

JD Vance hopeful of 'positive' outcome as he departs for US-Iran talks in Islamabad

Says President Trump has given some pretty clear guidelines

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: US Vice President JD Vance said on Friday that America was looking forward to the negotiation with Iran and expressed hope that it would be positive as he departed for Pakistan to attend the 'Islamabad Talks'.

"We're looking forward to the negotiation. I think it's going to be positive. If the Iranians are willing to negotiate in good faith and extend an open hand, that's one thing. If they're going to try to play us, they're going to find that the negotiating team is not that receptive. The president has given us some pretty clear guidelines, and we'll see how it goes," said JD Vance.

Pakistan is set to host what could prove to be one of the most consequential diplomatic engagements in recent history, as senior leaders from the US and Iran arrive in Islamabad for high-stakes negotiations following a devastating six-week war that has left thousands dead and pushed the global economy to the brink of recession.

The American delegation will be led by Vice President JD Vance, accompanied by President Donald Trump's key Middle East

unprecedented security lockdown ahead of the talks. Key routes have been sealed, security personnel heavily deployed, and surveillance

airstrikes on Iran, which prompted Tehran to retaliate with attacks on Israel and US military bases in the Gulf. This escalation of tensions in the Middle East led to efforts by political and military leadership in Pakistan to de-escalate the situation.

To ease tensions, Pakistan had also hosted a quadrilateral foreign ministers' meeting in Islamabad, with representatives from Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. The meeting grabbed the world's attention and was widely appreciated for Pakistan's efforts.

A fragile, conditional ceasefire is in place between the US and Iran, agreed after weeks of intense conflict. The deal revolves around a two-week pause in fighting, largely aimed at halting major military strikes and reopening strategic routes like the Strait of Hormuz — although core disagreements remain unresolved. Both Washington and Tehran have declared the ceasefire a kind of victory, even as they stick to competing demands for a long-term settlement.



envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. On the Iranian side, Parliamentary Speaker Mohammad Bagher Chalibaf is expected to head the delegation, alongside Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and other senior officials.

Islamabad has effectively been placed under an

heightened to ensure the safety of visiting dignitaries. Officials say the negotiations will take place at a secure, undisclosed location, away from the media spotlight.

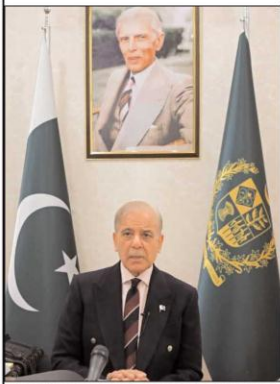
Pakistan has emerged as a key mediator in the region. Last month, the US and Israel launched

PM Shehbaz rejects proposal to hike petrol, diesel prices

Govt reduces petrol price by Rs12 per litre, diesel by Rs135

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced on Friday that the government was reducing the price of diesel by Rs135 per litre and that of petrol by Rs12 per litre. He made the announcement in a televised address to the nation. PM Shehbaz



other in a war had now agreed to resolve their issues through dialogue. He thanked the leadership of Iran and the US for accepting his proposal for a two-week ceasefire and invitation to visit Pakistan to hold talks for the restoration of peace. He said, "Pakistan hosting these talks was not just a proud moment for Pakistan but for the entire Muslim world."

said diesel would be available at Rs385 per litre and petrol at Rs366 per litre from 12am on Saturday. Moreover, he said targeted subsidy initiatives announced by the government following the fuel crisis resulting from the Middle East crisis would not be discontinued.

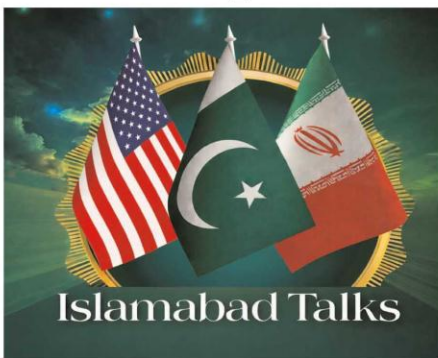
The premier began by saying that he was addressing the nation at a "historic occasion", when there was talk of peace instead of war in the Gulf. He said that parties that had been facing each other in a war had now agreed to resolve their issues through dialogue. He thanked the leadership of Iran and the US for accepting his proposal for a two-week ceasefire and invitation to visit Pakistan to hold talks for the restoration of peace. He said, "Pakistan hosting these talks was not just a proud moment for Pakistan but for the entire Muslim world."

Islamabad talks present golden opportunity for US-Iran to turn ceasefire into peace accord: Experts

PESHAWAR: The crucial talks in Islamabad present a rare and timely opportunity for both the United States and Iran to step back from escalating tensions and pursue meaningful diplomacy imperative for lasting peace and stability in the region. After weeks of conflict between the US and a two week ceasefire reached due to momentous efforts of Pakistan, both sides now have a platform to address core disagreements, including nuclear policy, oil trade through straits of harmuz, regional security, economic sanctions besides turning the two weeks ceasefire into Islamabad peace accord. With global energy markets

shaken and instability spreading across the Middle East, constructive dialogue in Islamabad could help rebuild trust and create a pathway toward long-term peace and stability in Middle East. Moreover, Pakistan's role as a neutral host further strengthens the chances of open communication and balanced negotiations between delegations of both the countries at Islamabad. The experts said if approached with sincerity and flexibility, these talks could mark a turning point in US-Iran relations besides reducing prices of oil and petroleum products in world.

For Washington, it offers a chance for smooth opening of



strait of harmuz and stabilize a volatile region besides preventing further economic and oil disruption, while Tehran can seek relief from sanctions, safeguarding its sovereignty and assert its position through diplomatic means rather than confrontation. However, experts said that deep mistrust and conflicting demands remain major obstacles, making compromise essential for progress and turning fragile ceasefire into Islamabad peace accord.

Experts said even a partial agreement would be a significant step forward, signaling that dialogue—not conflict—is still a viable path in resolving

one of the world's most complex geopolitical rivalries. Academics in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday commended Pakistan's growing diplomatic engagement in facilitating dialogue between the United States and Iran, terming it a constructive and timely effort toward ensuring regional peace and global stability.

Leading scholars from the University of Peshawar emphasized that Pakistan's evolving role as a mediator reflects its commitment to peaceful conflict resolution and multilateral diplomacy at a time of heightened tensions in the Middle East.—APP

FO clarifies visa-on-arrival facility for 'Islamabad Talks' limited to US, Iran delegates, journalists

Naqvi reviews security arrangements in capital, directs strict measures be implemented for foreign dignitaries

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi clarified on Friday that the visa-on-arrival facility provided by Pakistan for the 'Islamabad Talks' applies only to delegates and journalists from participating nations, namely Iran and the United States. "This facility, extended for the duration of the talks, does not cover third-country nationals," he added.

Earlier, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said that delegates

and journalists from participating nations coming to Islamabad will be issued a visa on arrival.

In a post on X today, FM Dar said, "Pakistan welcomes all delegates, including journalists from participating nations, travelling in relation to Islamabad Talks 2026. To this end, all airlines are requested to permit boarding to all such individuals without a visa. Immigration authorities in Pakistan will issue them a visa on arrival."

Pakistan is set to host what

could prove to be one of the most consequential diplomatic engagements in recent history, as senior leaders from the US and Iran arrive in Islamabad for high-stakes negotiations following a devastating six-week war that has left thousands dead and pushed the global economy to the brink of recession.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi reviewed security arrangements and directed that foolproof security measures be implemented for foreign dignitaries.

Pakistan Navy rescues 18 crew members of distressed vessel in Arabian Sea operation

TIMES REPORT

KARACHI: The Pakistan Navy on Friday carried out a rescue operation in the North Arabian Sea, saving 18 crew members, including several foreign nationals, after receiving a distress call from a merchant vessel operating far off the country's coastline.

According to an official statement, the incident involved MV Gold Autumn, which encountered difficulties approximately 200 nautical miles, or around 370 kilometres, from Pakistan's coast.

The vessel's emergency alert prompted an immediate response from maritime authorities. Upon receiving the distress signal, the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency activated its Maritime

Rescue Coordination Centre and initiated standard emergency response procedures. The coordination centre then tasked Pakistan Navy Ship HUNAIN, which was already deployed in the area, to assist the troubled vessel. The naval ship reached the location and commenced a search and rescue operation. The response team, comprising trained specialists, provided medical assistance to the crew, supported firefighting efforts onboard the vessel, and conducted a technical assessment to determine the extent of damage. All 18 crew members were successfully evacuated during the operation. The rescued individuals included nationals from China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Vietnam and Indonesia,

reflecting the multinational composition of the vessel's crew. Following the evacuation, the crew members were transported safely to Karachi aboard PNS Hunain. Authorities confirmed that they would receive medical care upon arrival before arrangements are made for their repatriation to their respective countries.

The operation was conducted at an extended range in open waters, highlighting the navy's operational reach and readiness in responding to maritime emergencies. Officials noted that such missions form part of ongoing efforts to ensure safety and provide humanitarian assistance within Pakistan's area of responsibility in international waters.

عظیم الشان 11
اپریل 2026
روز ہفتہ
ظہر تا عشاء

عظیم الشان 11
مفتی محمد شہاب الدین پوپلزئی
حضرت مولانا

امیر مرکزہ عالمی مجلس تحفظ ختم نبوت خیر پختونخوا

استاد العلماء و الصحاء
حضرت مولانا
حافظ محمد ناصر الدین خاکوانی
امیر مرکزہ عالمی مجلس تحفظ ختم نبوت

مجلس تحفظ ختم نبوت تھری پشاور کے زیر اہتمام

مجلس خصوصی
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مجلس خصوصی
حضرت مولانا اللہ وسایا
مجلس خصوصی
حضرت مولانا خواجہ عزیز احمد

مقام
حیات آباد ٹول پلازہ رنگ روڈ پشاور
0333-9169352 / 0312-9125626 / 0300-9399338

CityNews

Scholar Masood Shah defends Ph.D thesis

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MALAKAND: Masood Shah, PhD Scholar in Department of Chemistry, University of Malakand has ceremonially presented his PhD thesis titled "Co-crystallization of Anti-inflammatory Drugs Through NonCovalent Interactions for Enhanced Bioavailability" under the supervision of Prof Dr



Naveed Umar, Department of Chemistry & co-supervision of Prof Dr Zahoor Ahmad, Department of Biochemistry, University of Malakand. The External Examiners were Prof Dr Ejaz Ahmad, School of Chemistry, Quaid e Azam Campus, University of the Punjab, Lahore & Prof Dr Umar Farooq, Department of Chemistry, CUI, Abbottabad Campus. The Chairperson, Department of Chemistry, University of Malakand Prof Dr Mumtaz Ali & Faculty Members Congratulated Dr Masood Shah & Research Supervisors for PhD Public Defense.

Scholar Salahuddin defends M.Phil thesis

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MALAKAND: Salahuddin, MPhil Scholar in Department of Computer Science & IT, University of Malakand has successfully defended his MPhil thesis titled "Automatic System for the Assessment of Spinal Deformities in Idiopathic Scoliosis" under



the supervision of Dr. Fakhre Alam (Associate Professor) and co-supervision of Prof. Dr. Sami Ur Rahman, Department of Computer Science & IT, University of Malakand. His work received strong recommendations from external examiner, Dr. Numan Ali, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Games Development, Air University Islamabad. The Dean, Faculty of Computing Sciences and Engineering, UoM Prof. Dr. Jamil Ahmad and Faculty Members Congratulated the MPhil Scholar & Research Supervisors in this regard.

Youth Engagement strengthens awareness on RTS in KP

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A joint awareness session was organized by Blue Veins for students representing various universities in Peshawar, focusing on enhancing youth understanding of citizens' rights under the Right to Public Services framework in the province.

