



Pakistan can achieve fast-track transformation in agriculture through Chinese partnership: PM

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that Pakistan, essentially an agrarian economy, held immense and largely untapped potential in agriculture and can transform its agri-sector not in years, but in months by adopting modern technologies, improving productivity and strengthening cooperation with China.

Addressing the Pakistan-China Agri Investment Conference here, the prime minister noted that nearly 65% of Pakistan's population still lives and works in rural areas, with agriculture remaining the backbone of the national economy. He stressed the need to enhance per-acre yield through modern techniques, efficient water management and optimal use of limited land resources.

The prime minister said sustainable growth in agriculture required coordinated efforts by the federal and provincial governments, the farming community, and scientists and researchers. He underlined the importance of deciding what to grow and export, developing value chains, cold storage, warehousing and value addition to make Pakistani agricultural produce globally competitive.

He described Beijing as a friend who had stood by Pakistan through thick and thin and said China had never hesitated in sharing expertise and advanced technologies. He said the dispatch of 1,000 Pakistani graduates, selected on merit, to leading Chinese agricultural universities and research centres was a landmark initiative of the federal government. He said the trained graduates had returned and would now help farmers improve quality, productivity and value addition.

PAF contingent arrives in Saudi Arabia for aerial exercise Spears of Victory-2026

TIMES REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Air Force contingent comprising F-16 Block-52 fighter aircraft, alongside dedicated air and ground crew, has arrived at King Abdulaziz Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to participate in the multinational aerial combat Exercise Spears of Victory-2026.

The exercise is witnessing the participation of fighter jets and combat support elements from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, France, Italy, Greece, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, ISPR said in a press release on Monday.

It offers a robust platform to enhance interoperability, operational synergy, mutual understanding and capacity building among participating Air Forces, particularly in large force employment, night composite air operations, integrated ISR, and operations in advanced electronic warfare environments.

Through participation in this multinational forum, PAF seeks to enhance interoperability with partner Air Forces, and validate its operational preparedness in a contested, technology-driven battlespace.

For this international deployment, PAF fighter aircraft undertook a non-stop flight from their home base in Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, demonstrating the long-range operational reach and expeditionary capabilities of Pakistan Air Force. During the conduct of the exercise, PAF pilots flying advanced F-16 Block-52 aircraft equipped with modern avionics and Beyond Visual Range capabilities will be pitched against aircrew of participating Air Forces operating a wide array of sophisticated combat aircraft.



Atta Tarar calls on Chairman Senate along with Federal Secretary & PIO

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday called on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani at his residence to discuss outcomes of the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference hosted by Islamabad recently. The minister, who was accompanied by Federal Secretary for Information Ashfaq Ahmad Khalil and Principal Information Officer



Mobashir Hassan, presented a digital album documenting the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference.

During the meeting, the Senate Chairman expressed his sincere appreciation for the Ministry of Information's role in providing exceptional media coverage, noting the positive outcomes of the conference for Pakistan at the international stage. The Chairman Senate emphasized that the conference, which focused on the core themes of peace, security, and development, served as a significant milestone for parliamentary diplomacy in Pakistan.

He highlighted the unanimous adoption of the Islamabad Declaration as a major achievement, noting that the document stressed the promotion of global peace and sustainable development while reaffirming a commitment to a global order based on United Nations principles. He praised the collective efforts of the Information Minister and his team for their dedication in making the event a success.

Federal Minister Attaullah Tarar remarked that the successful hosting of the conference by the Senate of Pakistan has greatly enhanced the country's positive image globally. He credited the leadership of Chairman Gilani for bringing together distinguished speakers and parliamentarians from across the world onto a single platform.

CM meets with elders and notables of a tribal Jirga from Khyber District KP govt to provide every assistance to affectees of Tirah Valley, vows CM Afridi

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: An important jirga comprising elders and notables of District Khyber was held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Sohail Afridi, at the Chief Minister House, Peshawar. The jirga discussed in detail the overall law and order situation in District Khyber and the problems faced by families displaced from Tirah Valley.

Addressing the jirga, Chief Minister Muhammad Sohail Afridi categorically said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government would not abandon the affectees of Tirah and would extend all possible assistance to them. He said that the tribal people had rendered immense sacrifices for the country, leaving behind their homes and belongings, and their sacrifices could not be ignored under any circumstances.

The Chief Minister said that there existed an organized mindset which did not want Pashtuns, particularly the tribal people, to become part of the mainstream system. He remarked that the same mindset, which had been hostile for the past 75 years, did not recognize their very existence. He added that as soon as he was elected Chief Minister, a campaign of misleading and negative propaganda was launched against him, which was a regrettable attitude towards an elected Chief Minister. However, he



not a solution to the problems. During the jirga, tribal elders presented their suggestions and opinions regarding the restoration of peace and the dignified displacement of the people affected by Tirah. The Chief Minister issued directives to ensure the provision of all possible facilities to the affected families and reaffirmed the commitment that the provincial government stood with the displaced families and would utilize all available resources to resolve their issues. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Muhammad Sohail Afridi visited the registration center established for the affectees of Tirah of District Khyber. He met the displaced people, listened to their problems and issued on-the-spot directives to the concerned authorities for their immediate resolution.

ment that military operations were not a solution to any problem. After 22 major and 14,000 small operations, the question arises as to what guarantee remains that peace can now be established. He made it clear that decisions taken behind closed doors, if imposed on Tirah, would not yield positive results.

The Chief Minister stated that decisions were being made without taking the provincial government into confidence, whereas if the provincial government were consulted, consensus could be built by taking the nation into confidence. He said that operations launched through coercion and force were

those displaced from Tirah. The Chief Minister said that all political parties and schools of thought in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were in agree-



President recommends Civil Award for martyred firefighter

TIMES REPORT

KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari has directed Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah to utilise all available resources in the ongoing rescue and fire-fighting operation in Gul Plaza.

During a telephone conversation with Murad Ali Shah on Sunday, Asif Ali Zardari said that martyred firefighter Furqan Shaukat should be nominated for the Civil Award and inquired from the CM about the situation of the fire in Gul Plaza. He appreciated the bravery of martyred firefighter Furqan Shaukat.

He said that immediate steps should be taken for the medical care of the injured and the affected people, and also emphasised the implementation of fire safety laws and the development of a system of safety inspections in commercial and residential buildings on modern lines.

President Asif Ali Zardari said that such steps should be taken to prevent tragedies in the future.

JUI chief Fazal calls for National Harmony Amid Global Upheaval

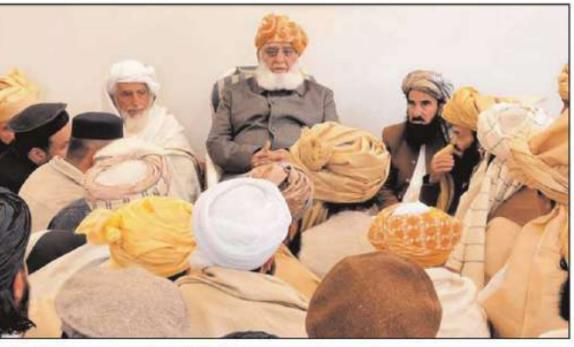
MUHAMMAD REHAN

DIKHAN: Central Ameer of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, has stated that following the failure of communism and capitalist democracy, extraordinary changes are rapidly shifting global politics. He emphasized that the need of the hour is national harmony rather than the deepening of political conflicts. Engineer Maulana Zia-ur-Rehman, head of the Central Digital Media Committee, was also present on the occasion.

He noted that over the past two centuries, the region has experimented with multiple political systems, including monarchy, colonialism, democracy, and communism, arguing that none have truly fulfilled the objective of human welfare, instead concentrating power in limited hands. According to him, contemporary global political systems have failed to alleviate human suffering or establish genuine welfare societies.

Reflecting on historical developments, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that while scientific advancement was once presented as the solution to humanity's problems, it instead became a tool for domination and destruction. He referred to the development of nuclear and hydrogen weapons by major powers and cited recent conflicts, including civilian casualties in Gaza, as evidence of science being used against humanity rather than for its benefit.

He further remarked that events such as actions by the United States against leadership in Venezuela have intensified global insecurity, pushing the world closer to the threat of nuclear confrontation. He added that Western intellectual movements, including the Renaissance, weakened the purpose of life and undermined family systems, resulting in widespread loneliness and social distress. Maulana Fazlur Rehman urged Pakistani intellectuals, politicians, bureaucrats, and military leadership to exercise collective wisdom rooted in historical consciousness, cultural heritage, and social values.



Meeting party leadership and family is a constitutional right of Imran, Shafi Jan

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Shafi Jan, has said that tomorrow the sisters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Founder Chairman Imran Khan will visit Adiala Jail to meet him, while on the occasion elected PTI members and party workers will also be present to express solidarity.

In a statement issued here, the Special Assistant said that there are clear court orders regarding meetings of political leadership and family members with PTI Founder Chairman Imran Khan; however, despite this, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government occupying Punjab has been repeatedly violating court orders, which is not only a blatant violation of the Constitution and the law but also an affront to democratic values.

Shafi Jan said that the PML-N government, which lacks a public mandate, is openly displaying fascism by continuously preventing Imran Khan's family members, political leadership and lawyers from meeting him. He said that meeting Imran Khan is a fundamental and legal right of political leaders, lawyers and family members, which cannot be denied through the use of force.

He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is a peaceful, constitutional and democratic political party, but at the behest of the "fake" Punjab government, the Punjab Police are using tactics such as water cannons against peaceful workers and women, which is the worst example of political victimisation. Shafi Jan said that Imran Khan remains the voice of the people's hearts and all conspiracies to isolate him will fail. No matter how much oppression the fake Punjab and federal governments resort to, public support for Imran Khan cannot be suppressed.



CityNews

Literary ceremony held in honor of Dr. Anwar Nagar

ANWAR ZADA GULYAR

BAJAUR: Under the auspices of Hisban Media Network, a dignified and purposeful literary ceremony was held in honor of the renowned poet, researcher, critic, and literary figure Dr. Anwar Nagar. The event was attended by prominent personalities from the fields of literature, journalism, and society.

The ceremony was presided over by senior poet and a leading figure in organized literary circles in Bajaur,



Muhammad Khan Bajauri, while Dr. Anwar Nagar was the chief guest. The guests of honor included Javed Khayal, a well-known political, social, and academic personality and PhD scholar from District Dir; renowned poet Bacha Zada Hairan; and Dr. Anwar Nagar's respected father. The event was hosted by senior member of Hisban Media Network, renowned journalist, and radio broadcaster Irfanullah Jan.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Dr. Anwar Nagar was accorded a warm and dignified welcome. Bouquets were presented to him by representatives of Hisban Media Network and the participants. Renowned radio presenter and poet Nazir Gul Nadeem presented Dr. Anwar Nagar with a traditional pakol on behalf of the network, while Irfanullah Jan presented a certificate of appreciation from Hisban Media Network.

The proceedings were conducted by well-known journalist and poet Anwarzada Gulyar, while the recitation of the Holy Quran was performed by Ashna Bajauri. During the ceremony, Qadir Khan Sayal, Umar Hayat, and the president of the session Muhammad Khan Bajauri presented poetic tributes in honor of Dr. Anwar Nagar. Renowned poet Bacha Zada Hairan further enriched the gathering by presenting his poetry along with his prose remarks. Former Assistant Education Officer Mian Abdul Rehman offered a detailed commentary on Dr. Anwar Nagar's poetry and intellectual dimensions, highlighting his literary stature.

On this occasion, Ashna Bajauri, Ishaq Utmankhel, and Javed Khayal presented summaries of research papers written on Dr. Anwar Nagar's life, art, and thought, paying tribute to his literary and research contributions. The speakers stated that Dr. Anwar Nagar is a multifaceted literary personality of Bajaur who, besides being a poet, holds a distinguished position as a researcher, critic, author, and translator. They added that he has played responsible roles in various literary organizations and, as President of the Bajaur Culture Association, rendered significant services for the promotion of literary and cultural activities in the region.

The participants appreciated this literary and journalistic initiative of Hisban Media Network and expressed hope that such positive collaboration between literature and journalism would continue in the future. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Dr. Anwar Nagar thanked Hisban Media Network and all the participants, stating that such activities are exemplary models of positive journalism, contributing to intellectual growth and positive change in society.

