

Federal budget date revised, likely to be presented on June 10

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has revised the schedule for the upcoming budget for the fiscal year 2026-27, with the presentation now expected on June 10 instead of June 5. According to official sources, the change comes amid ongoing negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) over the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) and broader budgetary matters.

Sources further said that the National Economic Council (NEC) meeting, which was scheduled for today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has also been postponed. The meeting was expected to approve federal and provincial development programmes.



Earlier, the federal government had proposed a development budget exceeding Rs1.1 trillion for the upcoming financial year 2026-27, according to official budget documents outlining sector-wise allocations. As per the documents, Rs754.9 billion has been earmarked for development spending by federal ministries.

Among major allocations, the Ministry of Water Resources is proposed to receive Rs179 billion, while Rs72 billion has been allocated under the Cabinet Division for development schemes linked to members of parliament. The Ministry of Defence has been allocated Rs11 billion for development projects, whereas Rs1.1 billion has been set aside for the Ministry of Defence Production. The Board of Investment is expected to receive Rs805 million, while the Ministry of Climate Change has been allocated Rs2.78 billion under the proposed plan.

For other sectors, Rs16 billion has been proposed for the Ministry of Interior and Rs20 billion for the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications. Education-related allocations include Rs36 billion for the Federal Education Ministry and Rs4 billion for the Ministry of Information. The Higher Education Commission is expected to receive Rs41.19 billion for development projects.

A further Rs1 billion has been proposed for the Finance Division, while Rs27.83 billion is allocated for railway infrastructure projects. The documents also show Rs355 billion proposed for state-owned corporations, including Rs264 billion for the National Highway Authority (NHA) and Rs91 billion for power sector development under the Power Division.

Laghari orders immediate disciplinary action against worst-performing field officers

BY: APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Laghari, on Wednesday issued strict directions to all electricity Distribution Companies (DISCOs) across Pakistan to initiate immediate disciplinary proceedings against their worst-performing Sub-Divisional Officers (SDOs) and Executive Engineers (XENs). Acting swiftly on the minister's directive, Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) and Sukkur Electric Power Company (SEPCO) have become the first DISCOs to initiate immediate disciplinary action — including suspension — against their worst-performing officers on account of failure in resolution of consumer complaints registered through the national 118 Call Centre system (CCMS PLUS), said a statement. All remaining Distribution Companies (DISCOs) across Pakistan are in the process of initiating similar action against their respective worst-performing officers. The minister's directive followed his personal and comprehensive review of complaint handling performance data extracted from the Customer Complaint Management System (CCMS PLUS) — Pakistan's national 118 call centre — covering the period from October 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026. The data, encompassing complaints related to power outages, voltage fluctuations, line faults, and transformer tripping, revealed a deeply alarming pattern of neglect. Tens of thousands of consumer complaints registered during the review period were either resolved late or left unattended within the stipulated resolution windows, directly resulting in prolonged electricity disruptions for citizens across urban and rural areas alike. The Power Division identified the worst-performing officers in each DISCO on the basis of complaints resolved late under their respective jurisdictions and formally communicated these lists to the Chief Executives of all DISCOs for immediate departmental action.

Minister Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Laghari expressed grave disappointment over the failure of the identified officers to fulfil their primary duty of ensuring timely redressal of consumer complaints. He stated that the 118 call centre platform was established specifically to bridge the gap between citizens and electricity service providers, and that any officer treating this system with indifference is directly undermining the government's commitment to consumer welfare. He directed that disciplinary proceedings — including suspension where warranted — be initiated against all identified officers without delay and concluded in a time-bound manner under the applicable service rules. PESCO has suspended 5 SDOs and 1 XEN with immediate effect on account of misconduct, citing failure to meet prescribed performance targets as reflected in CCMS data. The suspended SDOs — presently working in Gulberg, Shahi Bagh, and Sethi Town/Dalazak Sub-Divisions under Peshawar Circle — have been attached with the General Manager (Operation) PESCO HQ for regular attendance.