The session was addressed by Tashfeen Israr, District Monitoring Officer, Peshawar of the Right to Public Services Commission, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He delivered a comprehensive brief-



ing on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Public Services Act, 2014, underlining that essential public services, including domicile certificates, licenses, and other civic entitlements, must be provided within legally defined timelines.

He informed participants about the formal mechanisms available for citizens in cases where services are delayed, denied, or delivered below standard. These include structured complaint procedures, imposition of penalties on responsible officials, and provision of compensation to affected citizens. He emphasized that the Commission serves as a critical pillar in promoting transparency, efficiency, and accountability within public institutions.

IAP holds meeting with police to improve security

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A meeting was held between the Industrialists Association Peshawar (IAP) and police high-ups here the other day at the IAP office. The meeting was chaired by President IAP Ayub Khan Zakori, while the police department was represented by SP Cantt Abdullah Ehsan, SDPO Hayatabad Muhammad Junaid, and DSP Traffic Khyber Muhammad Nawaz. Apart from them, Senior Vice President IAP Haris Mufti, Vice President Farhad Asfandiyar, Ex-President Malik Niaz Ahmed, Ex-Secretary Zarak Khan Khattak, Executive Member Sajjad Zaheer, and members Dr Bilal Zeb, Ismail



Mohmand, Muhammad Saeed, and Mohsin Saeed also attended the meeting.

Similarly, President, Transport Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Itlaf Gul, Senior Vice President Ejaz Hussain, Vice President Sultan Zada, and General Secretary Tariq Khan participated on the occasion as well.

CEO WSSCM awarded staff for their outstanding performance in Eid

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MARDAN: The Chief Executive Officer of WSSCM, Shahid Khan, distributed cash awards and appreciation certificates among staff who demonstrated outstanding performance during Eid-ul-Fitr. A special ceremony was held to recognize their efforts in ensuring a clean and waste free environment for the public during the holy festival occasion.

On this occasion, all staff were commended for their dedication, particularly those who took part in special nighttime sanitation operations. Their hard work and

commitment were highly appreciated. and in delivering quality services to citizens.



Addressing the ceremony, CEO Shahid Khan emphasized that field staff play a vital role in the organization's success

He praised their dedication, professionalism, and sense of responsibility, stating that such commitment is

key to the organization's growth and continued success.

He further noted that acknowledging excellent performance not only boosts employee moral but also sets a positive example for others. Reaffirming his confidence in the team, he expressed hope that the sanitation staff would continue to perform their duties with the same level of excellence in the future. The ceremony was also attended by General Manager Muhammad Khalil Akbar, Manager HR & Admin Rahat Ullah, Manager Municipal Services Muhammad Ishaq, and other officials.

Rehan Malik attends MLF Eid Milan Party as Chief Guest

MUHAMMAD REHAN

DIKHAN: A grand program of the Pakistan Muslim Lawyers Forum was organized in connection with an Eid Milan Party under the chairmanship of Divisional President Malik Hidayatullah Manlana. The event was held at a local farmhouse, while the chief guest of the program was Member Central Working Committee of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Rehan Malik Rodu Khel.

A large number of members of the Muslim Lawyers Forum participated in the event, including Member Central and Provincial Council Chaudhry Riaz Advocate, Divisional Senior Vice President Rahmat Ali, District President Lawyers Wing Muhammad Aamir Khan, Bilal Alizal, District Secretary Lawyers Wing Muhammad Kamran

Baloch, and other prominent members Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, the



Muhammad Rizwan Rajput, Muhammad Mushataq Rajput, Adil, Abdulla Gandapur, Ismail Khan Waraich Khel, Arshad Kundi, Mubashir Nazir, Muhammad Adil Rajput, Umaid Habib Sial, Saleem, Malik Muhammad Javed, Pir Mukhtiar Zakori, and Karim Nawaz Baber.

Addressing the gathering, speakers said that due to the successful diplomatic strategy of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz world has been saved from a major catastrophe. They further stated that both leaders deserve the Nobel Prize for their services.

The speakers added that Pakistan Muslim League (N) has always achieved historic successes in every tenure and under the leadership of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the country's defense has become invincible, and no enemy can dare to look at Pakistan with evil intentions.

Police official orders steps for maintenance of law and order

RAUF KHATTAK

KARAK: Irfan Tariq, Regional Police Officer (RPO) Kohat Region, paid a one-day visit to District Karak, during which he conducted a detailed review of the overall law and order situation.

At the beginning of the visit, the RPO received a security briefing from District Police Officer (DPO) Karak, Imran Khan, along with other senior officials. On this occasion, he issued strict directives for indiscriminate action against terrorists and anti-social elements, making it clear that no leniency would be shown to those disturbing peace, and they would be dealt with promptly and decisively.

The RPO granted full

authority to the special anti-terrorism team and



resolve them promptly. Furthermore, personnel were urged to perform their duties with honesty and enhance their professional skills in line with modern-day requirements. Later, the RPO inspected the police mess and the under-construction Police Facilitation Center at the Police Lines, reviewing the progress of ongoing development work.

During the visit, the RPO also held an open court (Khuli Kachehri) to address the issues of police personnel. He listened to their concerns and assured immediate resolution. He directed officers to treat the administrative and per-

Stakeholders review draft policy to prevent VAW in KP

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Key stakeholders including representatives from the legislature, government



departments, United Nations agencies, and civil society organizations on Friday held a consultative meeting here to discuss the draft policy to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG). The consultation, organized by Aurat Foundation with support from the European Union and UN Women, focused

on reviewing the draft policy and incorporating input from key stakeholders to strengthen strategies for preventing violence against women and girls in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking on the occasion, Resident Director of Aurat Foundation, Shabina Ayaz, emphasized the need for joint efforts among government institutions, civil society, and development partners to promote prevention-focused approaches. The draft policy was presented by Saima Munir, who highlighted its key objectives and strategic priorities, stressing the importance of addressing root causes of violence through coordinated and preventive measures. Participants took part in group discussions and proposed recommendations aimed at improving policy provisions, enhancing institutional coordination, and promoting community-based prevention strategies. Deputy Country Representative of UN Women, Fahmida Khan, appreciated the initiative and termed it an important step towards developing a comprehensive and effective prevention policy. She underscored the need for sustained collaboration to address violence against women and girls.

Poppy crops wiped out in various areas of Bajaur

ANWAR ZADA GULYAR

BAJAUR: The district administration in Bajaur has launched a comprehensive and well-coordinated campaign to eliminate illegal poppy cultivation, with large-scale operations underway across various tehsils. On the special directives of Deputy Commissioner Bajaur, Shahid Ali Khan, Tehsilidar Utman Khel, Muhammad Fayaz Khan, along with police personnel and local elders including Malik Fazal



Rabi (Baro) and Malik Burhanuddin (Gatkai), carried out an operation in the Gatkai area of Tehsil Salazar, where poppy crops were uprooted and destroyed.

Meanwhile, in Tehsil Barang, the administration also remained active. Additional Assistant Commissioner Khar-1, Muhammad Nisar, Additional Assistant Commissioner Nawagai, Arshad Kamal, Tehsilidar Barang, Anwar Hussain, along with police officials and local elders, conducted operations in Kohi Barang, Mordara, Matta, and Memol areas, successfully eliminating poppy cultivation.

The administration stated that this campaign is not temporary but will continue on a sustained basis to rid the region of the menace of drugs and to protect the younger generation from its devastating effects. Local elders appreciated the initiative and assured full cooperation with the authorities, while officials reiterated that strict action will be taken against violators without discrimination.

"CPDI Report exposes Gaps in Budget Transparency and Accountability"

SYED SAJJID SHAH

SHANGLA: Significant gaps in budget transparency and accountability in Pakistan have been highlighted in a recent report by the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI). The findings were shared during a media briefing held in Shangla, organized by Awami Welfare Society, where CPDI presented key insights from its State of Budget Transparency Report 2025, focusing on fiscal year 2024-25. According to the report, budget transparency in Pakistan remains limited and uneven, with weak public participation and notable accountability gaps. Key budget documents are not consistently made public, restricting citizens' ability to influence budget priorities. Speaking at the event, Chairman Syed Mahi-ud-Din and Executive Director Dr. Yasmin Gul stated: "Budgets in Pakistan are still not truly public. People are informed after decisions are made rather than being part of the process."

The report further notes that although budgets are presented on time, parliamentary engagement remains weak, with limited debate and insufficient scrutiny. Transparency declines further during implementation, as governments often fail to publish timely spending and audit reports. In terms of performance, Punjab ranks relatively better, followed by the federal government, while Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan lag behind in transparency standards. CPDI has urged governments to ensure timely sharing of budget information, promote meaningful public participation, and strengthen accountability systems to enhance public trust and governance.

Christian community hold rally in support of Pakistan's role in Iran-US ceasefire

AHMAD NABI

KHYBER: 10 Members of the Christian community in Landi Kotal organized a thanksgiving rally at Bacha Khan Square, on Friday expressing support for the Prime Minister and the Pakistan Army over the country's reported role in facilitating a ceasefire between Iran and the United States. A visible number of community elders and youth attended the event while raising slogans in favor of Pakistan, the armed forces, Field Marshal Asim Munir, and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Addressing the gathering, former minority Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Wilson Wazir said Pakistan played an important role in mediating between Iran and the United States and avoided further bloodshed. The dynamic leadership of Field Marshal Asim Munir and the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif made it possible to pave the way for a ceasefire, he remarked. Wilson Wazir said that although the ceasefire, reportedly agreed upon for two weeks, would create an opportunity for dialogue between the two countries, which would be termed a positive development.

Eyes of the world firmly fixed on Pakistan: Masood Khan



Ojhri Camp Tragedy Remembered; Tributes Paid to Shaheed Khaqan Abbasi

TIMES REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Leaders of the Awaam Pakistan Party have termed the Ojhri Camp tragedy of April 10, 1988, as one of the most painful and unforgettable chapters in Pakistan's history, which caused immense loss and grief to the nation.

Central Vice President Chaudhry Inam Zafar and Additional General Secretary Hafiz Usman Abbasi, in a joint statement, paid tribute to Shaheed Muhammad Khaqan Abbasi, stating that his services to the country will always be remembered with respect and honor.

They noted that Muhammad Khaqan Abbasi, father of former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, was serving as the Federal Minister for Production and was a retired Pakistan Air Force Air Commodore at the time of the incident.

The leaders said the tragedy occurred when a fire broke out at an ammunition depot, triggering a series of explosions. During the incident, he was fatally struck when a rocket hit his vehicle, resulting in his martyrdom on the spot.

They added that the Ojhri Camp tragedy was not only a personal loss for the family but also a major national disaster in which numerous lives were lost and significant damage was caused to the country.

Pir Mehboob Hails Pakistan's Role in Promoting Iran-US Ceasefire Talks

TIMES REPORT

HARIPUR: Religious scholar and spiritual leader Naeqeb-ul-Ashraf Mufakkir-e-Islam Abu Zain Pir Syed Mohiuddin Mehboob Hanafi Qadri Kazmi Maturidi, Sajjada Nasheen of Khanqah Mehboob Abad Sharif, Haveliyaan, has appreciated Pakistan's diplomatic efforts, stating that its role in facilitating dialogue between Iran and the United States reflects a positive step toward regional peace. He described the reported two-week ceasefire between Iran and the United States as a welcome development that could help ease tensions in the region.

He praised Pakistan for encouraging both sides to engage in dialogue in Islamabad, calling it a responsible and timely diplomatic initiative. He said Pakistan's efforts have been recognized for promoting peace and stability in the region.

Pir Mehboob further stated that the development reflects political maturity as well as moral and spiritual values. He said the initiative sends a message of peace, wisdom, and justice, adding that Pakistan's role is a matter of pride for the Muslim world.

He emphasized that dialogue and mutual understanding are essential for long-term peace and harmony in the world.