Member of Yousafzai Narriwala Jirga visits Takht Bhai Press Club

IZZAT MUHAMMAD

TAKHT BHAI: Iqbal Khan Manager, a central member of the Takht Bhai Yousafzai Narriwala Jirga, visited Takht Bhai Press Club. On this occasion, he congratulated the newly elected cabinet on their success. He was



accompanied by PPP Provincial Council Member Bacha Hussain.

Speaking to journalists at the press club, Iqbal Khan Manager said that journalism is a noble profession that plays a vital role in reforming society and raising public awareness. He expressed regret that, unfortunately, in today's era, journalism has often taken the shape of a business rather than a service, which goes against the true purpose of this profession.

He further stated that in the current times of terrorism and unrest, the importance of journalism has increased more than ever, as journalists play a key role in bringing the truth to light and keeping the public informed. Iqbal Khan Manager paid tribute to the services of the journalist community and expressed his best wishes for them.

Shaheed Families demand justice

IMRAN AFRIDI

JAMRUD: Representative of Shaheed Families, Malik Parvaiz, has demanded that Chief Minister Kher Pakhtunkhwa, Sohail Afridi, grant an immediate meeting to the Shaheed Committee delegation to resolve the serious issues faced by the families of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Special Dabar and Levy Force sha-



heads.

Addressing a press conference at Jamrood Press Club, Malik Parvaiz said that the shaheeds of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Special Dabar and Levy Force have also made great sacrifices for the country, and therefore, their families should be given all the benefits as given to other shaheeds of the country. These benefits include payment of salaries till the age of 60, free education for children, free medical treatment, and pension facilities. Malik Parvaiz said that they hope that the Chief Minister Kher Pakhtunkhwa will recognize the legitimate demands of the shaheed families and grant them justice. He warned that if these issues are not resolved within a week, the shaheed families will be forced to protest again, and various options will be considered.

No compromise on public health, says DC Food Authority Kashif Iqbal Jilani

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Director General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety & Halal Food Authority, Kashif Iqbal Jilani has said that there will be no compromise on public health and that those involved in adulteration and the sale of substandard or hazardous food will face strict action without any leniency.

He stated that the KP Food Safety & Halal Food Authority is strictly implementing a zero-tolerance policy against the adulteration mafia and individuals involved in unsafe and substandard food practices to safeguard public health.

The DG expressed these views during a surprise visit to Malakand, yesterday, accompanied by Director Operations Muhammad Yousaf. The Malakand Food Safety Team was also present during the visit.

During the inspection, the

team checked hotels, restaurants, milk shops, ghee and oil mills, and other food-related business units operating in different areas of

two ghee and edible oil manufacturing units and sent to the Authority's Provincial Food Testing Laboratory and Centre for Research

Kashif Iqbal urged the public, media, and food business operators to fully cooperate with the Food Authority in promoting safe and quality food. He appealed to citizens to report businesses involved in unsafe food practices, stating that effective public cooperation is essential for the complete eradication of substandard food.

Jilani further extended that a state-of-the-art provincial food testing laboratory equipped with modern machinery has been established under the Food Authority, eliminating the need to send samples to other provinces. Food testing is now being carried out at the provincial level on modern scientific lines.

He added that along with routine inspections, the series of surprise visits across the province will continue to curb adulteration mafia and ensure the provision of safe and quality food to the public.



Malakand. Several food business operators were issued improvement notices over violations of hygiene and food safety standards. Samples were collected from

for detailed analysis. The owners were informed that strict legal action would be taken if the laboratory reports confirm the products to be substandard or unsafe.

Inspection of BISP and Hearing of Public Complaints held at Parachinar

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: An inspection of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) was carried out at Parachinar, Upper Kurram by a team of the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat Regional Office Peshawar. The inspection team comprised Mr. Bakhtiar Gul, Deputy Advisor / Incharge SADD Cell, Mr. Salahuddin, Deputy Director, and Mr. Javed Iqbal, Assistant. The team reviewed the functioning of BISP with particular focus on service delivery and public facilitation.

In addition, a hearing of public complaints was con-



ducted at the ADC Conference Room, Parachinar, under the chairmanship of Mr. Bakhtiar Gul, Deputy Advisor / Incharge SADD Cell. Complaints raised by the public were heard attentively, and necessary directions were issued to the concerned officials on the spot. The Wafaqi Mohtasib continues to conduct field inspections and on-site hearings to ensure prompt and effective redressal of public grievances and to provide justice at the doorstep of citizens.

PTI Malakand Division to stage protest on Jan 25

SYED SAJID SHAH

SHANGLA: After Hazara, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers of Malakand Division will stage a large-scale protest on January 25. Workers should make full preparations for a peaceful protest and show the world where the people stand. These views were expressed by PTI Central Deputy Spokesperson Shaukat Yousafzai while congratulating the newly elected cabinet and President Syed Sajid Shah of the Shangla Press Club.

He said that a region with a population of more than 20 million has fallen below the poverty line, people are struggling for two meals a day, while the rulers remain busy in luxury and continue chanting slogans that everything is fine. He added that the country is currently facing severe economic difficulties, and corruption amounting to Rs 5,300 billion has taken place in just two years. The rule of thieves and looters has ruined the country, he alleged.



Shaukat Yousafzai said that due to the deteriorating law and order situation, no investor is willing to invest in Pakistan. Owing to flawed policies, the country is trapped in an economic quagmire and the security situation has further worsened. He stated that attempts to launch attacks on the neighboring country Iran are being intensified, while the country's foreign policy remains unclear. He added that although talks with Afghanistan are discussed, war is not a solution to the problems.

He further said that censorship in the media has severely damaged press freedom and the credibility of the media. He noted that during the PTI government, the national debt was \$40 billion, which has now increased to \$78 billion, a clear proof of the current rulers' failed policies.

E-Office training for Administrative and Sectional Heads kicked off

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The E-Office training for Administrative and Sectional Heads has formally commenced at the University of Malakand, marking a significant step towards the implementation of a modern, efficient, and paperless communication system within the University.

The training is being conducted by Ms. Qurat ul Ain, Operational Manager from the National Information Technology Board (NITB), who is serving as the resource person and providing hands-on guidance to the participants.

This initiative represents an important milestone in the University of Malakand's journey towards

digital transformation and E-Governance.

The successful launch

Saqib Khan, Deputy

Director IT, and the entire

IT team for their dedication



of the E-Office system has

been made possible under

the visionary leadership

and kind support of the

Honorable Vice Chancellor,

Prof. Dr. Rashid Ahmad,

who appreciated the tire-

less efforts of Dr. Nasir

Rashid, Director IT, Mr.

and commitment in this

regard. The University

remains committed to

adopting innovative digital

solutions to enhance effi-

ciency, transparency, and

service delivery across all

administrative and acad-

emic units.

Blood donation camp organized

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A blood donation camp was organized at Cantt General Hospital under the auspices of the Fatimid Foundation.

A successful blood donation camp was held on Monday, 19 January 2026, at Cantt General Hospital (CGH) under the patronage of the Fatimid Foundation, in which a large number of volunteers and citizens participated by donating blood.

The objective of the camp was to ensure the availability of safe blood for patients suffering from thalassemia, hemophilia and other life-threatening diseases.

During the camp, the Fatimid Foundation's trained medical team ensured the collection, screening and safety of blood in accordance with international standards. People from various walks of life voluntarily donated blood, demonstrating a strong sense of social responsibility and humanitarian spirit.

On this occasion, CEO CBP Chaudhry Babar Hussain and Vice President CBP, Major (Retd) Arshad Mahmood, visited Cantt General Hospital and inspected the blood donation camp.

They appreciated the

services of the Fatimid Foundation, termed the initiative highly significant for social welfare, and commended the spirit of the voluntary blood donors, describing the Foundation's continuous efforts as praiseworthy.

CEO Chaudhry Babar Hussain expressed his commitment to providing

Cantt General Hospital, CBP officials and all blood donors, whose cooperation ensured the success of the camp.

The Fatimid Foundation reiterated its commitment to continuing its services to patients through the organization of similar blood donation camps in the future.



full support for such welfare initiatives to ensure the timely and safe supply of blood to patients. He also appealed to the public to actively participate in similar camps in the future and play their role in saving human lives.

Representatives of the Fatimid Foundation expressed their gratitude to the administration of

It is worth mentioning that in 2025, the Cantonment Board Peshawar organized approximately ten free medical camps at various locations, where thousands of patients received free medical check-ups and treatment, along with free medicines provided in collaboration with local pharmaceutical companies.

VC UET Peshawar highlights China's remarkable progress in engineering, science, and technology

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Prof. Dr. Sadiq Khattak, Vice Chancellor, University of Engineering & Technology (UET) Peshawar, visited the China Window Center, Peshawar along with a four-member delegation today. During the visit, Prof. Dr. Sadiq Khattak highlighted China's remarkable progress in engineering, science, and technology. He assured to extend this cooperation for the socio-economic development of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He stated, UET Peshawar already maintains diversified collaborations with Chinese universities and is actively working across various engineering disciplines through capacity building, faculty exchange, joint research projects. Having unique niche in Rare Earth Elements, UET Peshawar is closely working with

Chinese universities for technology transfer and cutting edge research in the field of REE, he remarked.

Window, Mr. Amjad Aziz Malik, gave a detailed briefing on joint initiatives aimed at promoting knowl-



edge exchange, particularly through Chinese government scholarships. He assured that the number of scholarships for Pakistani engineering students would increase further, contributing to the development of skilled human

resources for national progress. Prof. Dr. Sadiq Khattak also referred to the celebration of the 75th anniversary of Pakistan-China friendship, describing it as a historic milestone that reflects the strength and continuity of bilateral relations.

The delegation toured various galleries of the China Window and appreciated its role in promoting Chinese culture and strengthening Pakistan-China relations. The Vice Chancellor recorded his impressions in the visitors' book, and a souvenir was presented to him at the conclusion of the visit. The visit concluded with a reaffirmation of commitment to further strengthening academic exchange and engineering cooperation between UET Peshawar and the China Window to reinforce collaboration between the two friendly countries.

Pakistan committed to support Chinese investors: Rana Tanveer



TWIN CITIES

ANF Crackdown against Drug Traffickers, nine arrested

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: ANF conducted 9 operations, resulting in the apprehension of 9 accused including 3 women around various cities across the country, & confiscated 91.46 kgs of drugs worth more than 86 lac PKR



International Drug Interdiction

At a courier office in Rawalpindi, 873 grams of opium concealed in a waist coat recovered from a parcel destined for Canada.

At the Rawalpindi courier office, 2 cannabis oil vapes, weighing 76 grams, recovered from a parcel originating from the UK.

Domestic Drug Interdiction

In another operation at the Rawalpindi courier office, 188 ecstasy tablets weighing 66 grams recovered from a parcel.

In Sohrab Goth, Karachi, 4.8 kgs of hashish recovered from an accused.

Near Model Town, Islamabad, 500 psychotropic tablets, weighing 395 grams, recovered from a suspect.

From Dildar Imrani Goth, Karachi, 72 kgs of hashish, concealed in 2 tractors, seized.

Inter-provincial Drug Interdiction*

Near the Islamabad Motorway Toll Plaza, 7 kgs of ice & 2.4 kgs of hashish seized from a vehicle 5 accused, including 3 women, arrested.

Near Sangjani Toll Plaza, Islamabad, 3.6 kgs of hashish recovered from an accused.

Near Tarkai Toll Plaza, Jhelum, 250 grams of hashish recovered from a passenger, the accused apprehended.

Cases have been registered under the CNSA-1997.

Public complaints pile up at DC Lower Dir Open Court

JAVED UR REHMAN

CHAKDARA: Residents of Union Council Khadgazai Badwan lodged numerous complaints during an open court held under the auspices of the district administration. The forum was organized on the directives of Muhammad Arif Khan, Deputy



Commissioner Lower Dir, and was chaired by Wajid Ali at Government High School Khadgazai to address public grievances of Union Council Khadgazai Abazai Badwan, Tehsil Adinzai.

Senior officials from various government departments attended the open court, including Assistant Commissioner Adinzai Saleem Ayubi and Additional Assistant Commissioner Shahzad Ahmed Abbasi. DSP Adinzai Muhammad Zaman, District Settlement Officer Younis Khan, and representatives of other line departments were also present.