PM Shehbaz emphasizes expanding cooperation in key areas under CPEC 2.0

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday stressed the need to expand cooperation in key areas under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) 2.0, particularly agriculture, IT, industries, including SEZs, and mines & minerals. While talking to Ambassador of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong who called on him at the Prime Minister House, the prime minister conveyed his warm regards and best wishes to President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang and fondly recalled his most productive and substantive meetings with the Chinese leadership during his recent visit to China. While conveying his firm resolve to ensure the further strengthen-

ing of Pakistan-China All Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, the prime minister immediately initiate necessary actions for follow up on the important decisions taken during his visit to China.

The prime minister further stressed the need to ensure timely follow-up of the various MoUs signed between Pakistani and the Chinese companies, at the B2B Investment Conference, held in Hangzhou, during his visit. He appreciated the Chinese Ambassador's efforts to make the visit successful, in every aspect, while observing that it was now incumbent upon the two sides to work together to deliver on the decisions taken by the leadership of the two countries.

PM approves revised closing hours for shops, markets

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has approved revised closing timings for businesses across the country with immediate effect, citing longer daylight hours and rising temperatures during the summer season.

According to a notification issued by the Cabinet Division and shared by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar on social media platform X, the decision applies to a wide range of commercial establishments.

PM: Budget to Provide Relief, Focus on Export-Led Growth

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said the upcoming FY2026-27 federal budget would include measures aimed at providing relief to the public while advancing the government's export-led growth agenda.

He said the government was pursuing an export-led growth strategy, which was the central pillar of the economic policy.

Sohail Afridi orders devising of legal framework for establishment of CM Model Schools

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi has directed the authorities of education department to immediately initiate home work on the legal framework for the estab-

lishing of Chief Minister Model Schools and said that Model Schools initiative would serve as a landmark intervention in the government's education reform agenda. He emphasized that the schools would be equipped with modern teaching methodologies, highly trained faculty, and state of the art facilities aimed at delivering quality education to students across the province. While chairing an important meeting on the establishment of Chief Minister Model Schools, he said that access to quality education is a fundamental right of every child and reaffirmed the government's commitment to

improving educational outcomes and raising standards across the province. He noted that education sector reforms remain one of the government's foremost priorities and that comprehensive and sustainable measures are being introduced to address long-

standing challenges facing the sector. Muhammad Sohail Afridi expressed the resolve to develop Chief Minister Model Schools into a benchmark for quality and modern education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He observed that investment in education is, in essence, an investment in human capital, sustainable development, and the future prosperity of the province.



work would be developed for the schools, while a centralized Board of Governors would be constituted to oversee their governance and management. It was also informed that the curriculum and assessment system of the Chief Minister Model Schools would be distinct from the conventional public school system and designed to align with contemporary educational standards and future workforce requirements.

Provincial Minister for Education Arshad Ayub Khan, along with senior officials of the Elementary and Secondary Education Department, attended the meeting. The meeting was given a detailed briefing on the proposed Chief Minister Model Schools initiative and their preliminary framework. The meeting was informed that a total of 72 Chief Minister Model Schools

for boys and girls would be established across all districts of the province during the next fiscal year.

The estimated cost of the initiative has been projected at Rs. 9.5 billion. The briefing further highlighted that a dedicated legal and regulatory frame-

work would be developed for the schools, while a centralized Board of Governors would be constituted to oversee their governance and management. It was also informed that the curriculum and assessment system of the Chief Minister Model Schools would be distinct from the conventional public school system and designed to align with contemporary educational standards and future workforce requirements.

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KP CM moves IHC seeking meeting with Imran Khan ahead of provincial budget

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi, while speaking to the media at the Islamabad High Court, stated that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government is preparing to present its budget for fiscal year 2026-27 and is seeking a meeting with PTI Founder and former Prime Minister Imran Khan to get his guidance before the budget is finalized.

He said that the provincial government had approached the Islamabad High Court seeking permission to meet Imran Khan so that guidance could be obtained from the party's founding leader prior to the presentation of the budget. The Chief Minister maintained that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had entrusted their mandate to Imran Khan and that the provincial government continues to derive its political legitimacy from that mandate.