Second nationwide polio campaign from April 13

BY: APP

ISLAMABAD: The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) has announced that Pakistan's second nationwide anti-polio campaign of 2026 will be conducted from April 13 to 19, to protect millions of children from the crippling disease. During the campaign, more than 45 million children under the age of five will be administered polio drops across the country.

In addition, children will also receive Vitamin A supplements to boost their immunity. Over 400,000 trained polio workers will go door-to-door to ensure maximum coverage and reach every eligible child. According to NEOC, the campaign targets include over 23 million children in Punjab, 10.6 million in Sindh, 7.2 million in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 2.6 million in Balochistan.

In Islamabad, more than 460,000 children will be vaccinated, while 228,000 children in Gilgit-Baltistan and over 760,000 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir will also receive polio drops. Health authorities have emphasized that polio remains an incurable disease that can cause lifelong paralysis. Parents and caregivers have been asked to cooperate with polio teams and ensure their children receive the vaccine.



ABDUL BASIT ALVI

As a deadline for massive U.S. strikes against Iran approached under an ultimatum from Donald Trump, fears of catastrophic destruction peaked until a last-minute diplomatic breakthrough from Islamabad secured a two-week ceasefire between the United States and Iran. This outcome was credited to the mediation of Shehbaz Sharif and Syed Asim Munir, whose efforts were seen as decisive in preventing disaster. The crisis began on February 28 after U.S.-Israeli strikes killed Iran's Supreme Leader, escalating into a six-week war

Senator Rubina Khalid pays tribute to Pakistan's constitutional legacy

BY: APP

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid on Friday said Pakistan Constitution Day is a symbol of national consensus, democratic continuity and the protection of every citizen's fundamental rights.

She said the 1973 Constitution remained the foundation of justice, equality and the welfare state that Pakistan's founders envisioned. In her message, Senator Khalid credited Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto with uniting a fractured nation under a single, unanimously adopted constitutional framework in 1973, describing it as one of the most remarkable achievements in Pakistan's political history.

She also honored Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who she said, waged a courageous struggle to restore the Constitution and democracy at a time when both were under

grave threat. Highlighting the Pakistan Peoples Party's democratic milestones, Senator Khalid said the 18th Constitutional Amendment, passed during the presidency of



Asif Ali Zardari, strengthened the parliamentary system and granted provinces the autonomy they had long been denied.

She added that Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari continues to actively advocate for constitu-

tional supremacy, democratic values, and the protection of public rights.

Senator Khalid said the Constitution guarantees every citizen's fundamental rights, justice, and equality, and that protecting vulnerable segments of society is among its core obligations.

She described the Benazir Income Support Programme as a direct and practical expression of the welfare principles enshrined in the Constitution, adding that the economic empowerment of women remains a top priority fully in line with the constitutional vision.

She stressed that the strength of democracy depends on constitutional supremacy and that every state institution must operate strictly within its constitutional limits. She said Constitution Day serves as a reminder of the nation's collective responsibility toward the rule of law, national unity, and democratic stability.

PMYP IT Courses to Begin Soon at Governor House Sindh, Boosting Youth Opportunities

SABAHAT SARWAR

KARACHI: Pakistan is among the countries with one of the largest youth populations in the world, with nearly two-thirds of its population under the age of



30. Recognizing this demographic strength, the government has prioritized youth empowerment through the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP), which is built around its core agenda of the "4Es": Education, Employment and

Entrepreneurship, Engagement & Environment. The programme operates nationwide, aiming to equip young people with skills, opportunities and resources for a sustainable future.

In an exclusive conversation, Dr. Fahad Shafiq, Coordinator of PMYP Sindh, confirmed that IT courses have resumed soon at the Governor House. He stated that, in the first phase, students who were previously enrolled will be facilitated to complete their courses. He further emphasized

that, unlike before, participants will now receive officially recognized and government-certified credentials upon completion.

Dr. Shafiq also revealed that additional initiatives, including more IT courses and sports activities, are set to be launched at the Governor House in the near future, further expanding opportunities for young people in the province.

Highlighting the programme's recent achievements, he shared that over 6 lac students have benefited from PMYP courses in the past six months alone. During the month of Ramadan, approximately 20,000 laptops were distributed among high-achieving students across 33 universities in Sindh. According to him, the distribution process was entirely transparent, with eligibility based on a CGPA and successful application through the official website portal. He also announced an upcoming mega youth engagement event in Karachi, to be held at the historic Mazar-e-Quaid.

China may hold the key in Pakistan's mediation to end Gulf war

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: As Iranian and US envoys prepare to hold talks in Islamabad to end the Middle East war, official sources and experts say Beijing helped pave the way for the negotiations and will be a crucial component in securing a permanent truce.

Pakistan has received praise – and some surprise – on the global stage for its last-ditch clinching of a temporary ceasefire between the warring sides.

But Pakistani officials say Beijing's quieter role would now prove to be as essential as it was in striking the down-to-the-wire agreement that had looked set to fail on Tuesday night.

"On ceasefire night, hopes were fading, but China stepped in and convinced Iran to agree to a preliminary ceasefire," said a senior Pakistani official source familiar with the negotiations.

"While our efforts were central, we were falling short

of a breakthrough, which was ultimately achieved after Beijing persuaded the Iranians," said the source, who requested anonymity to speak openly on a sensitive diplomatic matter.

That echoed President Donald Trump, who shortly after announcing the two-week ceasefire on social media, told AFP that China had been key to getting Iran to the negotiating table.

The planned talks had raised fragile hopes of an end to the war that has claimed thousands of lives and jolted the global economy since Israel and the United States launched strikes on February 28 and Iran responded with attacks on the Gulf as well as Israeli cities.

Pakistan, which has deep cultural and religious ties with neighbouring Iran and whose leaders share close personal rapport with Trump, will facilitate both sides.

To get a lasting agreement, it will need to steer the rival sides through fractious issues,

including on the opening of the strategic Strait of Hormuz and the continuation of Iran's nuclear programme. "Pakistan has formulated a team of experts to facilitate the two sides in negotiations, on navigation, nuclear and other related matters," said a second diplomatic source familiar with the matter, requesting anonymity as they were not authorised to speak publicly.

The second source, along with several experts and former officials, told AFP that as Pakistan sets the negotiating table, all eyes were on China's role. "China was requested to be a guarantor. Iran wants a guarantor," said the source.

The main alternative, Russia, which is fighting a war in Ukraine, would not have been accepted by Western players, especially the European Union, meaning China was "best placed". Beijing shares close ties with Islamabad and Tehran, and has been Iran's largest trading partner during years of crippling US-led sanctions.

Appreciation for Pakistan's Role in Promoting Peace and Diplomacy

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Catholic community of the Archdiocese of Rawalpindi-Islamabad has expressed deep appreciation for the Government of Pakistan's leadership in promoting global peace and regional stability.

In a formal statement, Archbishop Dr Joseph Arshad, Archbishop-Bishop of Islamabad-Rawalpindi and Ex. President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Pakistan, commended Honourable Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Excellency Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for their continued commitment to diplomacy and constructive engagement at the international level.

The archbishop particularly acknowledged Pakistan's significant role in facilitating dialogue between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran. He noted that the successful ceasefire and the "Islamabad Talks" mark an important step toward reducing tensions and fostering mutual understanding between the two nations.

"These efforts reflect Pakistan's sincere commitment to peace and its ability to bring parties together through dialogue," the statement said. "Such leadership offers hope to a world increasingly affected by conflict and division."

The statement further highlighted the message of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, who has recently spoken about the "irrationality of war" and emphasised the importance of dialogue, reconciliation, and peaceful coexistence. The archbishop reaffirmed the Church's solidarity with all efforts to protect human life and promote lasting peace.

The Catholic community also offered prayers for Pakistan's continued strength and for its role as a force for peace in the international community.

ITP issues key advisory as diversions planned on Srinagar, Express highways

BY: APP

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) issued an important traffic advisory, announcing diversions on Srinagar Highway and Islamabad Expressway in connection with the movement of foreign delegations.

An ITP official told APP on Friday that citizens were advised to avoid unnecessary travel during this period except in case of emergency. He said commuters should use alternate routes during the diversions to avoid inconvenience.

The official said entry into the Red Zone would remain strictly restricted for all types of traffic except official vehicles.

He urged citizens to completely avoid traveling towards the Red Zone during this time.

He said security across the city had been put on high alert, with strict checking being carried out at entry and exit points.

The official appealed to citizens to cooperate with law enforcement agencies to ensure smooth implementation of security arrangements. He added that traffic updates would be shared through Islamabad Traffic Police's WhatsApp channel, social media platforms, and ITP FM 92.4 for public guidance.

Thunderstorms & hailstorms likely in parts of Pakistan on Friday

BY: APP

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast largely dry weather across the country on Friday, with chances of rain accompanied by strong winds and thunderstorms at scattered locations in northeast Balochistan and lower Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the afternoon. Hailstorms may also hit a few places during this period.

In Islamabad and surrounding areas, dry conditions will prevail with partly cloudy skies expected by evening and night.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, most districts will remain dry; however, thunderstorms with strong winds are likely at isolated places in Kohat, Hangu, Bannu, Karak, Tank, Kurram, Dera Ismail Khan, Lakki Marwat, Waziristan and surrounding areas during the afternoon, with hailstorms possible at some locations.

Most districts of Punjab will remain dry, though isolated thunderstorm activity is possible in Bhakkar, Layyah, Jhang, Khanewal, Tonsa, Kot Addu, and Dera Ghazi Khan, and surrounding areas during the afternoon, with hailstorms likely at some places, while Murree and Galiyat will see dry weather with partly cloudy conditions by evening and night. Sindh will remain largely dry across most districts.

Shehbaz- Munir: Heroes Who Saved Humanity

marked by retaliation, including Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which disrupted global oil supplies and threatened economies worldwide. Pakistan intervened through sustained backchannel diplomacy and urgent engagement with both Washington and Tehran, and in the final hours Munir convinced Trump to consider restraint while Sharif maintained direct contact with Iranian leaders including Masood Peshkian and Abbas Araghchi and issued a public appeal for delay and confidence-building measures.

Trump then suspended attacks conditional on reopening the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran accepted by halting operations and allowing safe passage, with both sides acknowledging Pakistan's role and opening the way for negotiations. The mediation was hailed as a humanitarian and diplomatic success that prevented devastating strikes on Iranian civilian infrastructure, a potential mass-casualty catastrophe, and a wider proxy war threatening Gulf states including the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia, while earning global praise from leaders and institutions such as Antonio Guterres,

China, Turkey, and Egypt, and positioning Islamabad as the venue for talks on April 10, 2026, with Pakistan also facilitating backchannel communication involving figures like Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff despite skepticism and contrary media reports that it ultimately overcame.

Beyond the ceasefire, the episode was portrayed as a transformative moment in global diplomacy, demonstrating Pakistan's strategic maturity and elevating it as a model of effective middle-power mediation while also safeguarding its own national interests. By ending the crisis, Pakistan mitigated severe domestic consequences, including energy shortages caused by the Strait of Hormuz closure, economic strain from inflation and factory shutdowns, and the risk of a large refugee influx from Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan region that could have destabilized border security and fueled radicalization. The leadership of Sharif and Munir was credited with simultaneously protecting global stability and Pakistan's internal security, economy, and social cohesion. Domestically, the achievement sparked widespread public celebration and national unity

across regions such as Lahore, Karachi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Gilgit-Balistan, with citizens praising Sharif's diplomatic leadership and Munir's strategic coordination in maintaining critical communication channels. The outcome was framed as proof that skilled diplomacy and soft power can achieve what military force cannot, cementing Pakistan's image as a global peacemaker and ensuring its role in ending the crisis would be remembered as a defining and enduring contribution to international history.