During the session, local residents highlighted a wide range of issues, including the deteriorating condition of roads, law and order concerns, drug trafficking, one-wheeling, forest and wildlife protection, irrigation channels, passport counter services, and shortcomings in health and education facilities. Complaints were also raised against the Communication and Works Department, municipal services, the Pakhtunkhwa Highway Authority, and TMA Adinzai. Prominent local figures, including ANP Tehsil President Abdul Latif Bacha, former district deputy speaker Abdul Rashid, former Nazim Sultan Rum, Ashraf Ali, Abdul Hameed, and Dr. Abrar, drew attention to longstanding problems faced by the area. Citizens particularly voiced concern over alleged drug trafficking activities at Sangam Khadgazai Bridge in Malakand district and within Lower Dir.

Death toll in Karachi plaza inferno climbs to 14, 60 missing

Army units, FWO teams join rescue and search operation

SABAHAT SARWAR

KARACHI: It took firefighters more than 33 hours to bring the Gul Plaza fire under control which claimed 14 lives and injured 30 people, 11 of them seriously, with the fate of dozens of trapped people unknown.

The fire which started on Saturday night has damaged the basic structure of the building which caused a major portion to collapse.

Firefighters began cooling the steaming rubble of the nearly collapsed structure. Personnel of Pakistan Navy, Sindh Rangers and Rescue 1122 have doused the fire after hectic efforts.

Fire Brigade Operational In-charge Zafar Khan said that the fire has been brought under control.

He said that the lack of ventilation in the mall, which housed more than 1,200 shops, caused the building to fill with smoke and slowed rescue efforts.

Sindh police chief Javed Alam Odho told reporters at the site that the fire appeared to have been caused by a circuit breaker.

He said that the nature of the

items in the building, such as carpets, blankets and other objects made of resins, had made it difficult to bring the fire under control.

Saturday night, with rescue services receiving a call at 10:38 pm (1738 GMT) reporting that ground-floor shops at the multi-storey Gul Plaza shopping

building was already engulfed in flames." Rescue 1122 spokesperson Hassanul Haseeb Khan told Reuters.

Firefighting teams continued operations late Sunday night to extinguish a blaze that has been raging since the previous night at the Gul Plaza shopping mall, as Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and rescuers confirmed eight fatalities and said that more than 58 people were still reported missing.

Talking to media during his visit to the fire-ravaged Gul Plaza, Murad Ali Shah said that some people are politicising the tragic incident.

He added that the prime minister has not contacted him so far, but the provincial government will compensate traders for their losses in a transparent manner.

The chief minister said that he was not in the city at the time of the incident and was informed late at night about the blaze.

"I remained in contact with the Mayor of Karachi and the Chief Secretary, and Saeed Ghani also visited the site," he said.



Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab told media at the scene that 65 people were still missing.

Reuters adds: The fire erupted on

centre were ablaze.

"When we arrived, the fire from the ground floor had spread to the upper floors, and almost the entire

Illegal "Load and Unload" Tax checkpoints dismantled in Kohat

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Advocate ordered the immediate removal of illegal "load and unload" tax checkpoints around Kohat, taking swift action on public complaints of unlawful tax collection.

The law minister paid a surprise visit to tax collection points on Pindi Road and Dhoda Road, where he sought detailed records from the staff on duty and interacted directly with the citizens and transporters to hear their grievances. Complainants said tax was being forcibly collected outside the city limits, a practice they termed illegal and a major source of harassment.

Expressing strong displeasure, Aftab Alam issued clear directives to the Tehsil Municipal Administration Kohat, stating that the "load and unload" tax is legally applicable only within city limits and that any collection beyond those boundaries is unlawful.

He ordered the immediate dismantling of all illegal checkpoints and warned that no future violations would be tolerated. "Strict legal action will be taken against any official or staff member found

violating government directives," the minister warned.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to public relief, Aftab

tax collection system transparent and to establish an effective monitoring mechanism for timely redress of the public complaints.



Alam said the provincial administration was determined to protect the citizens from unnecessary taxation, harassment and mismanagement and to ensure the rule of law. He further directed the district administration to make the

Public and social circles welcomed the minister's prompt intervention, expressing the hope that the move would provide tangible relief to citizens and lead to the complete elimination of illegal tax collection in the district.

Shehryar Afridi Urges Unity for Kohat's Agri Development

TIMES REPORT

KOHAT: Former Interior



Minister and Member of the National Assembly Shehryar Khan Afridi called for a unified, inter-departmental effort to transform Kohat into a model district for agriculture and livestock development, stressing the need for a practical and result-oriented roadmap.

Speaking at a high-level inter-departmental meeting at the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Afridi directed the relevant departments to focus on increasing agricultural productivity, ensuring efficient water management, promoting livestock development, protecting the environment and adopting modern and digital technologies. He said trans-

parency, coordination and timely completion of projects would be ensured at all levels. The meeting

ment and efficient utilisation of water resources. It was agreed to extend the Gumbat Agri Model

was attended by the Chairman District Development Committee and MPA Daud Afridi, Deputy Commissioner Rahimullah Mehsud, Chairman Tehsil Gumbat Sajid Iqbal, focal person of Special Assistant Shafi Jan Muhammad Ehsan and senior officials from the agriculture, forestry, livestock, water management, fisheries, irrigation, soil conservation and planning and development departments.

Participants reviewed the ongoing and proposed development schemes and held detailed discussions on farm sector growth, improved irrigation systems, afforestation, livestock improve-

ment and efficient utilisation of water resources. It was agreed to extend the Gumbat Agri Model across all the constituencies under which farmers will be provided a range of facilities, including free solarisation, establishment and fencing of guava orchards, supply of certified seeds, olive grafting and provision of water pumps.

The meeting also emphasised strengthening inter-departmental coordination to address the issues faced by the farmers and livestock owners, while ensuring effective field-level implementation.

Officials resolved that no negligence would be tolerated in public welfare projects aimed at boosting agriculture and improving livelihoods in the district.

MTI amendment bill tabled, Kalash community endowment fund approved in KP PA

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The session of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly began with a delay of one hour and forty minutes and was presided over by Deputy Speaker Suraiya Bibi. During the session, the provincial government tabled the Medical Teaching Institutions (MTI) Amendment Bill 2025, presented by Provincial Minister for Law Aftab Alam.

According to the proposed bill, the Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be authorized to make temporary appointments to key administrative positions. The Chairperson will be able to appoint the Hospital Director, Medical Director, and Nursing Director on a temporary basis for 120

days. If permanent recruitment is not completed within this period, the duration of temporary appointments may be extended. The bill also includes a provision allowing all employees to file appeals against any decision of the Board of Governors, after first approaching the Grievance Committee. The Health Department will provide secretariat support to the Appellate Tribunal, while existing staff will continue to serve under their current terms and conditions.

During the session, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly also unanimously approved the Kalash Community Endowment Fund Bill 2025. Under the bill, a special endowment fund will be established for the Kalash community, with an initial alloca-

tion of Rs 100 million. Philanthropists, non-governmental organizations, and various institutions working for the Kalash community will also be able to contribute to the fund.



The fund will be utilized for the social, cultural, and religious festivals, burial rites, and other important ceremonies of the Kalash community. To ensure

transparency, a nine-member committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner Lower Chitral will oversee the utilization of the fund, including a female representative from the Kalash com-

munity.

The Assembly also offered Fateha for the deceased of the fire incident at Gul Plaza in Karachi. Expressing grief over

the tragedy, MPA Mushtaq Chani stated that the Karachi administration failed to take timely measures to extinguish the fire, resulting in increased losses. He added that, according to reports, more than 50 people are still missing, which is a highly alarming situation. The Assembly demanded transparent investigations and action against those responsible.

MPA Ahmed Kundi raised questions regarding Zakat committees, stating that Rs 2 billion remains unutilized in Zakat funds. Law Minister Aftab Alam said that discussion on the issue in the Standing Committee was necessary and that the matter of the province's share in Zakat funds would be taken up with the federal government. The Assembly unanimously referred

the matter to the Standing Committee. Responding to questions related to floods, Minister for Rehabilitation and Relief Aqibullah stated that all details had been compiled and would be provided to the members. He also announced that new divers would be recruited for Rescue 1122.

During the attention notices, Farzana Sherin highlighted the deteriorated condition of the Peshawar-Islamabad-Dera Ismail Khan road below the CPEC route, while Aiman Jaili expressed concern over hundreds of open manholes across Peshawar city. The Law Minister informed the House that 2,261 manhole covers had been provided and that a policy had been adopted to install plastic manholes in the future.

LOSS OF VEHICLE DOCUMENTS

Mr. Kashif Khan, son of Gul Said Khan Afridi, holder of CNIC No. 17301-8219906-5, resident of House No. 8, Haji Abad, Kohat Road, Peshawar, has reported the loss of original vehicle documents.

According to details, Mr. Kashif Khan is the lawful and rightful owner of a Toyota Corolla XLI M/T-178B, Model 2020, Color Altitude Black, Chassis No. NZE170R-4198292, and Engine No. 2572748. The original Sales Invoice and Sales Certificate, issued in the name of Central Motors, 3 Main Sharah-e-Faisal Karachi have been lost in jurisdiction of Police Station Mattani, Peshawar. Finder may please return these documents to Customer Relations, Indus Motor Company Ltd Port Qasim Authority Karachi, or owner at House No. 8, Hajjabad Kohat Road, Peshawar

Editorial & Opinion

The Voice of the Time

DAILY TIMES

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India's islamophobia

Islamophobia in India is not confined to sporadic acts of mob violence. It assumes the character of state policy, extending its reach deep into the occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir, where even places of worship are no longer spared intrusive surveillance. The reported profiling of mosques and mosque management committees in the disputed Himalayan territory marks yet another troubling escalation in New Delhi's campaign to securitize Muslim religious life.

According to reports, police in the occupied valley have distributed detailed forms seeking personal, financial and digital information of mosque leaders and members of management committees. Pakistan has rightly condemned this development, calling it a blatant intrusion into religious affairs and a grave violation of the fundamental right to freedom of religion and belief. It contradicts India's own constitutional guarantees and fits neatly into a broader pattern under the Hindutva-driven political order.

From laws regulating Muslim charitable endowments to crackdowns on religious education and now the profiling of mosques, the Indian state has steadily normalised discrimination under the guise of governance and security. In IOJK, such actions carry even graver implications. In a region already stripped of political autonomy and subjected to heavy militarisation, the targeting of religious institutions further erodes the social and spiritual space available to Kashmiris.

Freedom of religion is not a concession granted by the state. It is an inalienable right. The people of Jammu and Kashmir are entitled to practise their faith without fear, coercion or surveillance. Pakistan's commitment to standing in solidarity with Kashmiris remains necessary, but the responsibility does not rest with Islamabad alone. The international community, particularly those who claim to champion religious freedom and minority rights, must recognise Islamophobia for what it is.

Pakistan's Stolen Democracy & the Global Silence

Diplomacy Won. Democracy Lost



SARA ALI SYED

When election monitors fall silent, democracy becomes the casualty.

In February 2024, the Commonwealth Observer Group (COG) deployed a 13-member mission, led by former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, to monitor Pakistan's general elections. Their mandate was routine: observe the process and publish an impartial assessment. The mission completed its work and submitted its final report to the Commonwealth Secretariat in November 2024.

What followed was unprecedented silence.

For nearly a year, the report was withheld from public view. It only

surfaced after being leaked by investigative platform Dropsite News in September 2025. Under pressure, the Secretariat released the same report—dated 20 November 2024—on 30 September 2025. Never in the Commonwealth's 17-year election-monitoring history has a report been delayed this long. Comparable missions in Sri Lanka, Ghana, and Trinidad and Tobago were published within weeks.

The Secretariat's explanation was telling: publication was delayed to avoid "straining relations with Pakistan." In other words, diplomacy was prioritised over democratic integrity.

This decision violated the Commonwealth Charter, which requires observer reports to be issued promptly and guarantees their independence—even from the Secretariat itself. More troublingly, the report had already been shared with Pakistan's government and the Election Commission, while citizens, opposition parties, and civil society were kept in the dark. Those accused of manipulation saw the findings first; those seeking accountability saw them last.

When finally released, the report confirmed widespread electoral distortion.