14 killed, over 150 injured after dust storm, rain batter country

TIMES REPORT

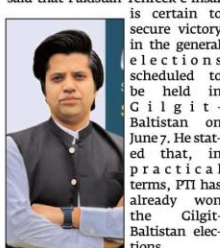
ISLAMABAD: As many as 14 people were killed while over 150 were injured after a dust storm, accompanied by heavy rain, lashed different districts of Sindh and other parts of the country on Tuesday night, blowing away signboards, solar panels, transformers, electric wires and trees. As many as 10 people were killed and 70 were injured when dust storm buffeted Nawab Shah and its outskirts, prompting the authorities to announce emergency at Peoples Medical College Hospital. Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Abdus Sammad Nizamani said that severe damage was caused to the roofs of several houses and solar panels installed on them. "Similarly, signboards were blown away and several feeders tripped," he elaborated. Some of the deceased were identified as Umair Abbasi, Afzal Palli, Chanesar Mehr.

Similarly, over a dozen people were injured in Khairpur Nathan Shah. Two children and a woman were injured in Rehmatullah Colony of Khairpur Nathan Shah in an incident of roof collapse. They were shifted to a hospital in a critical condition. A man named Khuda Bux Laghari was seriously injured after wall of his house collapsed in a suburban village of Dau Dau Laghari. Strong winds also resulted in the suspension of power supply to different localities of the city. Over 100 people were injured in different incidents in Dadu, while power supply to Larkana was suspended after a supply tower came crashing down. Likewise, 24 were injured in Bannu in incidents of roof and wall collapse. In Khurrianwala near Faisalabad, a labourer died after the roof of an under-construction shade being built for animals came crashing down. The deceased was identified as 60-year-old Shehbaz. A 13-year-old student died in Chakwari area near Mirpur, Azad Jammu and Kashmir after he was struck by lightning. Aryan Tanveer, the deceased, was a student of class sixth.

PTI to sweep the upcoming GB Elections, claims Shafi Jan

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Provincial Minister for Information and Public Relations, Shafi Jan, has said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf



is certain to secure victory in the general elections scheduled to be held in Gilgit-Baltistan on June 7. He stated that, in practical terms, PTI has already won the Gilgit-Baltistan elections.

He said that, unlike other political parties, obstacles created in PTI's election campaign clearly indicate that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan have already delivered their verdict in favor of Imran Khan before the elections.

While addressing a press conference at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House in Islamabad, the Provincial Minister said that the reality is that fear of Imran Khan is clearly evident among other political parties in the Gilgit-Baltistan elections.

Expressing concern over what he described as discriminatory treatment against PTI during the election campaign, he said that PTI Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President Junaid Akbar Khan was arrested and expelled from the province, while airport traffic was blocked to prevent Asad Qaiser from proceeding. In addition, PTI Central Secretary General Salman Akram Raja and Intizar Panjthwa were also prevented from participating in the election campaign.

The Provincial Information Minister stated that the party with which PTI had formed an electoral alliance was, unfortunately, deprived even of its election symbol, while PTI candidates were allotted different election symbols.

He further said that despite being in prison, PTI founder Imran Khan continues to dominate the political thinking of rival parties.

Shafi Jan said that the party is formulating a comprehensive strategy to safeguard its votes and public mandate and remains in constant contact with all candidates. He added that complete protection of Form 45 would be ensured this time and that the electoral irregularities faced by PTI in the February 8 elections would not be allowed to recur.

Shafi Jan said that on February 8, PTI's public mandate was taken away and that despite having a clear majority in the federation and Punjab, the party was deprived of its right to form government through what he termed "Form 47." He added that PTI is also not being provided a level playing field in Gilgit-Baltistan. He concluded by saying that despite all these tactics, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf will achieve a clean sweep in Gilgit-Baltistan and form its government. Commenting on the country's overall situation, he said that due to the poor policies of what he termed the "Form 47 rulers," every sector of the country is facing decline.