In a world often cynical about the motives of nations, where every action is suspected of hiding some selfish agenda, the actions of Pakistan stand out as purely altruistic and genuinely heroic. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir had nothing to gain personally from this conflict resolution—no financial reward, no territorial expansion, no increase in personal power—but humanity had everything to lose, including the very possibility of a peaceful future. They proved that leadership at its highest level is not about power, prestige, or personal ambition, but about responsibility, courage, and

the willingness to act when action is most needed. They proved that nations, regardless of their size, economic might, or historic capacity, can shape the course of history through wisdom, patience, and moral courage, offering an inspiring example to smaller nations everywhere who feel powerless in the face of superpower confrontations.

The entire world, from the bustling cities of America to the ancient bazaars of Tehran, from the capitals of Europe to the villages of Africa, owes a debt of gratitude to these two men that can never be fully repaid. They saved millions of innocent lives, preserved the fragile fabric of international order, and brought the world back from the brink of destruction at the very last moment. As the delegations prepare to land in Islamabad for the next round of talks, the world looks to Pakistan not with suspicion or condescension, but with hope, admiration, and deep respect for what has already been accomplished. The nation has truly become a beacon of peace in a stormy world, and its leaders, Shehbaz Sharif and Asim Munir, stand as the real heroes of the world, deserving of every honor that humanity can bestow.

Editorial & Opinion

The Voice of the Time
DAILY TIMES

Editor-In-Chief Fazli Haq
Head Office: 2nd Floor, Flat#1,
Dar-I-Salam Plaza Sikandarpura
Chowk Peshawar City,

Phone: 091-2216407, Fax: 091-2218687

Regional office: Flat#06 Block-11, 3rd Floor
PIHA Apartments, G-7-1, Islamabad
Cell#: +92 321 9111947
E-mails: dailytimespes@gmail.com

Lahore office: 398-J-2 wapda town,
Bureau chief: Ghulam Haider Shaikh
00923225300703
Email: haraan.pk@gmail.com

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Pakistan Zindabad

"Pakistan Zindabad" is not merely a slogan; it is a feeling, a promise, and an ideology that lives in the heart of every Pakistani. These words symbolize the love, sacrifice, and hope upon which this country was founded and through which it continues to stand today. Whenever the nation faces challenges, this slogan lifts the spirits of the people and reminds them that Pakistan is not just a piece of land, but an idea and a dream.

The creation of Pakistan was not a coincidence; it was the result of a long struggle and countless sacrifices. The Muslims of the subcontinent united in their efforts to achieve a separate homeland under the leadership of great leaders. Millions of people sacrificed their lives, wealth, and homes during migration, yet they did not step back from their goal. These sacrifices remind us that saying "Pakistan Zindabad" is, in essence, a tribute to the martyrs and migrants.

The true strength of any country lies in its people, and Pakistan's strength is its hardworking, talented, and courageous nation. When the people are united, even the greatest challenges become manageable. Whether it is natural disasters, economic hardships, or security issues, the people of Pakistan have always demonstrated unity and resilience. The slogan "Pakistan Zindabad" represents this unity and national cohesion.

A large portion of Pakistan's population consists of youth, who are considered the guarantors of the country's future. If young people focus on education, skills, and research, Pakistan can stand among the developed nations. In today's world, knowledge and technology are the main drivers of progress, so it is essential for youth to channel their abilities in a positive direction and contribute to national development.

Pakistan faces many challenges, but every challenge also brings opportunities. Economic stability, educational reforms, good governance, and the rule of law can strengthen the country. When the nation and its leadership are on the same page, even the impossible becomes possible. Saying "Pakistan Zindabad" is not just an emotional expression; it is a commitment to make the country stronger and more prosperous. Peace is essential for the progress of any country. Pakistan has made great sacrifices in the fight against terrorism and in the pursuit of peace. Now is the time to promote tolerance, patience, and brotherhood at the national level so that lasting peace can be established and the journey of progress can accelerate. "Pakistan Zindabad" is a slogan that reminds us of our history, sacrifices, and responsibilities. It teaches us that love for the country should not be limited to words but should be reflected in actions. If we adopt honesty, hard work, and unity as our guiding principles, Pakistan will undoubtedly become a strong, prosperous, and developed nation.

Pakistan Zindabad — Forever and Always.

Building Stability, Shaping Peace: Pakistan's Evolving Role



JUNAID QAISER

There are moments when a country's choices begin to tell a different story about its future. Not through grand declarations, but through steady, deliberate actions that signal a shift in mindset. Pakistan today appears to be in such a moment—working to strengthen stability at home while quietly contributing to peace beyond its borders.

At the center of this effort is Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, whose recent decisions reflect a growing emphasis on coordination

and preparedness. The creation of a unified crisis management structure is not just an administrative step; it is a recognition that modern challenges—economic, political, and security-related—are deeply interconnected. Addressing them requires more than fragmented responses. It demands clarity, speed, and above all, cohesion.

Equally significant is the role of Field Marshal Asim Munir, whose alignment with the civilian leadership points to a rare but necessary unity of purpose. In a country where civil-military coordination has often been a subject of debate, this moment suggests a more synchronized approach—one that prioritizes national stability over institutional divides.

The global context makes this alignment even more important. The ongoing tensions in the Middle East have sent shockwaves across economies and political systems far beyond the region. For Pakistan, the risks are immediate and tangible: disruptions in energy supplies, pressure on foreign exchange reserves, and uncertainty affecting millions of families dependent on overseas remittances. In such an environment, hesitation can prove costly.

What stands out, however, is that Pakistan is not only preparing

for the consequences of these global shifts but is also attempting to influence them. Its role in facilitating dialogue between the United States and Iran reflects a quiet confidence—an understanding that countries like Pakistan can move beyond being observers of global tensions to becoming participants in their resolution.

This is not an easy path. Diplomacy between long-standing rivals is rarely straightforward, and the space for meaningful engagement is often narrow. Yet the willingness to create that space—to host conversations, to encourage restraint, to keep channels open—matters. It reflects a belief that even in deeply polarized environments, dialogue remains possible.

There is also a deeper significance to this dual approach of internal preparedness and external engagement. Stability at home strengthens credibility abroad. And credibility, once established, allows a country to play a more constructive role in global affairs. Pakistan's current trajectory suggests an awareness of this relationship.

Still, the real test lies ahead. Policies and structures must translate into results. Economic resilience must be felt not only in macroeconomic indicators but in the daily lives of citizens.

Diplomatic efforts must move beyond symbolism to tangible outcomes. And perhaps most importantly, public trust must be sustained through transparency and consistent communication.

However, even with these challenges, there is reason for cautious optimism.

The emphasis on planning rather than reacting, on coordination rather than fragmentation, and on dialogue rather than disengagement signals a maturity that is often overlooked in discussions about Pakistan.

In a world increasingly defined by uncertainty, such steadiness carries its own value. It suggests that progress does not always come through dramatic breakthroughs, but through the accumulation of thoughtful decisions—each one reinforcing the other.

Pakistan's evolving role, shaped by leaders like Shehbaz Sharif and Asim Munir, is still unfolding. It may not transform the regional or global landscape overnight. But it points toward something meaningful: a country learning to navigate complexity with greater confidence, and choosing to contribute to stability not only within its borders, but beyond them.

And in times like these, that choice matters.

Pakistan's Diplomatic Gambit: How Islamabad Helped Pull the Region Back from the Brink

MUHAMMAD SHAHID

For several tense days, the Middle East appeared to be moving toward a confrontation that could have spiraled far beyond the immediate crisis. Rising tensions between Iran and the United States generated fears of a broader regional conflict—one capable of drawing in Gulf states, disrupting strategic sea lanes, destabilizing energy markets, and triggering consequences across multiple regions. The mood in international capitals reflected the seriousness of the moment. Markets reacted nervously, maritime risk calculations shifted, and concerns grew that a single misstep could ignite a conflict with global implications.

At this critical juncture, Pakistan emerged as one of the few states willing and able to step forward with urgency, credibility and strategic clarity. Rather than remaining a passive observer, Islamabad moved quickly to help reduce tensions, open channels of communication and create space for diplomacy at a moment when escalation seemed dangerously close. In doing so, Pakistan positioned itself not merely as a concerned regional actor, but as a responsible diplomatic force working to prevent a much wider and more destructive war.

Pakistan's leadership framed its intervention as an effort to stop a preventable crisis from becoming a historic disaster. Officials in Islamabad emphasized the need for restraint, dialogue, and immediate de-escalation at a time when the region appeared to be running out of diplomatic space.

This message resonated widely enough that international observers began referring to the process as the "Islamabad Talks," reflecting the growing recognition of Pakistan's role as a facilitating capital during one of the most sensitive moments in recent regional politics.

At the center of this diplomatic effort were Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Pakistan's top military leadership, whose coordination appears to have been central to the initiative's effectiveness.

This civil-military alignment

gave Pakistan an unusual degree of coherence at a moment when successful diplomacy required not only political messaging but also strategic assurance. Public diplomacy helped shape the narrative of restraint, while military and security channels reinforced credibility, conveyed seriousness, and helped ensure that sensitive communication could move without distortion.

In crises of this magnitude, diplomacy does not operate through speeches alone; it also depends on trusted channels, quiet signaling, and the ability to prevent tactical misunderstandings from escalating into strategic catastrophe. Pakistan's ability to play such a role was rooted in a rare diplomatic advantage as it remained one of the few states capable of speaking to all sides without being immediately discounted.

Pakistan's close ties with Iran, its long relationship with the United States, and its strong links with important Gulf countries gave it a diplomatic advantage at a time when options were becoming limited. In a region often divided by rival camps and political tensions, Pakistan showed that careful and balanced diplomacy can play an important role in managing crises.

According to the broad picture presented by Pakistani sources, Islamabad's approach combined public calls for calm with intensive private engagement.

The objective was not to dominate headlines or claim ownership of the crisis, but to prevent events from moving too quickly toward military confrontation. This was a diplomacy of timing as much as messaging. When states feel cornered by deadlines, domestic pressure, and political signaling, escalation can begin to look like the easiest display of resolve. Pakistan's intervention appears to have challenged precisely that logic by reinforcing the idea that strategic maturity lies not only in force projection, but also in the ability to pause, communicate, and avoid irreversible decisions.

The immediate outcomes associated with this engagement have given Pakistan's diplomatic effort particular significance.

Reports of a short-term ceasefire window and a U.S. deadline

extension suggest that the atmosphere of immediate confrontation was, at the very least, interrupted. In crisis diplomacy, even a limited pause can have major strategic value.

It creates breathing space for clarification, third-party messaging, backchannel verification, and political recalibration. What matters in such moments is not only the duration of the pause, but the fact that diplomacy re-entered the picture at all.

In that respect, Pakistan's role appears to have been consequential: it helped shift the regional conversation away from imminent escalation and back toward negotiated restraint.

What made Islamabad's effort especially notable was the way it emphasized substance over spectacle. Pakistan did not attempt to dramatize its role through performative diplomacy or overexposure. Instead, it acted as a serious facilitator like carrying messages, clarifying positions, and helping reduce the risk of dangerous misperception.

This is often where crises either intensify or ease and not only in public declarations, but in whether states are still able to understand each other's intentions before acting on worst-case assumptions. Pakistan's diplomacy appears to have functioned precisely in that space, where quiet intervention can often achieve what louder diplomacy cannot.

This episode also reinforced a broader and more important point: Pakistan demonstrated that it can contribute meaningfully to international peace and security at a time when many states prefer caution, distance, or silence.

In a moment when the risk of a wider regional war carried implications far beyond the Middle East, Islamabad chose engagement over indifference.

That choice matters. It suggests that Pakistan is capable not only of responding to crises that affect it directly, but also of acting in support of wider international stability when the consequences of war threaten to spread across borders and continents.

Beyond the immediate diplomatic outcome, the symbolism of

Pakistan's role should not be underestimated.