It documented severe restrictions on political freedoms, including

arrests, intimidation, enforced disappearances, and internet shutdowns that crippled opposition campaigning—particularly against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The stripping of PTI's election symbol forced candidates to run as independents, denying the party its constitutional share of reserved seats. Media censorship was systematic, judicial processes appeared politically engineered, and election-day communication blackouts obstructed voters and observers alike.

The report identified serious discrepancies in official results forms, delayed publication of data beyond legal deadlines, and incomplete results in multiple constituencies; clear breaches of electoral law. Despite PTI-backed candidates securing the highest number of seats nationally and in Punjab, administrative labelling blocked them from forming government.

Nearly half of Pakistan's electorate; over 56 million voters, many of them young; saw their political voice diluted. The report concluded that the 2024 elections were neither free nor fair.

This silence is not unique to the Commonwealth. The European Union has refused to release its own election assessment, citing "protection of international relations." A UK-commissioned evaluation also

remains unpublished. Together, these omissions reveal a troubling pattern: when democratic breakdown occurs in strategic states, international institutions choose discretion over disclosure.

While global statements expressed concern, they stopped short of accountability. Think tanks acknowledged the elections were "marred," yet power was allowed to shift without consequence.

Truth delayed is democracy denied.

The Commonwealth's report is now official, verified, and undeniable. By withholding it, the institution compromised its own credibility. The parallel silence of the EU and UK reinforces a global reluctance to defend democratic principles when doing so risks diplomatic discomfort.

Pakistan's stability will not come through suppression or silence, but through truth, transparency, and respect for the people's vote. No democracy can survive when its truth is postponed for diplomacy.

The writer, advocate High Court, Sara Ali Syed is Central Information Secretary, South Punjab Region, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf & Co-Organizer Election Analysis & Management Cell South Punjab PTI. She can be reached at Sasyed@bsol.pk.org

Unjustified Rejection of Bajaur-Related Questions in the Provincial Assembly

Serious Concerns Over Democratic Transparency and Parliamentary Accountability



ANWAR ZADA GULYAR

Concerns are growing over the rejection of important public-interest questions related to District Bajaur in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Assembly without providing any reasons or citing assembly rules. All questions submitted by the elected Member of the Provincial Assembly from constituency PK-22 were not approved by the

Assembly Secretariat, raising serious questions about parliamentary accountability and democratic values.

According to sources, the MPA submitted questions under the Rules of Procedure of the Provincial Assembly concerning various departments, directly linked to public interest. These included issues related to new government recruitments, the use and alleged misuse of development funds, the distribution of funds for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), administrative matters, and violations of merit and rules within government departments, with particular focus on the situation in District Bajaur.

Sources further state that these questions were neither forwarded to the relevant departments nor was any written or verbal reason provided for their rejection. No reference to any assembly rule was cited, a move being described as contrary to democratic traditions and parliamentary procedure.

According to records, the rejected questions pertained to the Sports Department, Local Government Department, Home and Administration Department, Health Department, and funds allocated for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) affected by military operations. In the case of the Health Department, the questions highlighted alleged violations of merit, illegal appointments, and disregard for rules and procedures concerning the District Health Officer (DHO) Bajaur, while the question regarding IDP funds was described as a sensitive humanitarian issue.

Political and social circles maintain that parliamentary questions are a key constitutional tool to ensure transparency and accountability. Preventing elected representatives from questioning the use of public funds, government jobs, and administrative decisions is tantamount to weakening the democratic process.

Local residents and political observers note that the people of

Bajaur have endured decades of insecurity, displacement, and deprivation. Under such circumstances, transparency in the utilization of development funds, government recruitments, and the performance of health and other departments is essential.

Analysts argue that rejecting questions does not resolve problems but rather deepens them. Suppressing questions related to corruption, merit, and the use of public resources undermines public trust.

Public and political circles have demanded that all rejected questions concerning Bajaur be reinstated on the assembly agenda and that the relevant departments be compelled to present complete facts before the public and their elected representatives.

Experts conclude that democracy is strengthened through questions and answers, while silence negates the very essence of a transparent system.

Addressing the Challenges Faced by Freelancers in Pakistan and Indonesia



USAMA AHMAD KHAN

INTRODUCTION:

Freelancing has become a global trend, offering individuals the freedom to work anywhere, and access global clients and apply their expertise in flexible work environment, which offer freedom, financial independence and flexibility. However, despite the growth of the gig economy, freelancers in Pakistan and Indonesia face some significant challenges that prevent them to be fully integrated into the global market. Despite these two nations are Muslim majority countries, their problems in the freelancing sector are not the same but equally important. This article will cover the key issues that free-

lancers encounter in these nations with special focus on the lack of infrastructure, issues with the payment system, and lack of legal policies.

MAIN ISSUE:

The challenges that affect freelancers in Pakistan and Indonesia include poor internet connectivity, delayed payments, expensive transaction costs, and lack of legal protections. These obstacles limit their ability to succeed, especially as freelancing becomes a major source of employment among the young generation, women and individuals that demand flexibilities in their working schedules. The absence of clear policies and infrastructure development further undermines their potential to thrive in the global gig economy.

METAPHOR:

Freelancing is like a bridge that connects individuals to the global market. However, this bridge has a few potholes in the form of ineffective infrastructure, unreliable payment systems, and unpredictable legal systems. The Pakistani and Indonesian freelancers must find their way through these challenges and the

process is uncertain and even impossible. Similar to how a bridge must remain in good condition so that people do not fall off the edge, the freelancing ecosystem within these nations requires the right support and structure to help freelancers to achieve their potential.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE IRONY

The internet connectivity and frequent power outages are the biggest problems facing by freelancers in Pakistan as they interfere with their performance and communication with clients. The costs of acquiring the devices required by freelancers are further increased by high taxes on hardware and internet devices such as computers, laptops, and internet equipment despite that according to Payoneer Pakistan Ranks 4th in the world of Freelancing. Although Indonesia often benefits by being more infrastructurally equipped, but still there are some regional differences, specifically in the rural areas where freelancers have fewer means of reliable internet and digital literacy provisions. Such gaps in infrastructure prevent the success of freelancers to succeed and compete with the global gig economy.

THE PAYMENT GATEWAYS

Freelancers in Pakistan are facing difficulties due to the lack of international payment gateways such as PayPal. As a result, they have to depend on unreliable payment gateways which are slow and with high transaction fees. About (30.6%) out of 100 freelancers are irregularly paid with 47.2% percent have serious payment problems. Also, the lack of tax awareness complicates financial stability, as many freelancers don't understand their tax obligations. In Indonesia, 71.1% percent of freelancers operate off-platform and rely on local fintech, which, although convenient. Despite the fact that its payment systems are improved compared to Pakistan, but freelancers have difficulties with tax awareness and compliance, which impacts their financial management.

In Pakistan and Indonesia, there are no legal rights to protect freelancers, which exposes them to being exploited by clients. Freelancers in Pakistan are not legally registered under any labor laws and hence they do not enjoy such basic benefits as health insurance, retirement benefits and unemployment benefits. This status lack of legal recognition poses a challenge in enabling the freelancers to negotiate reason-

able wages or to have a stable working environment. Although the freelancing market in Indonesia is expanding, there is yet to be a proper legal framework in place that safeguards the freelancers, so they have no social security and are susceptible to financial insecurity. The current legislation (i.e., the Law No. 24 of 2011, the Government Regulations No. 35 of 2021) does not recognize freelancers as individuals to whom social security can be offered, so they are at risk of all kinds of risks related to sickness, unemployment, and old age without any safety net. This brings about inequality because freelancers stand at the same risk as formal employees with no protection whatsoever.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Effective communication is essential for freelancers in both countries. In Pakistan, freelancers with strong communication skills are better equipped to manage client expectations and navigate the global market. Effective communication enables freelancers to thrive internationally, even when opportunities are limited. In Indonesia, communication skills are less critical for local freelancers but become increasingly

important as more freelancers move to global platforms. Communication skills in particular, opens doors to higher-paying projects and better opportunities, especially in IT and content writing. Freelancers with poor communication skills often miss out on such opportunities due to misinterpretations and unclear messages.

CONCLUSION

By addressing these challenges, freelancing in Pakistan and Indonesia can offer a solution to the growing problem of unemployment. Freelancing gives the youth and women the opportunity to be their own boss, achieve financial independence and have flexibility in their occupations. With the right infrastructure, payment systems, and legal protections in place, freelancing can become a viable and sustainable career option in both countries. As freelancers develop their communication skills, they can access better opportunities worldwide. Freelancing can provide a flexible, independent future for millions, offering a promising solution to unemployment in both Pakistan and Indonesia.

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OVER OR NOT? UPTO US



AYMA RIZWAN

Before any millennial makes claims in our name, let me be clear: no millennial, man or woman, has any right to speak on our behalf. We are not the same, and you do not represent us, so don't paint us as helpless victims bound to run away—because we won't. Generation Z is not a monolith; some may agree with this, while others—like

yours truly—won't, which is precisely why I am writing.

A recent article, "It Is Over" by Zorain Nizamani, voices bold accusations against politicians and institutions in Pakistan, which is fine. However, if you are writing for an institution as prestigious as The Express Tribune, at least make sure your argument is factually correct and not sourced from Wikipedia. The article claims that efforts to promote patriotism among Gen Z are failing because young people see through the authorities' tactics and feel disconnected from those in power. It argues that the older generation is out of touch, the system is broken, censorship no longer works, and as a result, the youth are either tuning out or leaving the country. These claims oversimplify our complex situation and give an ultimatum we have not yet achieved.

I would like to ask a simple question: if your mother couldn't

afford to buy you the most expensive toys, would you love her any less? Of course not, because love isn't measured in material wealth, and it cannot be bought. According to Gallup Pakistan, 47% of the population can comfortably meet their basic needs. So what necessities are we claiming we don't have? If we love our country based on what it does for us and not what we can do for it, then we are ungrateful citizens who don't deserve Pakistan.

We fully understand the situation, and we don't need to buy anyone's version of patriotism—perhaps because we are broke, or perhaps because we already love our country. Patriotism has no versions; it is simply the love for one's country, the only difference being in how it is expressed. And, of course, the internet—a "reliable" source of information, with sites like Wikipedia and Instagram, which are basically owned by algorithms—dictates

much of our every move. And when it comes to education, it is bold to criticize our government when the Pakistan Army has established 214 APS schools nationwide, and the government maintains 176,000 public schools. What then have you contributed to this nation that allows you to openly criticize our education system? Why exercise your freedom of speech to make such claims about the very system that allowed you to study in London and the USA? A bit hypocritical, isn't it?

You claim that Gen Z sees through propaganda, but the truth is, we are just as susceptible to online manipulation and viral misinformation as anyone else. If we were truly enlightened, conspiracy theories wouldn't go viral on TikTok. You say we are afraid to speak up—we are not. We aren't afraid to voice our beliefs, unlike some millennials obsessed with political cults. Our love for

Pakistan isn't tied to one person or personality. You claim we don't care about those in power—we do. We care about those willing to make a difference, and we care about the soldiers who die every day for the sake of this country.

You argue that security for leaders shows unpopularity, but you forget that every popular personality has both supporters and critics, some willing to go to extremes to show their feelings. Moreover, the terrorism threat in this country is so high that security has become a necessity.

You declare that the youth will leave Pakistan because they cannot challenge the powerful, but let me ask: if Quaid-e-Azam had left India, would we have Pakistan? It is not okay to leave your country in a state you dislike—stop complaining and start acting.

You say Gen Z will meme its way through wars—considering

that you were referring to the Indo-Pak war of 2025—but everyone knows who started that conflict. The purpose of the memes wasn't to fight against our army, but to engage with it, to support it.

So, Generation Z does not need anyone to speak for us, and we don't need to be painted as victims, nor anyone above 40 to be painted as villains. We have eyes; we don't need you to see for us. We have mouths; we don't need you to speak for us. Our country and its institutions may not be perfect, but they do, and that is what matters. To reduce decades of service and sacrifice to a narrative of failure is lazy reasoning and deeply disrespectful.

So, before you declare "It is Over," remember this: You may have given up on your country, but we haven't.

The writer is currently doing O-levels and can be reached at: aymarizwan2510@gmail.com

Gold prices surge by Rs7,500 per tola



BUSINESS

Women entrepreneurs drive new phase of economic growth: SAPM

Khan says female-led businesses reshape markets and jobs

TARIQ KHATTAK

ISLAMABAD: Women are steadily reshaping the economic landscape of Pakistan by entering new sectors, creating jobs, and strengthening household incomes, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan said on Monday.