Shafi Jan expresses grief over casualties caused by strong winds and rain in KP

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Provincial Minister for Information and Public Relations, Shafi Jan, has expressed profound sorrow and grief over the tragic incidents caused by strong winds, heavy rainfall, and lightning in various districts of the province. In a statement issued here, he said that two people lost their lives and 31 others sustained injuries in different weather-related incidents triggered by strong winds and rain. He added that the injured are being provided with the best available medical care at the concerned hospitals.

CityNews

Community-powered Solar Project lights up Kohat school

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOHAT: A Government High School in Kohat's Chakar Kot Bala area has completed a community-funded solarisation project, highlighting growing local efforts to improve educational infrastructure through public participation. The project at Government High School Chakar Kot Bala was inaugurated at a ceremony attended by the District Education Officer (DEO) Kohat Zahoore Khan and Social Worker Isar Ali Bangash as chief guests, along with the school Principal Azmatullah Khan, teachers and local community leaders.

Officials and participants described the initiative as a model of community cooperation aimed at promoting



renewable energy in educational institutions and improving learning conditions amid limited public resources.

Speaking at the event, DEO Zahoore Khan praised the teachers and local philanthropists for completing the project through collective effort. He said such initiatives were commendable given constrained resources, adding that solar energy would help reduce school operational costs while providing a more stable and improved learning environment for students. He further noted that solarisation projects could play a key role in making schools more self-sufficient and encouraged other institutions to replicate similar models. Social worker Isar Ali Bangash said the project cost approximately Rs.300,000 and was fully funded through contributions from teachers and local philanthropists. He urged affluent members of society to support educational institutions to ensure better facilities for the next generation.

The school administration thanked the guests and participants at the end of the ceremony, expressing commitment to continue efforts for institutional development, student welfare and improved facilities in the future. Local education circles have termed the initiative a successful example of community partnership, demonstrating how targeted local contributions can help bridge infrastructure gaps in the education sector.

ANP plea for legal action against Syed Masoom Shah

IZZAT MUHAMMAD

TAKHT BHAI: Awami National Party Tehsil Takht Bhai has formally submitted an application at Takht Bhai Police Station for registration of an FIR and legal action against Syed Masoom Shah.

Earlier, addressing a crowded emergency press conference at Mian Farm House, Tehsil President Mian



Nasrullah Bacha, Senior Vice President Mian Saeedullah, General Secretary Dr. Akhtar Iqbal Yousufzai, District Joint Secretary Jawad Khan Tarkar, and Provincial Council Member Muhammad Ayub Yousufzai said that ANP and followers of Bacha Khan have complete faith in the doctrine of Khatam-e-Nabuwat. Bacha Khan was a special disciple of Sheikh-ul-Hind and a graduate of Deoband, and Sheikh-ul-Hind had also conferred upon him the title of "Raees-ul-Ahram".

They said that false fatwas of kufr have been leveled against us in different eras, which later proved to be lies and fabricated, because firm faith in Allah Almighty and the Holy Prophet is a matter of the heart.

They said that S.M.S. Bacha earned a lot of money during the ANP government, while Zalan Mohmand worked with him in teamwork for five years. But at that time he saw no fault in Zalan Mohmand or ANP. Now, however, he is carrying out negative propaganda against the party and its leaders at the behest of others.

PCTO Appoints Bushra Farakh as Patron of Women's Council

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR : Pakistan Culture, Tourism and Arts Organization (PCTO) has appointed Bushra Farakh as Patron of its Women's Council.

Welcoming the appointment, PCTO's Official Spokesperson and Advisor to the Chairman, Asif Ali Yousufzai, said that Bushra Farakh has rendered remarkable services in the fields of social welfare, culture, and women's development. He stated that her appointment would significantly contribute to enhancing women's representation and advancing the organization's vision.

He further said that Bushra Farakh's vast experience, leadership qualities, and social services would help make the Women's Council more active and effective. Her guidance, he added, would further strengthen ongoing initiatives aimed at the welfare and empowerment of women.