At a time when the international system is increasingly defined by fragmentation, mistrust, and strategic rivalry, Pakistan projected itself as a state willing to invest political capital in peace rather than polarization. This is not a minor distinction. Many countries speak in favor of dialogue; far fewer actively work to make dialogue possible when tensions are peaking and the margin for error is rapidly shrinking.

Islamabad's intervention therefore carried significance not only for the region, but also for how Pakistan is perceived internationally—as a state capable of constructive, timely, and responsible diplomacy in moments of genuine geopolitical danger.

The attention surrounding the "Islamabad Talks" also points to a reputational shift that may prove important for Pakistan in the longer term. For years, the country has too often been discussed internationally through narrow security narratives or domestic political turbulence.

This moment offered a different image: Pakistan as a diplomatic actor, a convener, and a state able to use its geography, relationships, and strategic judgment in the service of de-escalation.

That does not mean every crisis can be resolved through Pakistani mediation, nor does it mean structural tensions in the region have disappeared.

But it does mean Pakistan has demonstrated an ability to step into a high-risk diplomatic vacuum and make itself relevant in a constructive way.

History may decide later how far this effort truly changed the course of the crisis. But one thing is already clear: when the risk of a wider war was growing, Pakistan did not stand back. It stepped forward and in doing so, reminded the region that diplomacy, when used at the right time, can still pull events back from the brink.

Armenia Azerbaijan "Peace Bridge Initiative" | A Comparison with India Pakistan CBMs



TAZEEN AKHTAR

The third round of Peace Bridge Initiative between the civil society in a broader group of participants from both sides. Representatives of Azerbaijan and Armenia, the two rivals in South Caucasus having fought two wars of Karabakh kicked off on 10 April in Azerbaijan to be continued till 12 April.

The delegations cross the land bor-

der at a delimited and demarcated section, having completed all relevant procedures. They spend time to understand one another as confidence building measures CBMs facilitated by both sides. Neighbors can not be changed and living together with the Live and Let Live approach is the center point of this initiative.

Mentionable here is, Pakistan India experienced this initiative in the first decade of the new millennium but it failed. Noteworthy here is, Armenia is a partner of India in military matters while Azerbaijan enjoys close cooperation with Pakistan in all spheres including defence.

Peace Bridge is an initiative started in Feb this year, driven by the August 8, 2025, Washington Declaration, a US-brokered agreement initiated at the White House, when President Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan signed the deal in the presence of President Donald Trump.

This framework is aimed to formally end the 30-year conflict, establish diplomatic relations, and pave the way for regional connectivity projects by bringing together the civil society and promote direct discussions and

contacts to normalise the relations

As shared on various forums by both sides, the participants try to build an understanding on the emerging regional security architecture, the benefits of peace, public perceptions of the intersocietal relations, prospects for economic cooperation, and the role of civil society in promoting mutual understanding and confidence-building.

First Peace Bridge was constructed on February 13-14, 2026, when a bilateral roundtable was held in Armenia. Second such interaction was held in the second half of March 2026 in Azerbaijan and now the third is again taking place in Azerbaijan for which the Armenian delegation arrived.

As far as Azerbaijan is concerned, the government implements the recommendations of the participants. There is no information regarding that from the Armenian side.

Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) between India and Pakistan As some participants and some experts view to the affairs researched, the CBMs largely failed to produce lasting peace due to deep rooted mistrust, recurring terrorist attacks, the intractable Jammu Kashmir conflict

and a lack of political will. These efforts are frequently undermined by border hostilities, hostile media narratives, and internal political pressures, rendering them ineffective at transforming the long-term conflict.

Armenia Azerbaijan Case Azerbaijan states strongly that no Nagorno Karabakh conflict exists now but still there are matters of high importance to be addressed for stable and long lasting peace between two angry neighbors.

After Washington Deal, two major obstacles are still to be removed for real CBMs between formerly two arch rivals; 1- Elimination of the clauses in Armenian constitution about the ownership of Karabakh lands 2- Sharing the exact and complete maps of land mines Armenia installed in Azerbaijani newly liberated territories before the illegal occupants were pushed back from the Azerbaijani territories.

The question is, how can confidence be built when one party is not cooperating on two major conflicting issues. Armenia has not convened any session of the Parliament to do the needful on what was agreed in White House. More than 3,400 Azerbaijan

citizens have been killed or injured by landmines planted by Armenia over the past three decades. Since the 2020 ceasefire, over 400 people have been killed or injured, including civilians, journalists, and deminers, with casualties frequently occurring in former conflict zones.

Conclusion In Pakistan, there is a saying, "The Clap is always with Two Hands". Here in the Armenia Azerbaijan case, we have observed in our work on the conflict during the last decades that only Azerbaijan is prepared and positive in resolution of the conflict and related issues for peace building. Armenia sits on the negotiation table only after it faces humiliating defeat following her misadventures or some third party like Russia persuades her to hold talks with Azerbaijan.

In this state of affairs and mindset from the Armenian side, we are looking forward to the success of the Peace Building Initiative as it is a continuous process and one should not attach big expectations from one or two or three rounds of negotiations. We wish and we are waiting to see a ray of hope at the end of the tunnel.

HEC considers separate funds to maintain 35% salary gap between TTS, BPS faculties: Wealth Pakistan



BUSINESS

SCCI EC commends Pakistan's diplomatic triumph in US-Iran ceasefire

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A resolution was unanimously adopted by the Executive Committee of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), appreciating Pakistan's civil and military leadership role as mediator for brokered US-Iran ceasefire, calling it a significant diplomatic breakthrough and economic opportunity.

Meeting of the Executive Committee headed by SCCI President Junaid Altaf was held at chamber's house, wherein the Chamber's Secretary General Muqtasid Ahsan moved the resolution on U.S-Iran truce and Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and stability, according to a statement issued here on Friday.

Mr Ghazfar Bilour, leader of Businessman Forum and former FPCCI president, former presidents Haji Muhammad Asif, Zahidullah Shinwari, Malik Niaz Ahmad and Faiz Muhammad Faizi, former senior vice president Shahid Hussain, Naemul Rehman, Sadder Gul, Ihsanullah, Ishtiaq

Paracha, Aqeel Kiyani and Rashid Iqbal Siddiqui were attended the meeting as observer.

Rehman, Aftab Iqbal, Ashfaq Ahmad, Saifullah Khan, Sajjad Zaheer, Shamsur Rahim, Abbas Fuad Azeem, Haji Gul



The meeting was also attended by Muhammad Nadeem, Senior vice president and executive member, Fazal Mogeem Khan, Executive committee member and former president, Abdul Jalil Jan, former senior vice president and executive members Mujeeb

Zaman, Adnan Nasir, Abdul Nasir. Apart from routine rules of business, routine matters of the chamber, the prolonged Pak-Afghan trade routes closure, imposition of smart lockdown under government's energy conservation plan, and the recent unprecedented

hike in prices of petroleum products, budget proposals for FY2026-27, were on agenda of the meeting, and the house thoroughly held discussion on these points and their repercussions, impacts, essentially increase in cost of business and sluggish industrial and economic growth.

The participants called upon the federal and provincial governments to announce a special incentive package in the upcoming fiscal budget for revival of business and industry and trade in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Pakistan's effective role in the two weeks truce between Iran and the United States has elevated the country's stature on the global stage, as the resolution read.

It furthermore said Pakistan's diplomatic and leadership efforts, especially the vital role of CDF, Field Marshal and COAS General Syed Asim Munir in easing tensions between the leadership of Iran and the United States, as well as in advancing a ten-point agenda, is highly laudable.

Earlier, Businessmen addressed

during the meeting stated that the strategic acumen, diplomatic foresight, and courageous leadership of Field Marshal Hafiz Asim Munir played an important role in preventing potential large-scale global conflict.

President Junaid Altaf commended Pakistan's successful foreign policy reflected in the US-Iran truce.

He added Pakistan has not only played a key role in promoting peace but also strengthened its identity as a responsible and effective member of the international community.

SCCI chief noted that leadership of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and the Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is being widely appreciated across the world, reflecting the succession of Pakistan's foreign policy.

President Junaid Altaf said the development not only underscored Pakistan's growing role on the global stage but also opened up new economic opportunities, particularly in energy, trade, and industrial growth, while raising hopes for longer-term stability in the region.

Supernet wins Multi-Million dollar cybersecurity deal from major bank

BY: APP

ISLAMABAD: Supernet Technologies Limited has secured a multi-million US dollar cybersecurity contract through its subsidiary, Supernet Secure Solutions Pvt Limited, strengthening its presence in Pakistan's financial sector.

In a notification to the Pakistan Stock Exchange, the company said the five-year contract has been awarded by one of the country's largest banks.

This is a continuation of an ongoing partnership and follows a similar five-year contract awarded in 2021.

Under the new agreement, Supernet Secure will provide an upgraded cybersecurity system to improve the bank's digital infrastructure.

The project includes advanced endpoint security solutions to protect more than 10,000 employees across the country, targeting key cyber risks faced by financial insti-

tutions. The company said the deal, valued in the multi-million dollar range, will significantly boost its cybersecurity revenues over the next five years.

It added that Supernet Secure is already working with the same client on a three-year project related to privileged access management and has also supported the bank's international operations in the past.

Market analysts say repeat contracts of this size show strong client trust and rising demand for advanced cybersecurity services in Pakistan's banking sector, which is rapidly expanding its digital operations amid growing cyber threats.

The company said the contract is expected to have a positive financial impact over time and support its long-term growth, as it continues to expand in high-value digital infrastructure and cybersecurity services.

SBP eases export procedures for IT firms, freelancers to support digital services growth: Wealth Pakistan

BY: INP

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has introduced a set of facilitation measures for IT exporters and freelancers, simplifying export realisation procedures, standardising documentation requirements, setting transaction timelines and revising reporting forms to improve the ease of doing business in the digital services sector. According to the central bank, the new measures aim to support faster processing of inward export receipts and outward remittances, while also strengthening complaint resolution mechanisms for IT companies and freelancers.

A key change is that IT exporters and freelancers will no longer be required to submit Form "R" for every individual export transaction. Instead, they will provide a one-time declaration specifying the nature of services

offered overseas at the time of opening a new account, while existing customers will furnish it as and when required. Authorised Dealers (banks) will tag the relevant service and purpose code with the exporter's account for reporting and processing transac-

tion remittances from Exporters' Special Foreign Currency Accounts (ESFCAs), a move expected to address delays faced by the IT sector in banking transactions.

In addition, documentation requirements for outward remittances from ESFCAs for

the timely resolution of complaints raised by IT companies and freelancers.

In its EPD Circular Letter No. 06 of 2026, SBP said the amendments were made with reference to Para 12 of Chapter 12 of the Foreign Exchange Manual, which contains instructions for handling export receipts and outward payments on behalf of IT companies and freelancers. The central bank said the revised para has been issued for meticulous compliance by Authorised Dealers and advised them to devise internal mechanisms for timely complaint resolution.

Separately, in EPD Circular Letter No. 07 of 2026, SBP revised Form "M", Form "R" and the Inward Remittance Voucher (IRV) to align the prescribed formats for invisible payments and receipts with current regulatory reporting requirements and remove redundancies.



tions, unless advised otherwise by the exporter. SBP has also introduced a maximum turnaround time of one working day for processing inward export receipts and

acquiring services from abroad have been standardised to ensure clarity and consistency across banks. Banks have also been instructed to establish effective internal systems for

OPF retrieves over 400 kanals of land from encroachers in its housing schemes: Wealth Pakistan

BY: INP

ISLAMABAD: The Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) has taken several initiatives to support overseas Pakistanis and their families. These measures include major land recoveries, progress in housing projects, new welfare incentives, institutional partnerships and education-sector support, according to documents available with Wealth Pakistan.