He was speaking at the 4th All Pakistan Women Chambers Presidents International Conference being held at Islamabad, organized by Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce (IWCCI).

Khan said women-led enterprises were no longer confined to micro or informal activities and were increasingly visible in manufacturing, services, information technology, agribusiness,

and exports. This shift he said, was changing how markets function and how families cope with inflation, rising energy costs, and weak growth.

Haroon Akhtar Khan said official data showed women's participation in small and medium enterprises had increased over the past decade, but policy gaps and weak access to finance still limited scale and productivity. He stressed that unlocking women's potential was essential for sustaining growth under fiscal pressure.

He said women entrepreneurs were helping diversify exports through value-added products, particularly in textiles, food processing, and digital services. This diversification, he said, reduced reliance on a few commodities and sup-

ported foreign exchange earnings.



He said there was a visible shift from survival-based busi-

nesses to growth-oriented firms led by educated women using digital platforms and formal banking channels. He pointed to recent initiatives aimed at easing business registration, expanding credit guarantees, and linking women-owned firms to public procurement.

However, he acknowledged dissenting views from small traders and women business owners, who said that access to affordable credit remained limited despite policy announcements. Representatives of women's chambers said high interest rates, collateral requirements, and delays in bank approvals continued to exclude many viable businesses. Workers' groups also raised concerns that informal women workers were still outside social

protection schemes.

Haroon Akhtar Khan assured the government will address these gaps. He said evidence showed firms with women leadership were more resilient during economic shocks.

He said that translating commitments into outcomes, including higher women's participation in formal employment, an increased share of women-owned manufacturing, and improved access to finance, is a challenge.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Samina Fazil, founder President, IWCCI, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khizer Feradov, Commissioner SECP Muzaffar Mirza, Deputy Director DGTO Pir Shah Gul, Secretary General of UBG Zafar Bakhtawri.

Pakistan's Kinnow exports remain on strong trajectory despite Afghan market closure

ISLAMABAD: Under the proactive leadership of Jam Kamal Khan, Federal Minister for Commerce, Pakistan's kinnow exports have continued to register strong growth despite the closure of the Afghan market, highlighting the success of timely policy measures and export diversification efforts led by the Ministry of Commerce.

Despite the disruption of a traditionally significant export destination, the Ministry of Commerce, in close coordination with the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, moved swiftly to facilitate exporters and redirect consignments toward alternative international markets, said a release issued here on Monday.

These efforts ensured continuity in shipments and protected growers and exporters from potential losses. According to official export figures, Pakistan earned approximately \$ 40 million from kinnow exports within a span of just 45 days, covering the peak export period of December and the first half of January. The data shows that exports maintained a steady pace throughout December, followed by sus-

tained momentum during the first 15 days of January—an encouraging sign amid regional trade constraints.

The Federal Minister for Commerce lauded the collective efforts of the Ministry of Commerce team, TDAP, Pakistan's trade missions abroad, exporters, growers, and logistics partners, acknowledging that the strong performance was the result of close coordination and shared commitment. Jam Kamal Khan emphasized that overcoming the impact of the Afghan market closure required a whole-of-government and whole-of-sector approach, and appreciated the dedication of officers and stakeholders who worked tirelessly to keep export channels open and competitive. Officials attributed this performance to focused market outreach, enhanced trade facilitation, and close engagement with exporters. Under Jam Kamal Khan's direction, priority was given to expanding access to markets in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and other non-traditional destinations, while ensuring compliance with international quality and phytosanitary standards. — APP

District Administration Destroys Opium Cultivation in Bajaur

ANWAR ZADA GULYAR

BAJAUR: In district Bajaur, the district administration and police carried out a joint and effective operation to eliminate narcotics, destroying an opium crop cultivated on 10 kanals of land. The operation was conducted on the special directives of Deputy Commissioner Bajaur Shahid Ali Khan and District Police Officer Waqas Rafiq.

The operation was carried out under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Khar Dr. Sadiq Ali, led by the Tehsildar Barang, with the participation of DSPs Abdul Aziz and Hunar Khan, along with representatives from the Agriculture Department, Forest Department, Irrigation Department, TMA, Civil Defense, and the Highway Department.

Prior to the operation, a

jiirga was convened with local elders in the Khan Saly area of Tehsil Barang, where detailed discussions were held on the

destroyed in order to prevent the spread of narcotics.

Following the jiirga, the opium crop cultivated on 10



harms of opium cultivation, its legal status, and its social impacts. The administration persuaded the local elders that all opium crops present in the area must be completely

kanals of land was completely destroyed by spraying poisonous chemicals. On this occasion, the administration clearly instructed all local elders and farmers that any-

one found cultivating opium or any kind of narcotic crop in the future must destroy it on their own; otherwise, strict legal action will be taken against those concerned in accordance with the law.

According to the district administration, narcotics not only cause social disorder and crime but also pose a serious threat to the future of the younger generation. Therefore, operations under a zero-tolerance policy against narcotics will continue throughout the district, and all possible measures will be taken to completely eradicate this menace with public cooperation. The administration appreciated the cooperation of local elders and expressed hope that, with public participation, the dream of a drug-free Bajaur will soon become a reality.

BoK, Commerzbank Explore Trade Finance Cooperation

BUSINESS REPORTER

KARACHI: Bank of Khyber (BoK) recently hosted a delegation from Commerzbank

aimed at reinforcing the long-standing correspondent banking relationship between the two institutions while explor-

ing avenues for enhanced trade and financial collaboration.



AG, Germany, at its Treasury Office located at BRR Tower, Karachi. The engagement

ing avenues for enhanced trade and financial collaboration.

Commerzbank representatives, including Hartmut Skok, Director FI Asia, and

Yousuf Bashir, Country Representative Office Pakistan. The meeting was also attended by BoK's Financial Institutions team, comprising Aniq Ahmed, Head of FI, and Ammar Munir, Unit Head FI.

During the discussions, Salman Ahmed Usmani highlighted Pakistan's improving macroeconomic indicators and the banking sector's gradual shift towards Islamic banking, outlining BoK's strategic progress in this transition. Hartmut Skok shared insights on the European financial landscape and reaffirmed Commerzbank's commitment to supporting BoK and its clients, particularly in facilitating business opportunities in Germany and strengthening international trade corridors.

Both institutions reiterated their shared resolve to deepen bilateral cooperation in trade finance and to promote sustainable, long-term partnerships across Europe and the Far East.

SCCI President, KP Tourism DG Discuss Tourism Conference and Investment

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: President of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Junaid Altaf, held a detailed meeting with Director General of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority, Muhammad Usman Masood, to discuss issues related to tourism promotion and future collaboration in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

During the meeting, extensive discussions were held on the organization of a proposed Tourism Conference, aimed at showcasing the vast tourism potential of the province at national and international levels. Both sides exchanged views on strategies to promote tourist destinations, improve tourist facilities, and attract both local and foreign investment into the tourism sector.

President SCCI Junaid Altaf highlighted the role of the business community in developing sustainable tourism and emphasized that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa possesses immense natural beauty, cultural heritage, and untapped tourism opportunities.

He stressed that close coordination between the Sarhad Chamber and the Culture and Tourism Authority is essential to create a conducive environment for investors and to ensure long-term growth of the tourism

industry. Director General Muhammad Usman Masood briefed the SCCI President on the initiatives being undertaken by the Culture and Tourism Authority to enhance tourism infrastructure, promote cultural heritage, and facilitate private-sector investment. He underscored the provincial government's commitment to positioning Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a preferred tourism destination by



improving connectivity, services, and regulatory frameworks.

Both leaders agreed that joint efforts between the public and private sectors are vital for organizing a successful Tourism Conference that can effectively highlight investment opportunities and strengthen partnerships.

They also agreed to continue mutual consultation and coordination to ensure that tourism development contributes meaningfully to economic growth, employment generation, and the positive image of the province.

Pakistan's Security Trajectory in 2025



SALEEM BUKHARI

At the outset of 2025, Pakistan appeared to be entering a phase of relative internal security stabilization. Sustained counterterrorism operations conducted throughout late 2024 and early 2025, particularly along the Pak-Afghanistan border, had placed considerable pressure on militant networks. Operational mobility was constrained, communication channels disrupted and the frequency of high impact attacks noticeably reduced. Within policy and security circles, this produced cautious optimism that militant violence was once again in retreat.

By late February 2025, early warning signs began to emerge. A suicide attack on Dar-al-Ulum

Haqqania signaled a strategic recalibration by militant actors. While casualties were limited, the symbolic nature of the target suggested that extremist networks were not only operationally intact but also recalibrating toward high visibility and psychologically resonant targets. This incident marked the first indication that militant pressure had been suppressed rather than dismantled.

The security environment deteriorated rapidly in March. The hijacking of the Jaffar Express in Balochistan represented a qualitative escalation in militant capability and confidence. Passenger trains had long been considered difficult targets due to logistical and security complexities, their successful seizure indicated a higher level of planning, coordination and operational sophistication. Simultaneously, March witnessed a nationwide surge in militant violence, with over one hundred attacks recorded, the highest monthly total since 2014. These incidents were not isolated but appeared synchronized, suggesting a shared operational window across multiple networks.

This escalation set the stage for a decisive turning point in May 2025, when Pakistan and Afghanistan engaged in a four day period of intense but geo-

graphically limited border clashes. Although the confrontation formally de-escalated, its strategic consequences were substantial. Pakistan sustained significant casualties, while reported losses on the Afghan side were higher. More importantly, the episode appeared to divert state attention and resources, creating operational space for non-state actors. In the weeks that followed, militant violence intensified in both frequency and lethality, indicating that the border crisis had altered the broader security equilibrium.

The attack on a school bus in Khuzdar later that month crystallized this shift. Targeting children marked a deliberate move toward maximizing psychological impact and societal pressure rather than achieving purely tactical gains. Such attacks reflected an evolving militant calculus. civilian harm was no longer collateral but instrumental.

June 2025 represented the apex of this resurgence. More than 110 militant attacks were recorded within a single month, underscoring the depth of militant reorganization. A vehicle borne suicide attack against security forces in Mir Ali, North Waziristan, stood out as a particularly clear indicator that elements of the Pakistani Taliban had restored their strike capabil-

ity and territorial reach. Although counterterrorism operations eliminated a substantial number of militants, the continued rise in civilian and security force casualties suggested an increasingly adaptive threat environment.

By mid-year, analytical consensus began to form around the role of external and regional drivers. The revival of militant networks coincided with intensified regional competition, particularly involving proxy dynamics in Balochistan and the northwest. While direct attribution remains contested, patterns of improved financing, logistics and operational coordination point toward indirect external facilitation rather than purely domestic regeneration. This dynamic disproportionately affected civilians, security personnel and local peace committee members, all of whom became frequent targets.

Simultaneously, Afghanistan's evolving political alignment introduced new uncertainties. The rapid expansion of engagement between the Taliban government and India moving from limited diplomatic contact toward broader security and intelligence cooperation raised concerns within Pakistan's security community. Regardless of intent, Afghan territory increasingly functioned as

operational depth for anti-Pakistan militant actors, whether due to permissive policies or enforcement gaps. The result was a persistent cross-border threat that Pakistan struggled to neutralize unilaterally.

The security situation further deteriorated in October, when renewed tensions erupted twice along the western border. Pakistan's defensive response was swift but the cumulative effect was deeper instability in frontier regions. Notably, this phase also saw an expansion of information warfare. Disinformation campaigns, propaganda operations and symbolic violence including allegations of corpse desecration amplified the conflict beyond the physical battlefield, transforming it into a multi-domain confrontation.

Efforts at mediation, particularly by Qatar, failed to produce meaningful de-escalation. Within Pakistani policy debates, skepticism grew regarding the neutrality of certain diplomatic and logistical channels, with concerns that they may have indirectly facilitated militant mobility or political cover. While such assessments remain probabilistic rather than conclusive, recurring patterns sustained these suspicions.

Late 2025 underscored the persistence of the threat. A suicide attack near Islamabad's

judicial complex and a narrowly foiled assault on a major educational institution demonstrated continued militant focus on symbolic, high-impact targets. The year concluded with a deadly attack on police in Karak, reinforcing the assessment that militant networks retained operational momentum.