CHANGE IN SHARES AND NAME

M/S SHAYAN ENGINNERING COMPANY, Reg No. C1/2418 has applied for Change of NAME AND CHANGE IN SHARES with PEC as follows:

EXISTING Ownership Status (Sole/ Partnership/ Shareholding)		New/ Incoming Owner(s)/ Partner(s) /Shareholder(s)	
Sr.No.	Name & CNIC No.	Sr.No.	Name & CNIC No.
1.	WAQAS RIAZ S/O RIAZ HUSSAIN 50% owner existing	1.	JAVED IQBAL S/O MUHAMMAD IQBAL 2. 50% NEW COMING

Further, CHANGE IN NAME; NEW NAME: HARDSTONE BUILDERS (This Paragraph Will be optional if required case to case). If any department(s) or person(s) has/ have any objection on this change of ownership, he/ she/ they shall let the Council know in writing within 15 days after publication of this advertisement.

Jirga reviews security and Muharram arrangements in Kurram, Orakzai

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOHAT: A high-level Grand Peace Jirga meeting was held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Mutasim Billah Shah at his office, focusing on the overall security situation in Kurram and Orakzai districts as well as preparations for the upcoming month of Muharram.

The meeting was attended by the tribal elders, Jirga members, and relevant officials, who reviewed in detail the implementation of the Kohat Peace Accord, inter-district coordination and measures to maintain law and order during Muharram. Participants lauded the efforts



enforcement agencies for maintaining peace and stability in the region. They reaffirmed their com-

mitment to continue full coopera-

tion with the state institutions to ensure lasting peace, stability and the protection of citizens. It was emphasized that all necessary arrangements for Muharram would be finalized through mutual consultation to promote religious harmony, brotherhood and mutual respect, ensuring that no untoward incident occurs during the period.

The participants also agreed on the full and effective implementation of the Kohat Peace Accord, stressing that all stakeholders would continue to play their role in achieving durable peace in the region.

The meeting concluded with a renewed pledge to take coordinated action against elements disturbing peace, with the support of the public to ensure long-term stability in the area.

Pak-UK Research Project reveals high burden of depression among TB patients

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A landmark Pakistan-United Kingdom collaborative health research project has revealed an alarmingly high prevalence of depression among tuberculosis (TB) patients in Pakistan, highlighting the urgent need to integrate mental health services into routine TB care.

These findings were shared by renowned psychiatrist and Chief Investigator of the CONTROL Program, Prof. Dr. Saeed Farooq of Keele University, United Kingdom, during a media briefing held here at the Alexander Fleming (Senate) Hall, Khyber Medical University (KMU). The briefing was also attended by Dr. Zohaib Khan, Director of the Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC),

KMU, Dr. Zeeshan Kibriya, Additional Director ORIC, and Dr. Alamgir Afridi, Additional Director Media, KMU.



Presenting preliminary findings of the CONTROL Program "Cognitive Therapy for Depression in Tuberculosis Treatment to Improve Outcomes for Depression and TB in Pakistan and Afghanistan" Prof. Dr. Saeed Farooq stated that depression and anxiety are among the leading contributors to poor health

outcomes worldwide. He noted that while a single TB patient can potentially transmit the disease to 10-15 individuals, nearly 40

percent of TB patients also suffer from anxiety and other mental health challenges.

According to the study, out of 1,200 patients registered under the project, 570 were found to have significant mental health problems, with approximately 66 percent experiencing moderate to severe depres-

Excise Dept intensifies action against unregistered vehicles

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: In line with the ongoing efforts to ensure compliance with vehicle registration laws and improve tax enforcement, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Excise,

Vehicles Peshawar, Masaud-ul-Haq, Excise team conducted operation in various parts of the city and checked a large number of vehicles. During the operation, vehicle registration documents, number plates,

the spot regarding compliance with traffic and taxation laws and the timely payment of government dues.

Speaking on the occasion, Excise and Taxation Officer Masaud-ul-Haq stated that the use of unregistered vehicles and vehicles lacking proper legal documentation not only constitutes a violation of the law but also creates hurdles in crime prevention and vehicle identification.

He further said that token tax is an important source of public revenue and its timely payment is the responsibility of every citizen.