Among the most significant developments, OPF reported large-scale recovery of encroached land and outstanding dues linked to its housing schemes. It said that 386 kanals of land in the OPF Housing Scheme, Zone-V, Islamabad, worth Rs2.6 billion, had been recovered from the land grabbers. It also reported the recovery of 33 kanals of land in the OPF housing scheme at Budhni

Road, Peshawar, worth Rs600 million; 11.34 kanals at OPF Town, Raiwind Road, Lahore, worth Rs170.1 million, and three kanals and seven marlas at OPF Housing Scheme, Phase-I, Raiwind Road,



Lahore, worth Rs200 million. In addition, OPF said it recovered Rs1.2 billion in outstand-

ing receivables from the allottees of the housing scheme.

The foundation also shared progress in its housing projects. Possession of 39 of the 50 built-up country houses in the OPF Housing Scheme, Zone-V,

Islamabad, was handed over to allottees on February 12, 2025, while construction of the remaining 11 units is nearing completion. Construction of 120 apartment buildings for overseas Pakistanis at the same scheme is also underway and has achieved around 70 per cent progress.

The documents show that OPF has taken further institutional steps to address property disputes and complaints involving overseas Pakistanis. These include memorandums of understanding signed with the Anti-Corruption Establishment, Punjab, and the Crime Control Department, Punjab, on May 17, 2025, to curb land grabbing, property fraud, and misuse of authority. A separate agreement with the Pakistan Employees Association, Hungary, signed in August 2025, aims to support legal employment, residence and visa facilitation for Pakistani workers.

JazzCash appointed as exclusive disbursement partner for KP Ehsaas fuel support scheme

BY: APP

ISLAMABAD: JazzCash, Pakistan's leading digital financial services platform, in partnership with Mobilink Bank, has been appointed as the exclusive disbursement partner for the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Ehsaas Fuel Support Scheme, marking a major step in the large-scale digital delivery of fuel subsidies and reinforcing the growing role of digital infrastructure in ensuring timely, transparent support for citizens across the province.

Aligned with the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's broader efforts to digitise public service delivery and enhance the transparency and efficiency of welfare programmes, the scheme streamlines the disbursement process. Eligible beneficiaries are identified and verified by relevant government departments, with subsidies transferred directly into their JazzCash wallets for immediate

access. Commenting on the initiative, Sohail Afridi, Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said, "The Ehsaas Fuel Support Scheme reflects our responsibility to stand with the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during a time of rising costs and economic pressure. Our focus is to ensure that relief reaches households in a way that is both accessible and dignified. By leveraging digital platforms such as JazzCash, we are strengthening our ability to deliver support directly to citizens."

JazzCash leverages a nationwide network of over 1 million Raast QR-enabled merchants and agents, allowing beneficiaries to conveniently access and use funds in both urban centres and remote areas.

With its experience in facilitating large-scale government disbursements, JazzCash will be supporting the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in delivering funds securely and on time.

Growing Prosperity in Small Spaces

How Mushroom Farming Is Strengthening Food Security and Women's Livelihoods in Peshawar

In the suburban communities of Peshawar, where land and income opportunities are limited, a simple innovation is quietly transforming lives. Through SABAWON's mushroom farming initiative, families are turning small indoor spaces into productive units that provide both nutritious food and a new source of income. The intervention offers a practical response to food insecurity, limited livelihoods, and rising climate pressures—especially for women and landless households.

A Science Backed Community Intervention Implemented in collaboration with the University of Agriculture Peshawar and with technical support from the Nuclear Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), the project introduced oyster mushroom cultivation as a climate smart and nutrition sensitive livelihood option. Farmers received hands on training covering the full production cycle, followed by regular follow up visits to ensure successful adoption. Using locally available agricultural waste such as wheat straw, participants established mushroom units inside homes, basements, and shaded rooms, requiring very little space, water, or investment.

From Training to Tangible Results

Within weeks of training, farmers moved from experimentation to production. Initial challenges, particularly around humidity management, were addressed through continued technical guidance during field visits. As a result, most farms reached full fruiting stages, with individual harvests ranging from 2 to 25 kilograms per cycle. Some participants sold up to 20 kilograms per batch in local markets, while others reinvested in repeated production cycles to ensure steady household income.

Women at the Center of Change

Women have emerged at the heart of this transformation. The home based nature of mushroom farming allowed women to manage production independently while balancing household responsibilities. Beyond income generation, the initiative strengthened skills, confidence, and decision making power within families. Regular consumption of mushrooms also improved household nutrition by providing an affordable and locally produced source of high quality protein.

Building Sustainable Livelihoods

By combining income generation, improved nutrition, and efficient use of space and resources, the mushroom farming initiative demonstrates how small scale, science based solutions can deliver lasting impact. What began as a modest training effort is now laying the groundwork for a local mushroom value chain and offering a scalable model for resilient and inclusive livelihoods in



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. SABAWON Initiative Home Grown Mushrooms: Low Cost, High Nutrition, Sustainable Livelihoods Fig. 5: Pear Oyster



Fig. 6: Blue Oyster Mushroom Fig. 7: Phoenix Oyster Mushroom Fig. 8: Golden Oyster Mushroom

SPORTS



Kings captain Warner vows to 'come back stronger' after record defeat against Zalmi

Fakhar Zaman thanks PCB Chairman Naqvi for 'wonderful gesture' on birthday

BY: WEB DESK

KARACHI: Experienced left-handed opener Fakhar Zaman on Friday expressed gratitude towards Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi for receiving a bouquet on his birthday. Fakhar, who has represented

senting Lahore Qalandars in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 11, was presented the bouquet by a PCB official on behalf of the board's chairman at a local hotel here. PCB Chairman's "wonderful gesture" moved the left-handed batter, who expressed his gratitude by sharing a video on his official accounts across



Pakistan in three Tests, 92 ODIs and 120 T20s, is celebrating his 36th birthday today and was thus presented with an exquisite bouquet, accompanied by a note that read, "Warmest Happy Birthday Fakhar Zaman from PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi".

The top-order, currently repre-

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PSL 11 points table after Peshawar Zalmi outclass Karachi Kings

BY: WEB DESK

KARACHI: 2017 champions Peshawar Zalmi registered a record 159-run victory over home side Karachi Kings in the 17th match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 11 here at the National Bank Stadium on Thursday. Put into bat first by Kings captain David Warner, the visitors piled up a mammoth total of 246/3 in their 20 overs, courtesy of a monumental 191-run partnership for the second wicket between centurion Kusal Mendis and captain Babar Azam. Mendis top-scored for Zalmi with a swash-buckling 109 off 52 deliveries, strudded with 14 fours and four sixes, while Babar carried his bat all the way through with an unbeaten 87 off 51 balls, laced with 10 fours and two sixes.

Middle-order batter Abdul Samad bolstered the Zalmi's total at the backend with a blazing cameo of 40 not out, which came off just 12 deliveries, and featured four sixes and three fours. Abbas Afridi was the standout bowler for the Kings, taking two wickets for 55 runs in his four overs, while Khushdil Shah could claim one. Set to chase a daunting 247-run target, the home side could accumulate a meagre 87 before getting bowled out in 16.1 overs and

thus succumbed to a record 159-run defeat, which marked their first in the ongoing PSL 11. Wicketkeeper batter Azam Khan remained the top-scorer for the Kings with a cautious

The 159-run victory lifted Peshawar Zalmi to the second position in PSL 11 standings with seven points in four matches, pipping Islamabad United due to a superior net

a negative 1.639. Meanwhile, 2021 champions Multan Sultans remained at the summit of the PSL 11 standings with eight points after five games, while holders Lahore



run rate, currently standing at 2.87, as the three-time champions have as many points after five games. On the contrary, the Kings remained fourth in the standings with six points after four matches despite suffering the biggest defeat in the history of the league, which, however, significantly dented their net run rate, currently standing at

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WAPDA Dominates 61st National Table Tennis C'ship with Men's and Women's Title Triumph in Peshawar

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: WAPDA once again proved its supremacy in

Table Tennis Championship, held in Peshawar from 6th to 10th April 2026, emerging as overall champions in both

categories, WAPDA dominated the championship by securing a total of 4 Gold medals, 1 Silver medal, and 5 Bronze

Gold medals were won in Men's Team Event, Women's Team Event, Men's Doubles, and Women's Doubles.

In individual competitions, WAPDA players also excelled impressively. In Men's Singles, WAPDA secured two Bronze medals, while in Women's Singles, Bisma Faryal claimed Silver after an excellent performance in the final. In the remaining categories, WAPDA added three more Bronze medals, bringing its total Bronze tally to five.

This outstanding achievement reaffirms WAPDA's leading position in Pakistan's table tennis arena and highlights its continued commitment to sporting excellence. The championship concluded with WAPDA standing tall as the most successful team of the tournament, adding another glorious chapter to its sporting legacy.



national table tennis by delivering a remarkable performance at the 61st National

Men's and Women's categories. Competing across nine

medals, reflecting its exceptional strength and consistency throughout the event. The

Rawalpindiz announce Naseem Shah's partial replacement

BY: WEB DESK

KARACHI: PSL debutants Rawalpindiz have announced a partial replacement for Pakistan pacer Naseem Shah, who has been ruled out for the foreseeable future due to injury. The franchise's management recently confirmed that Shah sustained a side injury during their clash against Karachi Kings.

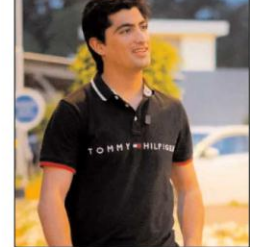
The team's medical staff are closely monitoring his recovery and are targeting a possible return towards the end of the tournament, subject to his rehabilitation progress and fitness clearance. As a precaution, all-rounder Mubasir Khan has been confirmed as a partial replacement for the right-arm seamer. A final decision regarding Shah's participation in the latter stages of the tournament will be taken after further assessment by the medical team.

Mubasir last featured in the seventh and eighth editions of the PSL, representing Islamabad United. In 14 matches, he scored 49 runs and took two wickets. Meanwhile, Rawalpindiz have bolstered their bowling attack by signing New Zealand fast bowler Ben Sears, following injuries to key pacers Naseem and Zaman Khan.

Sears was signed for PKR 2.5 crore and will make his PSL debut. He brings limited franchise experience from Major League Cricket (MLC) with Washington Freedom.

Internationally, he has taken 31 wickets in 27 T20s and ten scalps in four ODIs for the Blackcaps.

Zaman Khan, who suffered a dis-



location of the acromioclavicular (AC) joint in his right shoulder while fielding for Faisalabad against Peshawar in the National T20 Cup 2026, has been replaced by Jalat Khan.

Peshawar PSB Coaching Centre Reopens After Months

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The main gate of the PSB Coaching Centre in Peshawar has finally been reopened, restoring

ed from a dispute over authority between the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sports Department and the centre's administration, which was later taken to court.



sports activities after several months of suspension. The closure had result-

The Peshawar High Court had ordered the reopening of the facility on December 5, 2025. Following delays in implementation, officials eventually unlocked the gates to comply with court directives.

With the reopening, athletes, including female players, along with coaches and staff, have resumed their regular training and activities.

FIFA Series: Pakistan humble Turks and Caicos Islands to make triumphant start

BY: WEB DESK

ABIDJAN: Layla Banaras and Aqsa Mushtaq scored twice each and led Pakistan to a massive 8-0 victory over Turks and Caicos Islands in their FIFA Series campaign opener here at the Stade Alassane Ouattara on Thursday.