Between January 1 and December 31, 2025, terrorism-related violence claimed 3,372 lives in Pakistan, including approximately 2,100 militants, 664 security personnel, 580 civilians and 28 members of local peace committees. These figures reflect not only the scale of violence but also the paradox of an increasingly kinetic security response that failed to generate proportional reductions in attack frequency.

The broader implication of Pakistan's 2025 security trajectory is that militant violence can no longer be understood as a fragmented or purely domestic challenge. Instead, it has evolved into a coordinated regional hybrid threat, one that blends proxy warfare, cross-border facilitation and information operations. Tactical successes achieved through counterterrorism operations proved insufficient in the absence of a parallel regional strategy capable of insulating militant ecosystems from geopolitical rivalries.

SPORTS



Switzerland's Ruegg sprints to second Tour Down Under title

MELBOURNE:

Amanda Anisimova began her quest for a third consecutive Grand Slam final with a ruthless straight-sets win at the Australian Open on Monday.

The fourth seed from the United States overpowered Simona Waltert of Switzerland 6-3, 6-2 in an hour on Margaret Court Arena.

The 24-year-old faces Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic or Hungary's Panna Udvardy in round two.

"It's really good to be back here, I feel like Australia is my second home," said Anisimova, who enjoyed a breakthrough 2025.

"I love how rowdy it gets," she added of the Melbourne Park atmosphere. Anisimova broke the 86th-ranked Waltert, who was making her debut in the main draw in Melbourne, early in both sets to gain a stranglehold in a one-sided contest.

She sealed an emphatic victory with an ace.

Anisimova roared to the fore in women's tennis last year.

She reached her first major final at Wimbledon -- only to be thrashed 6-0, 6-0 by Iga Swiatek -- then made it back-to-back Grand Slam deciders by repeating the feat at the US Open.

She was again defeated in the final but pushed world number one

Aryna Sabalenka hard in a 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) defeat.

Anisimova is bidding to go beyond the last 16 at the Australian



Open for the first time. Her ranking of four in the world is her highest ever.

"Last year was a great year and trying to bring some confidence and a lot of great moments into this year," she said.

Army's Saddam Ul Haq wins All Pakistan National Men's Squash C'ship

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The All Pakistan National Men's Squash Championship concluded successfully with

final Saddam ul Haq defeated fellow Army player Bilal Zakir in straight games (3-0) to claim the championship trophy.

The closing ceremony

Squash Association, Ehsan Ullah Khan, as the chief guest who distributed prizes among the players. Former world squash champion and legendary player Qamar

Munawar Zaman and Fazal Khalil were also present on the occasion. The final match was contested between two Army players, Saddam Ul Haq and Bilal Zakir. Displaying excellent skills and dominance, Saddam ul Haq defeated Bilal Zakir in straight games. The final score was 11-7, 11-7, 11-5, giving Saddam Haq a convincing 3-0 victory.

Earlier in the first semi-final, Bilal Zakir defeated Jawad Ali Khan of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while in the second semi-final Saddam Ul Haq beat Abdullah Nawaz of WAPDA to qualify for the final. It is noteworthy that more than 90 players from across the country participated in the All Pakistan National Men's Squash Championship and the title was ultimately claimed by a player from the Pakistan Army.



Pakistan Army's Saddam ul Haq clinching the title after a best performance. In the

held at the Peshawar Sports Complex, was graced by the Senior Vice President of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Zaman, Finance Secretary of KP Squash Association and Chief Organizer Wazir Muhammad, Senior Coach

Gotterup charges to Sony Open victory in Hawaii

LOS ANGELES: Chris Gotterup fired a six-under-par 64 to surge to victory in the PGA Tour's season-opening Sony Open in Hawaii on Sunday.

Gotterup, who started the

from Maryland finished on 16-under-par 264, two shots clear of compatriot Ryan Gerard, who carded a closing 65.

Gotterup's win follows his victory at last year's Scottish

had a chance to win, I've done it," Gotterup said. "When you get in contention, you're able to hit shots under the gun, you just believe in yourself that you can do it again.

"Sometimes there is blind luck involved, and I'll take as much as I can get. I played pretty good this week." Patrick Rodgers finished third on 13 under, three off the lead, while Scotland's Robert MacIntyre was a shot back on 12 under alongside Jacob Bridgeman. MacIntyre was the day's big mover, vaulting 16 places up the leaderboard after a bogey-free seven-under-par 63.

But there was disappointment for third-round leader Davis Riley, who fell out of contention despite a bright start that included two birdies in his opening five holes to get to 14-under. Riley's challenge faltered after back-to-back bogeys on the sixth and seventh holes and a double-bogey on the eighth saw him card a 71 for a share of sixth on 11-under.



final round at Honolulu's windswept Waialae Country Club two shots off the pace, reeled off seven birdies and only one bogey to claim the third win of his career. The 26-year-old

Open when he held off Rory McIlroy for a two-shot victory, an experience he said helped him on Sunday.

"I felt like when I've been in control of my game, when I've

Gauff, Medvedev through in Australia as Djokovic begins record Slam quest

MELBOURNE: Erratic title contender Coco Gauff and three-time finalist Daniil Medvedev reached the Australian Open second round Monday ahead of a defiant Novak Djokovic launching his latest bid to win a record 25th Grand Slam crown. A bumper day two at the season-opening Grand Slam also sees six-time major winner Iga Swiatek, home hope Alex de Minaur and fourth seed Amanda Anisimova enter the fray. But the tournament is over for seventh seed Felix Auger-Aliassime who retired from his opening match with cramp. Gauff came through against Uzbekistan's Kamilla Rakhimova on centre court 6-2, 6-3, but was less than convincing, with seven double faults and 31 unforced errors.

"I tried not to put too much pressure on myself," she said. "I am only satisfied if I win, but I am proud of myself regardless of how I get on." Her reward is a clash next with Venus Williams' conqueror Olga Danilovic. Gauff last year beat world number one

Aryna Sabalenka at the French Open for her second major crown, but her best performance on the Melbourne hardcourts was a semi-final in 2024. While she progressed, 2020 winner

long queues to get into Melbourne Park.

Canada's Auger-Aliassime was another casualty, calling for the trainer while down 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 to Portugal's Nuno Borges



Sofia Kenin crashed out 6-3, 6-2 to fellow American Peyton Stearns as temperatures soared past 30C and fans again faced

and pulling out. "I want to be on the court competing with my opponent," said Auger-Aliassime.

Usman Khan's 75 Powers Pakistan to Convincing Win over Scotland

SHAKEEL UR REHMAN

SCOTLAND:Usman Khan's composed knock of 75, coupled with a disciplined bowling display, guided Pakistan U19 to a comprehensive victory over Scotland U19 in the 12th match of the ICC Men's U19 World Cup 2026 at the Takashinga Sports Club on Monday.

Chasing a modest target of 188, Pakistan reached the total in 43.1 overs, losing four wickets. Usman Khan was declared Man of the Match for his match-winning innings of 75 off 85 balls, which included five fours and two sixes.

Pakistan's chase began with a steady opening stand of 43 runs in 9.4 overs between Ali Hassan Baloch and Sameer Minhas. Scotland struck back through off-spinner Ollie Jones, who removed both openers. Baloch was bowled for 15, while Minhas, who scored 28 off 30 balls with three boundaries, was trapped lbw. Pakistan were 48-2 in 11.1 overs.

The turning point came when Ahmed Hussain and Usman Khan stitched together a crucial 111-run partnership,

putting Pakistan firmly in control and within touching dis-

Earlier, Pakistan made full use of the decision to bowl first,



tance of their first win of the tournament. Ollie Jones was the standout bowler for Scotland, finishing with two wickets.

dismissing Scotland for 187 in 47.1 overs. Pacer Ali Raza set the tone with a fiery opening spell, removing openers Theo

Robinson (4) and Max Chaplin (2) in the first over to leave Scotland reeling at 12-2.

Rory Grant and skipper Thomas Knight attempted to stabilize the innings with a 47-run partnership before Momin Qamar broke through, dismissing Grant for 21 off 45 balls. Pakistan maintained relentless pressure as wickets fell at regular intervals. Finlay Carter scored 12 before becoming the next casualty.

Ali Raza then struck twice in an over, removing Ollie Jones and captain Thomas Knight. Knight top-scored for Scotland with 37 off 72 balls, including three fours, while Jones contributed 30 off 35 balls with three boundaries. Despite a brief 58-run partnership between Manu Saraswat and Finlay Jones, Scotland collapsed late and were bundled out short of a competitive total.

For Pakistan, Ali Raza led the bowling attack with a four-wicket haul, while Momin Qamar supported him effectively with three wickets, sealing a dominant all-round performance by the Green Shirts.

MCMC Participants Outplay Faculty in Thrilling Cricket Encounter

SPORTS REPORTER

PESHAWAR: A thrilling cricket match was played

knock, scoring 30 runs off just five balls. His explosive batting turned the game decisively in favor of the participants and drew loud applause from spectators.



between the participants of the 45th MCMC and the NIPA faculty team, in which the MCMC participants emerged victorious after a dominant performance.

The highlight of the match was an extraordinary innings by Asad (OMG), who played an unbelievable

Despite resistance from the faculty side, the aggressive batting display and collective effort of the MCMC participants proved too strong, sealing a well-deserved win.

The match concluded on a high note, reflecting the spirit of sportsmanship and enthusiasm among both teams, and added memorable moments to the ongoing 45th MCMC activities.

Prince Moulay Rachid Chairs AFCON Final in Rabat

TIMES REPORT

RABAT: Prince Moulay Rachid chaired the final match of the 35th edition of the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) on Sunday at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium. The closely contested final was claimed by Senegal, which defeated



Morocco 1-0 after extra time. The closing ceremony featured vibrant artistic performances celebrating Africa's rich cultural heritage and the dynamism of its youth, symbol-

izing unity, cooperation, and competitive spirit. The tournament successfully brought together the African continent while capturing global attention.

At the conclusion of the match, Prince Moulay Rachid joined the podium to award trophies and medals to the Moroccan finalist team as well as to the Senegalese side, winners of this AFCON edition.

The Africa Cup of Nations proved to be a historic milestone for Morocco, transcending the realm of sport.

The tournament represented a significant political, strategic, and symbolic moment for the Kingdom and for King Mohammed VI.

Through its scale, popular success, and high organizational standards, the event showcased modern Morocco as a nation investing in infrastructure, global image-building, and international hospitality, while already preparing to co-host the 2030 FIFA World Cup with Spain and Portugal.

On this occasion, King Mohammed VI sent a congratulatory message to the members of the national football team, praising their journey to the final of AFCON Morocco 2025. His Majesty commended the players, technical staff, and officials for demonstrating perseverance, discipline, and collective spirit, describing their performance as a powerful example of the potential of Moroccan and African youth.

The King emphasized that the team's composure and heroic performance reflected the success of Morocco's strategic vision of investing in human capital and modernizing national infrastructure, reaffirming the Kingdom's readiness to host major global sporting events.

He also praised the passionate Moroccan supporters and encouraged the team to continue striving for excellence on international stages.

Morocco has, over the past decade, pursued a comprehensive football development strategy aimed at positioning the

country among Africa's leading and inaugurated in 2009, while providing both athletic



football nations and competitive globally. Central to this vision is the Mohammed VI Football Academy, established in 2008

Modeled on elite international training centers, the academy focuses on identifying and developing young Moroccan talent

and academic support, contributing to the long-term advancement of Moroccan football.

UAE aid convoys to Gaza continue under 'Operation Chivalrous Knight 3'



WORLD NEWS

South Korea, Italy agree to deepen AI, defence cooperation

SEOUL: South Korea and Italy agreed Monday to expand cooperation in artificial intelligence, space and the defence industry, pledging to confront "global challenges" at a bilateral summit in Seoul.

President Lee Jae Myung hosted Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni for the summit at his office in the first visit by an Italian leader to South Korea in almost two decades. Speaking alongside the far-right leader following their meeting, Lee said the two countries would "further expand the horizons of cooperation into advanced industries such as artificial intelligence, space, and aviation". "In addition, we will pursue complementary cooperation in the defence industry based on each side's strengths," Lee added.



South Korea has emerged as a major arms exporter in recent years as Central and Eastern European countries -- including Poland -- have signed deals with South Korean manufacturers in the face of Russia's protracted war in Ukraine.