He urged the public to ensure timely registration of their vehicles, use government-approved number plates, and clear token tax dues promptly in order to avoid legal action. Masaud-ul-Haq added that the special campaign would continue in the future to ensure public convenience, rule of law, and improved revenue collection.



Taxation and Narcotics Control Department has continued its special enforcement campaign against unregistered vehicles, fake and unauthorized number plates, and token tax defaulters in Peshawar.

Under the supervision of Excise and Taxation Officer (I) Private

and token tax records were thoroughly inspected.

Legal action was taken against vehicles found involved in violations including non-registration, use of illegal number plates, and non-payment of token tax. Several vehicle owners were also sensitized on

Summit for special and MDs students "PEAK 2026" concludes

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A three-day historic summit, "PEAK 2026," organized by

the bio-digital think tank Synapse Global in collaboration with Ayesha Foundation and with the support of the Youth Affairs Department and Culture and Tourism Authority Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, concluded successfully. The summit aimed to develop practical and effective policy recommendations to

address the challenges of climate change and public health.

Held at the Bara Gali Summer Campus, the

toric "Bara Gali Accord." The agreement called for the mandatory implementation of clinical green audits in hospitals and the establishment of climate-related disease registries. To oversee implementation, a dedicated "Synapse Vanguard" Task Force was also formed.

One of the summit's most notable initiatives was "HumNawa - Accessible for All," a program organized with the support of Ayesha Foundation to ensure the participation of students with disabilities and students from the merged districts. Participants engaged in eco-art, nature journaling, and various creative activities. In the Nature Art Competition, Adnan Khan, a student with hearing and speech impairment, secured first position, while Humaira Chayas achieved second.



unique event brought together more than 200 talented students from across the province representing the fields of medicine, engineering, and data science.

During the summit, a "Bio-Digital Climate Roundtable" was convened, where student leaders and senior medical faculty jointly drafted the his-

Syed Inayat to Appear as Special Guest on Hindko Podcast "Aj Di Shaam" Today

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR : Pakistan Television (PTV) Peshawar Centre's Hindko-language

"Aj Di Shaam" regularly hosts distinguished personalities from various fields, including literature, showbiz, sports, health,



podcast "Aj Di Shaam" will be broadcast today, Thursday, June 4, at 3:00 PM on PTV National. The first podcast of its kind in the Hindko language is hosted by presidential poet, fiction writer, columnist, dramatist, and composer Nasir Ali Syed.

The special guest for today's episode will be renowned religious and spiritual leader Pir Syed Inayat Shah Badshah. The program will feature an in-depth discussion on spirituality, social values, and a range of issues of public interest.

technology, business, arts, and journalism, providing viewers with insightful conversations about their experiences, achievements, and perspectives.

The program's set designers are Shahid Jawed and Quresh Khan, while the camera team includes Ashfaq Ahmed, Samar Gul, Haseeb Ullah, Ahsan Ali Mohr, Hamid Ullah, Adnan Sohail, and Syed Kabir Ali Shah. Boom operators are Kaleem Ullah and Danish Hussain, while Muhammad Tashfeen serves as the audio engineer.

ADC Sarah Tawab supervises driving test process to ensure transparency

TIMES REPORT

NEWSHERA: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Nowshera, Sarah Tawab, supervised the driving test process to ensure transparency, merit, and adherence to prescribed rules and regulations.

During the visit, officials of the Transport Department and Motor Vehicle Examiner accompanied the ADC. She reviewed the testing procedures, interacted with the staff, and examined the arrangements made for applicants appearing in the driving tests. Sarah Tawab emphasized the importance of a fair and transparent testing system, stating that driving licenses should only be issued to individuals who successfully meet the required standards of driving skills and road safety awareness. She directed the concerned officials to ensure strict compliance with traffic laws and testing protocols while providing maximum facilitation to citizens visiting the center. The ADC reiterated the district administration's commitment to improving public services through transparency, efficiency, and accountability.