The Green Shirts got off to a flamboyant start to the match, courtesy of Zahmena Malik, who opened their scoring in the 10th minute, while Aqsa Mushtaq doubled their lead two minutes later by slotting in a rebound after Mariam Mahmood had forced a save from Turks and Caicos goalkeeper Archenie Desir. Layla and Mariam struck apiece in quick succession, respectively, bolstering the Green Shirts' lead to 4-0 ahead

of the halftime. The second half followed the same pattern as Pakistan captain Nadia Khan, who had

by planting a perfect header to a cross from the left. Aqsa struck again in the 76th minute to make it 6-0 in



earlier tested Desir with a shot from long range in the first half, eventually got on the scoresheet in the 56th minute

Pakistan's favour, while Layla also got her second three minutes later, courtesy of a perfectly-placed shot from out-

side the box.

Isra Khan inflicted the final blow on Turks and Caicos Islands by scoring in the 81st minute and rounded up a dominant 8-0 victory for Pakistan, which is now their biggest in international football, surpassing their previous best of 7-0, which came against Maldives in 2022.

The resounding 8-0 victory put Pakistan at the summit of the Ivory Coast group with three points after one match, while Turks and Caicos Islands succumbed to the bottom with a negative goal difference of eight.

For the unversed, Pakistan's next FIFA Series match is scheduled against Mauritania at the same venue on Sunday.

Mika Stojsavljevic stuns Talia Gibson in Billie Jean King Cup debut

MELBOURNE: Teenager Mika Stojsavljevic delivered a remarkable debut, upsetting higher-ranked Australian Talia Gibson to give Great Britain a 1-0 lead in their Billie Jean King Cup tie on Thursday.

The 17-year-old, ranked world No. 275, overcame a gap of over 200 ranking places, earning a straight-sets victory, 7-6 (7-4), 7-5, after just over two hours of play.

Stojsavljevic edged a tense opening set in a tie-break, briefly losing a 3-1 lead but showing composure in crucial moments.

In the second set, Gibson pushed aggressively, testing Stojsavljevic by creating five break points in a key game. However, Stojsavljevic

responded confidently under pressure, saving all five break



points before eventually converting her first match point to seal a memorable win.

After her win, Stojsavljevic said she was over-

whelmed and could barely recall the final point. "It feels amazing. I can't

believe it. I can't even remember the last point," Stojsavljevic said. "I had amazing support from the side and managed to get through.

The win is significant for British tennis, as the team is missing top players Emma Raducanu, Sonay Kartal, Katie Boulter, and Fran Jones, all ranked inside the WTA top 100.

Earlier, Stojsavljevic won the 2024 US Open junior title and balanced her early professional career with school, even sitting GCSE exams while competing on the WTA circuit.

Britain's Harriet Dart will face Australia's Kimberly Birrell in the second singles, with doubles and reverse singles to follow.

PCB announces schedule for Zimbabwe women's first-ever Pakistan tour

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has confirmed that the Zimbabwe women's cricket team will make their first-ever tour of Pakistan to play a six-match white-ball series, comprising three One-Day Internationals (ODIs) and three Twenty20 Internationals (T20Is). All matches will be held at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi. Zimbabwe are scheduled to arrive in the city on Wednesday, 29 April. The ODI leg forms part of the ICC Women's Championship 2025-29. Pakistan currently sit fifth in the standings with two points, following their sole away series to date - three ODIs against South Africa in February and March this year.

The ODIs will take place on 3, 6 and 9 May, with each match starting

at 3:30pm local time. The T20I series will follow at the same venue on 12, 14 and 15 May, with the first ball sched-



uled for 7:30pm. The three T20Is will serve as crucial preparation for Pakistan ahead of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup, which will be held in England and Wales from 12 June to 5 July.

Melania Trump blasts 'lies' linking her to Epstein



WORLD NEWS

Kenya Supports Autonomy Under Moroccan Sovereignty, Intends to Cooperate with Like-Minded States to Promote Implementation

TIMES REPORT

NAIROBI: Kenya expressed on Thursday its support for autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty and affirmed its intention to cooperate with like-minded States to promote its implementation.

This position was expressed on the occasion of the first session of the Morocco-Kenya Joint Cooperation Commission, co-chaired in Nairobi by Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates Nasser Bourita and Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of the Republic of Kenya Dr. Musalia Mudavadi.

In the Joint Communiqué adopted at the end of this Joint Commission, Kenya "welcomed the growing international consensus and the momentum driven by H.M. King Mohammed VI in favor of the autonomy plan presented by the Kingdom of Morocco," describing autonomy as "the only credible and realistic solution to resolve the dispute over

the Sahara".

plan presented by Morocco to be resolving the regional dispute

Kenya stated its intention to

States to promote its implementation." The Republic of Kenya also welcomed the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2797, which enshrines "the autonomy plan under Moroccan sovereignty as the basis for a just, lasting and mutually acceptable resolution of the dispute". In this regard, Kenya stated that it "endorses the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to facilitate and conduct negotiations based on the autonomy plan."

In this Joint Communiqué the Kingdom of Morocco "welcomed the support of the Republic of Kenya for the United Nations framework as the exclusive mechanism to achieve a lasting political solution" to the dispute over the Sahara issue.

Morocco further expressed its "appreciation for Kenya's recognition of the Kingdom's continued cooperation with the UN Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to advance the political process" on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions.



Deeming the autonomy a "sustainable approach" to over the Moroccan Sahara, "cooperate with like-minded

Pakistan calls for building trust between Kosovo & Serbia to move forward towards regional peace

BY: APP

UNITED NATIONS: While last year's successful legislative elections in Kosovo featured broad participation, Pakistan has warned of the "complex and intricate web of challenges" ahead and called for Kosovo-Serbia dialogue for establishing peace and stability in the Southeast



European region.

"Trust building between the two sides remains essential for moving forward," Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, told the UN Security Council on Wednesday.

Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in February 2008 follow-

ing years of ethnic tensions, but Serbia has not recognized the declaration. The European Union has since been facilitating dialogue between the parties on a range of practical matters.

Speaking in the course of a debate on the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the Pakistani envoy said divisive rhetoric, hate speech, and inter-communal tensions should not be allowed to take root and disturb peace and tranquility. Pakistani, he said, believes that only a sustained and meaningful dialogue process, a toning down of political rhetoric, and the full implementation of commitments made under mutual accords can help overcome all challenges and lead to lasting peace and stability in the region.

"We appreciate European Union's steadfast commitment and efforts to facilitate dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina," the Pakistani envoy said, hoping that both sides will continue to build on the positive momentum, refrain from unilateral actions that stoke tensions, and continue constructive cooperation to resolve all outstanding issues.

Moroccan Sahara: The Republic of Mali announces the withdrawal of its recognition of the nickname "rasd"

TIMES REPORT

BAMAKO: The Republic of Mali announced today that "after an in-depth analysis of this important issue (of the Sahara) which has an impact on regional peace and security, the Republic of Mali has decided today to withdraw its recognition of the 'Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (rasd)'"

This position was expressed in a Statement by the Government of Mali, delivered by Mr. Abdoulaye Diop, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Mali, at the end of his meeting with his Moroccan counterpart, M. Nasser Bourita, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans living abroad, in visiting Bamako on His Majesty King Mohammed VI.

Mali "supports the autonomy plan proposed by Morocco as the only serious and credible

expresses "support for the efforts of the United Nations and the Personal Envoy of the

ues. The Malian minister also said that this decision will be



basis for the resolution of this dispute and considers that true autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty is the most realistic solution". Mali further

Secretary-General, as well as Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 2797 (2025), adopted on 31 October 2025," the document contin-

shared with regional and international organizations of which Mali is a member, as well as with the Diplomatic Corps accredited in Bamako.

Maryam Nawaz: Where Grace Meets Governance



FIZZA QAISAR

In a world where leadership often goes unnoticed, Maryam Nawaz has a presence that commands attention without uttering a single word. A presence defined by grace, by poise, by an almost enchanting elegance that reflects not just in appearance, but in attitude.

The way she carries herself, the refinement in her dressing, the quiet confidence in her demeanor, it all creates an impression that lingers. It feels

intentional, composed, and deeply aware. But beyond the charm and sophistication, what truly leaves an impression are the changes that can be felt, not just announced. I have seen it myself. Raja Bazaar, once overwhelmed with chaos, now breathes a little easier. The pathways feel more open, the surroundings more cared for, and there is a subtle sense of order that was once missing.

It is not perfection, but it is progress you can witness with your own eyes. The idea of a cleaner Punjab is no longer just a promise, it is slowly becoming something real.

And then there are the smaller efforts, the ones that rarely make headlines, yet quietly reshape everyday life. Footpaths that were once occupied are now cleared, allowing people to walk freely without constantly adjusting their steps. Streets that once felt neglected now carry a sense of attention, as if someone finally decided they matter. There is a rhythm forming where there was once only disorder. Traffic, too, feels different. Not perfect, but more aware, more disciplined than before.

Helmets are no longer just an option but a responsibility slowly being under-

stood. A simple act, yet one that protects lives in ways we often overlook. Seatbelts, once ignored, now remind people that safety begins with small decisions.

Streetlights illuminate not just the roads but also a feeling of security. Even the smallest road repairs, the filling of a pothole, can quietly transform a difficult journey into a smoother one. Markets feel more organized. Spaces feel more respected. These are not billion-rupee projects. They are not grand announcements meant to impress. They are subtle transformations, the kind that slowly shape habits, build discipline, and influence behavior without noise. And perhaps that is where true leadership begins.

Not only in building something extraordinary, but in refining what already exists. Not only in promises, but in presence. This applies not only to the vision but also to its execution, even in the smallest details. It is easy to overlook these changes. It is easy to focus only on what is missing. But sometimes, progress does not arrive as a revolution. Sometimes, it comes quietly, in small corrections, in everyday improvements, in moments we barely notice until they become part of our routine.

And in that quiet transformation, there is something deeply meaningful. Today, many people say that all of this is just for show, just for social media, just for platforms like TikTok. But I am an ordinary person. And as an ordinary person, I can see these changes. I can feel them. I am not saying that anyone should blindly follow. I have my own differences, my own thoughts, my own reservations. But honesty demands recognition. While everyone talks about the big projects, the massive announcements, the headlines that dominate conversations, very few pause to acknowledge these small, visible changes. And yet, these are the changes that touch daily life. These are the changes people live with. These are the changes that slowly shape a society. And for that, appreciation becomes necessary.

Because whether big or small, progress deserves to be seen, and where it is seen, it deserves to be acknowledged. And in this journey of quiet change, there is a presence that stands out with grace and determination. Maryam Nawaz carries not just the responsibility of leadership, but the strength to bring discipline into the smallest corners of everyday life. It is

not always the loudest achievements that define a leader, but the consistency, the attention to detail, and the intent to improve what people live every day. There is an elegance in that effort, and a sincerity that deserves acknowledgment. And perhaps, this is something more of our leaders can learn from. Those who represent the people, whether in the National Assembly, Provincial Assemblies, or the Senate, carry not just authority, but an image of the nation itself. Their presence, their conduct, and even their appearance should reflect dignity, discipline, and respect.

Maryam Nawaz presents herself with a grace that complements her role, reminding us that leadership is not only about decisions, but also about presentation, confidence, and the message one conveys without words. Because when a leader carries themselves with elegance and purpose, it does not just define them, it uplifts the standard of everyone they represent. And in that balance, Maryam Nawaz has shown a form of leadership that is not only visible, but quietly impactful.

Fizza Qaisar is a journalist who writes about social issues and human struggles.

A Test of Global Order and Pakistan's Resolve



MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL

There was a time when the world, weary of war and ruin, gathered under one roof and formed the United Nations. The purpose was simple and noble. Nations would no longer rush to war without restraint. Disputes would be brought to a common forum. Wisdom would prevail over impulse. Peace would be guarded by collective will.

This institution was not created to serve the designs of a few powerful states. It was not

meant to grant license to those who imagine threats and then move to destroy them. It was not meant to justify action first and offer explanation later. The spirit behind it was justice. Its strength was meant to lie in impartiality.