The South has remained combat-ready since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a truce and has been quick to export arms to countries in need. But it has not supplied weapons to Ukraine due to a domestic policy preventing the provision of arms to countries at war.

"The war in Ukraine also poses an extremely serious risk to Europe's security in every respect," Meloni said.

"For that reason, we will continue to pursue new forms of cooperation at the global level," she added, describing Seoul as "one of the G7's most important partners".

Lee also vowed to "work closely together to contribute to global peace" and "safeguard the universal value of peace, extending our efforts to the wider world". — AFP

Kyiv says held 'substantive' talks with US

KYIV, Ukraine: Kyiv held "substantive" talks on security and economic issues with Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and envoy Steve Witkoff, with more discussions expected in Davos this week, Ukraine's security chief said Sunday.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who has said he hopes to sign documents with the US on security guarantees at Davos, said his team had held several rounds of talks in the US.

"We had substantive discussions on economic development and prosperity plan as well as security guarantees for Ukraine," security chief Rustem Umerov said on social media.

More talks will be held at this week's Davos Economic Forum, he added.

The talks came as the fourth anniversary of Moscow's invasion looms and as Russia has pounded Ukraine's energy facilities during a freezing winter -- with parts of Kyiv still without heating in temperatures as low as -12C. The Ukrainian team

held talks with Kushner, Witkoff and US Army Secretary Dan Driscoll. Kyiv wants clarity from allies on post-war security guarantees.



"There have already been several rounds of negotiations. They are working on the documents needed to end the war," Zelensky said in his evening address.

He said he doubted Russia truly wanted to end its invasion, arguing that Moscow was instead focused on "missile strikes" and forcing "black-outs" in Ukraine.

Harry set for final courtroom battle against UK media

LONDON: Prince Harry is to return to London this week for the trial into his claims that a UK newspaper group unlawfully gathered information, in the royal's last case in his long-running crusade against the media.

The trial, expected to last up to nine weeks, is scheduled to start at London's High Court on Monday.



It is the third and final case brought by the prince, who is said to see holding the media to account as a personal mission.

Harry has long blamed the media for the death of his mother Princess Diana, who was killed in a Paris car crash in 1997 while trying to shake off the paparazzi.

King Charles III's younger son is bringing the case along with six other high-profile claimants including pop icon Elton John and John's husband David Furnish.

The seven accuse Associated Newspapers, publishers of the Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday, of allegedly carrying out or commissioning unlawful activities such as hiring private investigators to place listen-

ing devices inside cars.

They also allegedly impersonated individuals to obtain medical information -- a practice known as blagging -- and accessed private phone conversations.

The media group has firmly denied the allegations, calling them "lurid" and "preposterous".

- Rare UK trip -

Harry is expected to attend for some of the first three days of opening statements.

He is then due to take the stand for a full day of testimony on Thursday, according to a draft trial schedule shared with reporters by lawyers.

Actor Elizabeth Hurley is set to give evidence the following week, followed by John and Furnish in early February. Actor Sadie Frost is also among the complainants.

In 2023, Harry made history by becoming the first senior British royal to give evidence in court for more than a century, when he testified as part of his claim against Mirror Group Newspapers (MGN).

It will be a rare trip back to Britain for the prince, also known as the Duke of Sussex, who stepped back from royal duties in 2020 and relocated eventually to California with wife Meghan, where they live with their two children.

During his last UK visit in September, Harry met with the king, seeking to start to repair a bitter rift with his immediate family.

But UK media have said there are no plans for Harry to see Charles during next week's visit. The new trial follows earlier cases brought against Rupert Murdoch's News Group Newspapers (NGN) and Mirror Group. Last year Prince Harry settled out of court in his action against Murdoch's UK tabloid publisher. — AFP

Socialist to face far-right candidate for Portugal's presidency

LISBON: Portugal's socialist candidate won the first round of the presidential election and will face the far-right candidate in the second round, near-complete results showed Sunday. With votes from 95 percent of constituencies counted, Socialist Antonio Jose Seguro was leading with 30.6 percent of the vote, while far-right contender Andre Ventura came in second with 24.2 percent.

The liberal candidate Joao Cotrim Figueiredo was in third place with 15.5 percent.

Ventura and Seguro will face off on February 8 to decide who succeeds conservative incumbent Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. Opinion polls in the run-up to the election had suggested that Ventura was the favourite for the first round.

This will nevertheless be the first time a far-right candidate has made it to the second round of the presidential race. During the campaign, Seguro had argued that he was the only one capable of defeating Ventura's "extremism" and had called on "all democrats" to unite behind him. While the role of president is largely ceremonial, in times of crisis the incumbent can dissolve parliament, call elections or dismiss a prime minister.

Portugal's prime minister, right-winger Luis Montenegro, said he would not be giving any advice on who to vote for in the second round. His minority government already relies on Ventura's Chega party for

support to implement some of its policies. This is the first time in four decades that no candidate has won outright the second round.

And in his final election rally he toughened his tone, saying he would refuse to try

to please everyone and promising to "put some order" into the country.

Voting in Lisbon, Alexandre Leita, a 50-year-old biologist, said he had voted left wing to stave off the "very negative shift toward the far right".

"We young people are not happy with the country we have," said 33-year-old Irina Ferestreanu.

She said public approval of Ventura was "a warning sign for the country, because people are desperate to see change". Analysts say

Ventura has his sights set on eventually running the country as prime minister.

"Andre Ventura is running to keep his voter base," said Antonio Costa Pinto, a political scientist at Lisbon University. Chega's party emerged as the biggest opposition party in parliament after a general election last May, overtaking the Socialists.

"Another solid result for the far right would confirm its domination over the political landscape," consulting firm Teneo said in a note.

EU and eurozone member Portugal accounts for around 1.6 percent of the bloc's economic output. — AFP



Limited internet briefly returns in Iran after protest blackout

PARIS, France: Limited internet access briefly returned in Iran before dropping again, a monitor said Sunday, 10 days into a communications blackout that rights groups said aimed to mask a protest crackdown that killed thousands.

Iran's president warned that an attack on the country's supreme leader would be a declaration of war -- an apparent response to US counterpart Donald Trump saying it was time to look for new leadership in Iran.

Demonstrations sparked in late December by anger over economic hardship exploded into protests widely seen as the biggest challenge to the Iranian leadership in years.

The rallies subsided after the crackdown that rights groups have called a "massacre" carried out by security forces under the cover of a communications blackout that started on January 8. Monitor Netblocks said late Sunday that "traffic levels have fallen after a brief,

heavily filtered restoration of select Google and messaging services in Iran".

Iranian officials have said the demonstrations were peaceful before turning into "riots" and blamed foreign influence from Iran's arch-foes the United States and Israel.

Trump, who joined Israel's 12-day war against Iran in June, had repeatedly threatened new military action against Tehran if protesters were killed.

While Washington appeared to have stepped back, Trump hit out at supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in an interview with Politico on Saturday, saying it was "time to look for new leadership in Iran".

"The man is a sick man who should run his country properly and stop killing people," Trump said. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday warned on X: "An attack on the great leader of our country is tantamount to a full-scale war with the Iranian nation." As leaders in

Washington and Tehran have exchanged barbs, Iranian officials have said calm has been restored in the streets.

Security forces with armoured vehicles and motorcycles were seen in central Tehran, according to AFP correspondents.

Schools reopened on Sunday after a week of closure. Pezeshkian meanwhile told a cabinet meeting that he "recommended to the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council that internet restrictions be lifted as soon as possible". Some users reported access to WhatsApp, while outgoing international calls had resumed since Tuesday, and text messaging was restored Saturday.

Fars news agency on Sunday reported that the chief executive of IranCell, Iran's second-largest mobile phone operator, was dismissed for failing to comply with the government's decision to shut down the internet.

Solidarity demonstrations have con-

tinued in multiple cities in recent days, including in Berlin, London and Paris.

Despite the restrictions, information had still filtered out, with reports of atrocities emerging, according to rights groups.

Amnesty International said it had verified dozens of videos and accounts in recent days showing a "massacre of protesters" by security forces.

Norway-based Iran Human Rights says it has verified the deaths of 3,428 protesters killed by security forces, confirming cases through sources within the Islamic republic's health and medical system, witnesses and independent sources.

However, the NGO warns the true toll is likely far higher. Media cannot independently confirm the figure and Iranian officials have not given an exact death toll for the protests.

Other estimates place the death toll at more than 5,000 -- and possibly as high as 20,000 -- though the internet

blackout has severely hampered independent verification, IHR says.

The overseas-based opposition Iran International channel has said at least 12,000 people were killed during the protests, citing senior government and security sources. Iran's judiciary has rejected that figure. On Saturday, Khamenei said "a few thousand" people had been killed by what he called "agents" of the United States and Israel, and Iranian local media has reported multiple deaths among security forces.

Khamenei said authorities "must break the back of the seditionists", as local media have reported thousands of arrests and rights groups have estimated up to 20,000 people have been detained.

On Sunday, judiciary spokesman Asghar Jahangir reiterated that swift trials would be held, warning that some acts warranted the capital offence of "moharebeh", or "waging war against God". — AFP

A Delusion They Will Not Relinquish



ARHAM RIZWAN

Our nation has paid for political polarization, ignorance, and personality cults since the 1970s. Certain Political Parties have sown discord for their own gain, simply to maintain political power for a few years. Those specific groups have fine-tuned the general masses' brains through political manipulation to instill delusions, delusions that they will not relinquish. We have learnt to idolize romantic rebellion and those who endorse it. In short, we have learnt to hate realism in

an age of romantic rebellion. One is wrong when he says patriotism comes from equal rights.

The feeling of patriotism, that love for one's motherland, can never be conditional. Every day, a Soldier gives his life for this country unconditionally, which demonstrates that true patriotism is not dependent on material rewards or guarantees. For example, countless historical accounts testify that individuals in times of war have made the ultimate sacrifice for their nations, regardless of their personal circumstances or the specific rights afforded to them.

Yet some go on to say that patriotism cannot be evoked in a man without material benefits. I am sorry, but it seems those who believe this have no true homeland and can never love anyone if they cannot love the country in which they retain all types of freedoms, a place where one can seek refuge when the world closes its doors on them.

Young Minds are free to

express their beliefs; however, the claim that they understand what is happening is one that many would find unconvincing, because statecraft is a complex discipline that requires years of experience, institutional exposure, and responsibility and the average citizen, especially young commentators, does not possess this expertise, yet speaks with unwarranted certainty, no one takes away his right, but when this criticism becomes derogatory and questions the very foundations of the state and its well-being one must himself reconsider his position before becoming hostile to the state.

The belief that Popularity is the indicator of success is wrong. Popularity does not mean that one is a great leader, nor does being unpopular indicate that someone is incompetent. History is filled with examples of unpopular leaders who were the very reasons their nations endured, like Abraham Lincoln, who was elected with limited experience. He faced deep divi-

sions and early military struggles but emerged as a master statesman, preserving the Union and issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, cementing his legacy as one of America's greatest presidents. Winston Churchill, often seen as an old-fashioned, controversial figure, rallied Britain with powerful oratory during World War II, becoming a symbol of resistance against fascism.

Who are they to complain when they hoard their wealth, then go on to blame those in Government?

They have embraced delusions to escape from reality, a reality in which they realize they are wrong. They will go on and rant on all day about The Military establishing the Fauji Foundation and them not paying taxes, citing the voices in their heads, oblivious to the fact that, according to an Op-ed at Eurasia Review, the Fauji Foundation is rendering welfare to nearly 10 million individuals, amounting to Rs 10 billion per annum. Yet a

World Bank report noted that out of the 4.434 million active income taxpayers in June 2023, only about 2.32 million actually paid any tax; many filed "nil-income" returns, which seems a bit far-fetched when you are buying the latest models of your favourite cars, all of this seems a bit hypocritical, doesn't it?

They will go on to talk about press freedom, their use of free speech on social media, ignorant, oblivious and heedless to the fact that uncensored media can be the undoing of states, something history is a witness to, especially in the 21st century, when for instance in 2013, following an initial incident, social media platforms like BlackBerry Messenger (BBM), Twitter, and Facebook were used to coordinate "flash mobs" and organize riot activities across various cities in the UK.

