced that strategic initiatives for agricultural development and technology transfer between leading Chinese agricultural universities and PMAS-AAUR would be launched soon. The Chairman also paid tribute to Pakistan's Armed Forces.

TikTok removes 184 mln videos globally, 22.5 mln in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): TikTok removed more than 184 million videos worldwide between January and March 2026 for violating its Community Guidelines, while over 22.5 million videos were taken down in Pakistan during the same period, according to the platform's Q1 2026 Community Guidelines Enforcement Report. According to the report, TikTok removed 184,012,576 videos globally during the first quarter of 2026, representing approximately 0.5% of all content uploaded to the platform.
Of the total, 178,014,154 videos were detected and removed using automated detection technologies, while 8,838,710 videos were reinstated following further review.

Mustafa Kamal for strong local govt system to address challenges at grassroots level

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Mustafa Kamal visited the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) Cardiac Center following the completion of the first phase of its upgradation, emphasizing that the introduction of modern technology would enable patients to receive advanced treatment free of charge, leading to faster recovery. Addressing the inauguration ceremony, the minister described the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) as the largest hospital in the federal capital.
Minister also focused on the progress to make 28 basic health centers (BHUs) of the federal capital active to reduce burden on big hospitals.
He stressed that most challenges could be overcome if every member of society realized and fulfilled their responsibilities. He also underlined the importance of a strong local government system to address challenges at the grassroots level before they escalate into major burdens.


ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on SME Sector


QUETTA: The delegations of Balochistan Digital Media Forum and Voice of Balochistan called on Director General Public Relations Balochistan Askar Khan.

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