Yet the conduct of nations often strays from declared ideals. When power grows unchecked, it begins to see shadows as enemies. It creates fears and then seeks to remove them by force. Such actions shake the very foundations of international order. They weaken trust. They erode the faith of smaller nations in global institutions.

In recent times, the world has witnessed a familiar pattern. This time, Iran was targeted, yet it stood firm as an obstacle in a region already weighed down with tension. The assumptions were clear. The response was expected to be weak. The outcome was thought to be certain. Yet events did not follow the script. Iran responded with resolve. Calculations proved wrong. The situation grew more fragile. In such a moment, the role of the

United Nations became even more vital. The modern world is interconnected. A conflict in one region can ignite instability across continents. The risks are not limited to armies. They extend to economies, societies, and the fragile balance of peace. It was necessary that the global body act with urgency and clarity. It was expected to rise above politics and restore calm. But history repeated itself. Silence replaced action. Hesitation took the place of leadership. The institution that was meant to prevent escalation once again stood constrained by the very forces it was created to regulate.

In this delicate hour, Pakistan stepped forward in a manner that surprised many. It assumed a role that others had neglected. It sought to calm tensions. It engaged with responsibility. It demonstrated that even in a divided world, a nation guided by clarity of purpose can influence events beyond its size.

There is a belief among many that Pakistan has been blessed in recent times. Since May 2025, it has carried itself

with confidence. Its civil and military leadership have shown foresight. Decisions have been measured. The outcome has been dignity. Such moments are not accidental. They are shaped by resolve, unity, and faith.

Gratitude is essential in such times. A nation must acknowledge its blessings. Yet gratitude alone is not enough. It must also adopt a careful strategy. Gains must be preserved. Honor must be protected. The path ahead must be chosen with wisdom.

Pakistan must also look inward. A strong role abroad requires strength at home. The needs of its people cannot be ignored. Stability within gives credibility beyond. It must balance its external responsibilities with internal priorities. This balance is the true test of statesmanship.

only when they are honored. Without trust, even the strongest arrangements become fragile.

There are voices that question the dynamics behind the scenes. Some analysts suggest that powerful states are themselves constrained. They speak of influence that operates quietly. They argue that power is sometimes guided rather than guiding. Whether such claims hold truth or not, they reflect a deeper uncertainty in global affairs. Others recall recent history. They point to moments when Pakistan assisted major powers in difficult situations. They suggest that once again, it has stepped in where others faltered. Such observations add another layer to the narrative.

Mediation, however, is not merely about bringing parties to the table. It carries responsibility. In our traditions, when elders gather to resolve a dispute, their role does not end with an agreement. They remain guardians of that settlement. If one party breaks its word, it is their duty to intervene. They must correct the course. They must ensure jus-

tice. There is a simple wisdom in our culture. They say you can't clean a well if the source of the filth is still there. Drawing water again and again will not cleanse it. The problem must be addressed at its root. This wisdom applies to nations as well. Superficial solutions cannot resolve deep conflicts. Real peace requires honesty. It demands accountability.

The world stands at a sensitive juncture. Institutions must rediscover their purpose. Powerful states must reflect on their actions. Smaller nations must assert their voice. And those who step forward in moments of crisis must do so with sincerity. Pakistan has shown that it can rise to the occasion.

The challenge now is to sustain this role. To remain balanced. To remain just. And to ensure that its actions continue to reflect both strength and wisdom. The ideals that led to the creation of the United Nations still hold value. They must not be abandoned. They must be revived. For in their revival lies the hope of a more stable and peaceful world.

REAR WINDOW

Governor KP urges adherence to Constitution

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday said that the Constitution of 1973 reflects the true spirit of democratic foundations, federal unity, and public sovereignty in Pakistan.



In his message on April 10, observed as Constitution Day, he termed the unanimous adoption of the Constitution on April 10, 1973, a historic milestone that provided the nation with a collective framework for governance. The Governor paid tribute to Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, saying that giving the country a consensus Constitution was his remarkable achievement. He said the 1973 Constitution is not merely a legal document but a living covenant that unites the nation on the principles of justice, equality, and rule of law.

Kundi also lauded the struggle and sacrifices of Benazir Bhutto for the restoration of democracy and the Constitution, adding that her efforts played a key role in strengthening constitutional institutions. The Governor appreciated the leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari, saying the 18th Constitutional Amendment restored the Constitution in its true spirit and strengthened parliament.

He also acknowledged the role of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, saying that he is carrying forward the constitutional vision of past leaders with renewed commitment, particularly inspiring youth to uphold democracy, unity, and rule of law.

Kundi emphasized that the nation must reaffirm its commitment to protect and uphold the Constitution in letter and spirit, terming it a guarantee for Pakistan's collective political and social future.

E&T Minister orders disciplinary action against officials allegedly taking bribe

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control, Syed Fakhar Jehan, took immediate notice on Friday of a complaint lodged by a citizen from Shawa Adda, Swabi,



who alleged that officials of the Excise Department had taken a bribe from him while he was travelling from Peshawar.

Acting swiftly on the complaint, the provincial minister ordered strict disciplinary proceedings and issuance of charge sheets against the concerned officials. The minister in this regard, received the complaint at around 2:00 PM on Friday that certain Excise personnel had illegally extorted money from the citizen. On receiving the complaint, he immediately paid a surprise visit to Excise Police Station Peshawar, where an identification parade of the officials deployed in the nearby jurisdiction was conducted.

During the process, two officials of department involved in receiving the illegal amount were identified. The amount was also recovered from them and returned to the affected citizen on the spot. Secretary Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control Khalid Ilyas was also accompanying the provincial minister during the visit. The minister issued on-the-spot orders for strict action against the involved personnel, besides initiating formal disciplinary action. Similarly, the involved officials placed in quarter guard confinement for 10 days.

Shafi Jan expresses grief over roof collapse incident in Shakardara

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOHAT: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Shafi Jan, has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the tragic incident of a house roof collapse in the Shakardara area of Kohat.



In a condolence statement issued here, he said that he is deeply saddened by the loss of two women who lost their lives in this tragic accident. He extended heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the bereaved family, stating that the provincial government stands with them in their grief and will not leave them alone in this difficult time.

Shafi Jan said that Rescue 1122 promptly initiated the rescue operation and shifted the two injured girls to a nearby hospital, where they are being provided with the best possible medical care.

He prayed for the elevation of the ranks and forgiveness of the deceased women, patience and strength for the bereaved family, and the speedy recovery of the injured girls. The Special Assistant further stated that the provincial government will provide all possible support to the affected family.

Two women killed, two girls injured as roof collapses

KOHAT: At least two women lost their lives while two young girls sustained serious injuries after the roof of a house collapsed in the Shakardara area of here on Friday.

According to a spokesperson for Rescue 1122 Kohat, the incident occurred in Garina Khel village, where the roof of a house owned by a deceased person, identified as Khalid, suddenly caved in. Rescue teams promptly reached the scene after receiving the alert and launched immediate relief operations.

The bodies of injured were shifted to Civil Hospital Shakardara. The deceased women were identified as the wife of Khalid, aged around 50 years, and the wife of Faheemullah, aged about 20 years.

The injured included a 16-month-old girl, Momina Bibi, daughter of Faheemullah, and another 12-year-old girl. Both were reported to be in critical condition.

Rescue officials confirmed that timely response efforts helped evacuate the victims from the debris and ensured their swift transfer to the hospital for further medical treatment.—APP

Health Minister Khaleeq meets MSF delegation, discusses reform initiatives

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Health, Khaleeq Ur Rehman, chaired an important meeting with the Country Head and representatives of "Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)", also known as Doctors Without Borders, at the Health Department today. Secretary Health, Shahid Ullah Khan, was also present on the occasion.

During the meeting, MSF representatives gave a comprehensive briefing to the Honourable Minister through a detailed presentation on their ongoing projects and interventions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. MSF, an international humanitarian organization, has been providing medical assistance to populations affected by conflict, epidemics, natural disasters, and limited access to healthcare, and has been working in Pakistan since 1986.

It was highlighted that MSF continued most of its regular activities in KP during 2025,

particularly its work on Cutaneous Leishmaniasis (CL) at three key locations: Bannu, Peshawar, and Dogra. The MSF

as highly commendable and beneficial for the local population. Mr. Khaleeq Ur Rehman

port in addressing key operational challenges, including issues related to NOCs, human resources, and hospital upgra-



team also informed that the satellite clinic in Badabher has been closed.

The Health Minister appreciated MSF's significant contributions in various areas, including the CL program, primary healthcare services, OPD consultations in Tirah, nutritional screening, vaccination, and maternal and child healthcare services at Dogra Hospital, Bara. He termed these efforts

assured full support and facilitation from the Health Department to further strengthen collaboration with MSF. He emphasized that the government is committed to working jointly with MSF to ensure the provision of quality healthcare services at the grassroots level across the province.

The Minister also assured MSF of the department's sup-

port in addressing key operational challenges, including issues related to NOCs, human resources, and hospital upgra-

Furthermore, the Health Minister welcomed the expansion of MSF services to other underserved districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where healthcare facilities are limited and much needed. The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to enhance coordination and collaboration for improving healthcare delivery and outcomes in the province.

Meeting held on reduction in transport fares

SHABBR JAN

PESHAWAR: An important video link meeting was held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Peshawar Division and Chairman Regional Transport Authority, Riaz Khan Mehsud, regarding the reduction in transport fares and the implementation of government relief measures.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioners of all five districts of Peshawar Division—Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Mohmand tribal district, and Khyber district—along with the Secretary of the Regional Transport Authority.

During the meeting, a

detailed review was conducted of the relief provided by the provin-



cial government to the transport sector. On government instruc-

tions, schedule tax and terminal (adda) tax have been waived for one month across all districts, and transporters have been bound to pass this benefit directly on to passengers.

The Commissioner Peshawar Division issued important instructions for effective monitoring of fares, directing the deployment of three Assistant Commissioners in each district to check fares at transport stands and major highways. He also instructed Deputy Commissioners to remain in the field and personally supervise actions to prevent overcharging.

Furthermore, transporters were strictly directed to prominently display the official fare

list on their vehicles so that passengers can be aware of the approved fares.

The meeting was held in the context of the Commissioner's recent visit to bus terminals, GT Road, and the Motorway in Peshawar, with the aim of ensuring effective implementation of fare reductions in other districts as well and providing relief to the public.

The Commissioner Peshawar Division clearly stated that public complaints will be addressed immediately and strict, indiscriminate action will be taken against those charging excess fares to ensure full compliance with government directives.

Commissioner Dawood Khan chairs Polio Task Force Meeting

MUHAMMAD REHAN

DIKHAN: A meeting of the Divisional Polio Task Force was held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Dera Division, Dawood Khan, to review preparations for the upcoming three-day anti-polio campaign.

The meeting was attended by Regional Police Officer Ghulam Mubashir Mekan, Deputy Commissioner Abdul Nasir Khan, District Health Officer Syed Muhammad Masood, along with other health department officials.

During the session, a detailed review of

arrangements across all districts was conducted. Relevant teams briefed



the participants on their preparedness and operational plans. The Deputy Coordinator for South Khyber Pakhtunkhwa highlighted key points regarding field-level

implementation, emphasizing effective strategies for high-risk and remote

a well-coordinated strategy and complete preparedness are essential for the success of the campaign. He directed authorities to finalize all arrangements ahead of the campaign and accelerate efforts to achieve optimal results.

State-run school closures in Landi Kotal raises concerns

AHMAD NABI

KHYBER: The ongoing Pak-Afghan tension has led to the closure of several schools in Landi Kotal, causing significant disruption to students' education and raising concerns among teachers and parents, teachers community said. It is to be mentioned here that due to Pak-Afghan arm battle 27 government-run schools in Landi Kotal comprising 25 boys and two girls located in bordering areas in Sheen Pokh, Bazaar Zakha Khel and Kharghali have been closed.

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