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Editorial & Opinion

The Voice of the Time
DAILY TIMES

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

Phone: 091-2216407, Fax: 091-2218687

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

Lahore office: 398-J-2 wapda town,
Bureau chief: Ghulam Haider Shaikh
09923225300703
Email: haraan.pk@gmail.com

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The Dopamine Loop:

Why YouTube Shorts Are Trapping Kids

AYESHA NOOR

If you have kids in your house, you probably know this scene all too well: a child staring blankly into a phone or tablet, their thumb flicking upward every few seconds. They are watching YouTube Shorts.

Our brains rely on a chemical called dopamine. Think of dopamine as the brain's reward system. It gives us a tiny splash of happiness when we achieve something, eat good food, or see something new. When a child swipes to a new video, they don't know what is coming next. It could be a funny animal, a video game trick, or a loud prank. This mystery acts exactly like a slot machine in a casino. The brain loves surprises, so it releases dopamine every single time they swipe.

In the past, when a TV show ended, it was time to turn off the television. YouTube Shorts have no ending. The next video plays instantly. There are no commercial breaks, no credits, and no natural pauses. The "friction" that normally tells our brain to stop has been completely removed.

These videos are incredibly fast. The colors are bright, the music is loud, and the cuts happen every two to three seconds. This sets a dangerous new baseline for what the child considers "interesting."

The moment the screen turns off, the dopamine supply drops instantly. This sudden crash is why kids often scream, cry, or become aggressive when screen time ends. They are going through a mini-withdrawal.

Because they are used to content that changes every 15 seconds, regular life feels painfully slow. You might notice they can no longer focus on a book, sit through a full-length movie, or play quietly with physical toys.

When you first pull back on Shorts, your child will complain. They will tell you they have nothing to do. Expect this resistance and stay strong. Boredom is not a punishment; it is a necessary empty space. It is only when a child is truly bored that their creativity wakes back up, forcing them to pick up a box of crayons, build with blocks, or go play outside. Instead of banning screens completely on day one, ban the format. Move your child away from vertical, scrollable videos on phones. Instead, allow them to watch full-length movies, documentaries, or slower-paced television shows on a TV screen. This forces the brain to practice focusing on a single storyline for longer than a minute.

Breaking the loop takes patience and consistency, but reclaiming your child's attention span and peace of mind is entirely worth the effort.

United Against Terror



JUNAID QAISER

In a period where Pakistan is continually facing new security challenges, the recent events in Balochistan have once again emphasized an important fact: while terrorism poses a significant threat, the nation's resolve to defeat it is equally strong. The intelligence-based operations carried out by security forces in Mastung, Noshki, Zehri, Khuzdar, and Kech, which led to the elimination of seventeen terrorists, were more than just tactical successes. They reflected a broader commitment — a national effort to maintain peace and stability against those who seek to disrupt it.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif were quick to commend the professionalism and courage displayed by the security forces. Their underscored a

growing consensus that Pakistan's fight against terrorism is not the responsibility of one institution alone but a shared national mission involving the armed forces, law enforcement agencies, government institutions and ordinary citizens alike.

The timing of these operations is particularly significant. They come amid renewed terrorist activity in parts of the country and only days after a devastating suicide attack in Quetta claimed innocent lives and left many others injured. Such attacks are designed to spread fear and uncertainty, targeting not only people but also public confidence. Yet history has repeatedly shown that while terrorism can inflict pain, it has consistently failed to break the collective resolve of Pakistanis.

That resolve was visible during Eidul Azha when Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir chose to celebrate Eid with frontline troops stationed in Zhob. It was a symbolic gesture, but one that carried a powerful message. While many celebrated the holiday with their families, thousands of soldiers remained deployed in difficult terrain, standing guard against those who threaten the country's security.

The visit reflected a recognition of the sacrifices made daily by security personnel. It also reaffirmed the bond between military leadership and those serving on the frontlines.

By offering Eid prayers with troops, visiting Yadgar-e-Shuhada and paying tribute to the nation's martyrs, the military leadership emphasized that the fight against terrorism is built upon sacrifice, duty and unwavering commitment.

Field Marshal Munir's remarks during the visit were equally significant. Referring to recent terrorist incidents, he stressed that such brutal acts could neither weaken the morale of the armed forces nor shake the determination of the nation. His words resonated because they reflected a sentiment shared by many Pakistanis who have endured years of violence yet continue to reject fear as a way of life.