This led to a debate about the role of social media in facilitating public disorder and calls for potential regulation or in Iraq where in some cases, false online

news or rumors about specific individuals or events, which spread rapidly through social media, have prompted people to take "justice into their own hands," with some online activists and civil society members facing violence or assassination in retaliation for their online speech.

So when they claim that the Government curbs their basic rights, they forget that attacking one's political opponents verbally is one thing, but to launch coordinated attacks on state institutions is treason. And then to lament the restriction on the very platforms used for such activities is injustice, injustice to the nation. Winston Churchill said, "The price of greatness is responsibility." We shall pay that price or any other that may be required to maintain the nation's sovereignty, independence, and pride.

Written by Arham Rizwan
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REAR WINDOW

Irrigation minister inspects ongoing canal cleaning operations in city various areas

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Minister for Irrigation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Riaz Khan conducted a detailed inspection of the ongoing canal cleaning operations in various areas of Peshawar. Secretary Irrigation Abdul Basit along with other relevant officers accompanied him during the visit. On this occasion the Secretary Irrigation briefed the Provincial Minister on the progress of canal cleaning, desilting, excavation, and water flow management. During the inspection, Provincial Minister Riaz Khan closely reviewed the accumulated waste, obstructions, and the overall cleaning process in the canals and directed the concerned author-



ities to further accelerate and enhance the effectiveness of the cleaning work. He stated that delays in timely canal cleaning cause severe inconvenience to citizens, while disruptions in water flow also result in damage to agricultural lands. While speaking on the occasion, Provincial Minister Riaz Khan said that Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi has issued clear directives that no negligence will be tolerated in resolving public issues. He added that under the leadership of Chief Minister Muhammad Sohail Afridi the provincial government is taking serious measures to ensure the provision of clean water, improve the irrigation system, and eliminate environmental pollution.

Riaz Khan further stated that canal cleaning will not only improve the water flow system but will also ensure effective delivery of water to agricultural lands, directly benefiting farmers.

Live session to be conducted to address teachers' issues in Swabi

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: On the instructions of the Provincial Minister for Education of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Arshad Ayub Khan, the Elementary and Secondary Education Department, District Swabi, is organizing a live session under the "Education Morning Hour" for the immediate resolution of issues faced by teachers, non-teaching staff, and the general public.

This session will be held on 20 January from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. During the session, the Secretary of the Education Department will listen to the issues directly and issue immediate instructions regarding their resolution.

Senior officials of the Education Department, along with the concerned District Education Officers, will also participate in the session.

All concerned individuals are requested to submit their issues with clear and complete details, and it is mandatory to mention name, district, area, and a full description of the issue.

Takht Bhai Press Club hosts Farewell for Shamsul Haq

OUR CORRESPONDENT

TAKHT BHAI: The Takht Bhai Press Club on Tuesday organized a farewell ceremony in honor of Regional Director Information Mardan, Mr. Shamsul Haq, on the occasion of his retirement from government service.

Upon his arrival at the press club, Chairman Muslim Khan Sabir, along with members of the cabinet and the press club, warmly welcomed the guest of honor. The event was attended by senior journalists and members of the press fraternity.

Speaking on the occasion, senior journalists Murad Ali Murad, Izzat Muhammad Knpalwak, and Wazirzada Amjad paid rich tribute to the professional services of Shamsul Haq, particularly his contributions to the journalist community across the province. They highlighted his commitment, professionalism, and cooperative approach during his long career in the information department.



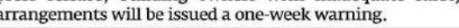
Shamsul Haq served in various key positions, including Director Advertisement and Communication, Director Public Relations, Deputy Press Registrar, and Regional Information Officer in Peshawar, Mardan, and Bannu. Speakers acknowledged his role in strengthening relations between the government and media organizations.

In his remarks, Shamsul Haq thanked the Takht Bhai journalists and the press club administration for organizing the farewell ceremony and for their goodwill and appreciation. He said that his association with journalists throughout his career remained a source of pride and learning, and he appreciated the support and cooperation extended to him by the journalist community. The ceremony concluded with prayers for his health and success in his future life.

Safety audit of high-rise buildings ordered across KP

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Director General of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Land Use and Building Control Authority (LUBCA), Hamid-ur-Rehman, has ordered an immediate and comprehensive safety audit of all commercial centers and high-rise buildings across the province. The directive comes in the wake of the tragic fire incident at Karachi's Gul Plaza. DG LUBCA has instructed officials in all districts to initiate inspections of plazas and multi-story buildings. The authorities have been tasked to ensure the presence and functionality of fire extinguishers, fire hydrants, and alarm systems. The DG emphasized that emergency exit routes must be meticulously examined and cleared of all encroachments or obstacles. "The clearance of these routes is vital for saving lives during any untoward incident," he stated. According to a press release, building owners with inadequate safety arrangements will be issued a one-week warning.



KP Police on frontline against terrorism, their sacrifices unmatched: Governor

SHABIR JAN

TANK: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday said that the sacrifices of the KP Police were unparalleled, as they stand on the frontline against terrorism.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi stated this while talking to media during his visit to Tank for offering condolences and expressing solidarity with the families of police personnel martyred in an IED blast targeting an APC vehicle in the limits of Gomal Police Station.

Upon his arrival at Police Lines Tank, he was received by DPO Tank Shabbir Hussain Shah, senior district administration officers, District President Pakistan Peoples Party Tank Hidayatullah Khan Gandapur, and other party officials.

The governor paid homage at the Martyrs' Memorial, laid floral wreaths, and offered special prayers for the elevation of the

ranks of the martyred police officials. He also met with the bereaved families and local elders,

are evident to the entire nation. He paid tribute to the KP Police, Frontier Corps, Frontier

imity to the Afghan border, the province faces persistent security challenges, adding that terrorist activities are being orchestrated from across the border with India and Israel backing.

The governor stressed that all political parties must set aside their differences and unite to defeat the enemies of the state, who cannot confront Pakistan directly and instead resort to terrorism.

He acknowledged the complex nature of counterterrorism operations, highlighting the risk of collateral damage, and praised the professionalism and courage of security forces and police in dealing with such threats.

He also lauded the role of the media and recalled the sacrifices of innocent civilians, including the APS martyrs, questioning the justification of violence against children in the name of religion. He reiterated that there would be no dialogue with groups acting against the state of Pakistan.



expressing heartfelt sympathy and assuring them of his full support.

Governor Kundi said that the bravery and sacrifices of KP Police

Constabulary, armed forces, and the public for their unwavering commitment to safeguarding the province and the country.

He said that due to KP's pro-

CS chairs Good Governance Roadmap Review Meeting

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A weekly review meeting on governance matters was held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shahab Ali Shah, with the participation of relevant administrative secretaries and senior officers. The meeting reviewed in detail the measures being implemented under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's Good Governance Roadmap to ensure the provision of quality services to the public across the province.

The meeting was informed that district administrations are continuing indiscriminate actions against encroachments. During the past week, from January 12 to 18, a total of 41 activities were carried out in various districts of the province, resulting in the recovery of 188 kanals of state land.

A briefing was also given on the performance of the Food Department. It was informed that

online Khuli Kacheris are being conducted to ensure effective control of prices and quality of essential food items, enabling timely redressal of

the Ring Road is progressing at a fast pace. Work on two packages of the missing link of the Peshawar Ring Road's northern section is



public complaints.

The Chief Secretary was further briefed on ongoing projects related to the beautification and rehabilitation of the provincial capital, Peshawar. The meeting was told that substantial progress has been made on city rehabilitation initiatives, while development work on the Main GT Road, Jamrud Road and

nearing completion.

The meeting also reviewed environment-friendly initiatives at tourist destinations. It was informed that 477 hotels in various tourist areas of the province have so far rectified their sewage systems, which is expected to help reduce environmental pollution and promote sustainable tourism.

Meeting discusses Provincial Paramedics Association issues

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A meeting regarding matters of the Provincial Paramedics Association was held under the chair-



manship of Minister for, Khaliq Ur Rehman, at the Health Department. Senior officers of the Health Department, including the Secretary Health, Special Secretary, Director General Health Services, Director General PHS, and representatives of the Provincial Paramedics Association were present.

The meeting commenced with recitation from the Holy Quran, after which the Minister welcomed the participants and initiated a detailed discussion on issues concerning paramedics across the province. The

forum reviewed various administrative, service-related, and promotion matters in a comprehensive manner.

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting would be issued

Health Department will process the case further in coordination with the Establishment Department. Until final approval of amendments, existing service rules will continue to remain applicable.

The Minister directed that nominations of eligible and competent paramedics be made for consideration against posts at the PHS Network, including Deputy Director and Assistant Director positions. It was further directed that representation of the Provincial Paramedics Association be ensured during the interview process to maintain transparency and confidence.

Issues relating to posting of paramedics against positions in the Medical Faculty were also discussed. The Hon'ble Minister directed that the matter be pursued through the relevant forums for appropriate decision-making. It was emphasized that due process and applicable regulations will be followed.

The meeting also reviewed matters concerning Departmental Promotion Committee meetings for degree-holder paramedics. It was agreed that promotions will be carried out strictly in accordance with prevailing service rules to safeguard the rights of all concerned.

Allegations of forest cutting and timber smuggling in Arandu Gol, Chitral declared baseless

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Department of Climate Change, Forestry, Environment and Wildlife has categorically rejected the circulating reports alleging forest cutting and timber smuggling in Arandu Gol, District Chitral, terming them contrary to facts and entirely unfounded. The Department reiterated that a complete, indiscriminate ban on illegal tree felling is firmly enforced across the province, with strict compliance ensured through robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

Secretary Forests Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr. Junaid Khan, stated that the provincial government maintains a zero-tolerance policy against timber smuggling, and no leniency or negligence will be tolerated in this regard. He emphasized that forests are a national asset, and their protection remains a top priority of the government.

According to the Secretary

Forests, the Arandu issue has remained under consideration for the past two decades. Taking into

terms is underway to promptly deter any unlawful activity. It was also stated that the pro-



account its historical, geographical, and socio-economic dimensions, a comprehensive, sustainable, and consultative policy is being formulated to ensure a lawful and lasting resolution. The Forest Department further informed that multiple check posts are operational in and around Arandu to curb the illegal transportation of timber, while continuous surveillance through modern monitoring sys-

cess of formulating the Arandu policy will be inclusive and participatory, with all relevant stakeholders—including local communities, elected representatives, and concerned institutions—taken on board to ensure that decisions are transparent, balanced, and aligned with the public interest. On this occasion, Secretary Forests Junaid Khan also clarified that the Up-Scaling Green Pakistan Project (UGPP) has been

directed to prepare an independent assessment report regarding Arandu Gol. The designated team will conduct a detailed field inspection and submit its findings to the Department of Climate Change, enabling future actions to be guided by verified facts and ground realities.

Reaffirming its commitment, the Forest Department stated that transparency, accountability, rule of law, and environmental protection form the cornerstone of the provincial government's overall strategy. All legal instruments will be employed to safeguard forest resources, and no individual or group will be considered above the law. In conclusion, the Department of Climate Change, Forestry, Environment and Wildlife, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, conveyed a clear and resolute message i.e. "Green Khyber Pakhtunkhwa — a Secure Future" is the unwavering commitment of the provincial government, for which every possible measure will continue to be undertaken.

Comprehensive posting & transfer policy is being formulated for PHE deptt: Shakoor

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE) Fazal Shakoor Khan, has said that a comprehensive, clear, and enforceable posting and transfer policy is being formulated for the PHE department aimed at improving the management of all administrative and technical affairs, enhancing overall performance, and significantly accelerate the pace of work. He said that no political interference will be tolerated in posting and transfer matters, and that all decisions will be taken strictly on the basis of merit, transparency, and justice, adding that no officer or official will be subjected to victimization or injustice.

The provincial minister expressed these views while chairing a review meeting on the posting and transfer policy at his office on Monday. The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer (South) PHE Amjad Shamsheer, along with other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the minister was given a detailed briefing on the posting and transfer policy. It is said in the briefing that interviews of candidates who have qualified the written examinations for various vacant posts in the department are currently underway.

After completion of the interview process and merit-based appointments, most of the existing vacant positions in the department will be filled. This will largely address the shortage of staff and enable faster execution of departmental affairs as well as the timely completion of development schemes.

However, the remaining vacant posts currently available in the department will be advertised through ETEA after obtaining the required approval from the KP Finance Department, in order to ensure transparent recruitment of competent and deserving candidates.