The challenge facing Pakistan today is different from what it was a decade ago. Large-scale militant infrastructures may have been dismantled, but terrorist groups continue to adapt through smaller networks, targeted attacks and attempts to exploit instability. This changing landscape requires not only military preparedness but also effective intelligence gathering, coordination among institutions and sustained political commitment.

Recent operations in Balochistan demonstrate the effectiveness of intelligence-driven counterterrorism efforts. They also highlight the importance of maintaining constant vigilance. Security gains achieved over years can only be preserved through continued cooperation

among all stakeholders.

What stands out the most from recent events is the unity displayed by the country's leadership and institutions. Whether through the statements issued by the President and Prime Minister or the messages delivered by military leadership, a common theme emerges: Pakistan will continue to confront terrorism with determination and national cohesion.

This unity is perhaps the strongest response to those who seek to spread division. Terrorist organizations thrive on instability, mistrust and fear. A united national response deprives them of that advantage.

Pakistan's journey toward lasting peace has been long and often difficult. It has required enormous sacrifices from soldiers, law enforcement personnel and civilians alike. Yet the resilience shown by the nation over the years offers reason for confidence. The recent successes in Balochistan, coupled with the unwavering commitment expressed by civilian and military leadership, send a clear message. Pakistan remains united against terrorism, committed to protecting its people and determined to ensure that peace, stability and development prevail over violence and fear. In the end, that unity may prove to be the country's greatest strength — and its most powerful message to those who seek to challenge it.

Honor Killing in Pakistan: A social tragedy that goes on



TOOBA TEHRIM

Honor killing is one of the most heart-wrenching and disturbing issues in Pakistan. While education, media and legal reform has been achieved, there are still too many women who suffer from violence and discrimination for the sake of so called family honour.

Honor-based violence has been reported each year from various locations across the country, and there are significant concerns regarding issues of human rights, gender equality and the effectiveness of the justice system. An alleged act that brings shame/dishonor to the family and is responsible for the killing of a person, usually a woman, by a member of the family or by someone on his/her behalf.

In most cases, these crimes are related to traditional and patriarchal values in Pakistan, where the honour of the family is more important than an individual's right to freedom, or even life. Women are typically the victims of marital choice, divorce, social interaction with men, social networking, and being targeted for not marrying based on a marriage contract. For some, sadly, the rumours and suspicions become enough to convince them of a victim's guilt, and they go on to kill them, even though there is no proof.

The centuries-long traditions, culture and tribal laws that still govern a part of the Pakistani society have it embedded. Cultural ideas that give men power over women in terms of decisions, location and life exist in many rural areas. It is oftentimes more feared than punishment as families know that they will be shamed or criticized by others for the actions that they have taken. Consequently, some feel that they have the right to resort to violence in

order to give the family respect, although this is a clear violation of human rights and the law.

According to human rights organisations hundreds of honour killings occur in Pakistan annually, but experts believe this is a more conservative estimate. Murders are covered up, evidence tampered with or accidents are reported as suicide by families.

Numerous incidents are not reported as family members cover up the crimes, and either cover-up the evidence for the crime or claim it was an accident or a suicide. Fear of social pressure and threat and lack of trust in the justice system are often reasons why many witnesses do not testify freely. In some communities, local jirgas or tribal councils continue to exist where there is high prevalence of harmful practices against women, and where women are less likely to be willing to seek legal remedies.

The murder case of Qandeel Baloch in 2016 has been one of the highly discussed cases in Pakistan. Her Facebook persona was so courageous and assertive, which stepped out of the norm when it came to the roles of women. Her independence and her popularity however came in for a lot of criticism in the conservative circles. Her eventual death was at the hands of her brother, who said that her actions brought discredit to the family.

The case made headlines across the country, and even the world, as a symbol of the perils that continue to exist where there is high prevalence of women who question the norms in Pakistan.

Another case which made headlines last year, and which brought tears to many eyes, concerned the killing of social activist Saba Qaiser because she entered into a marriage with a man of her own choice, and which she somehow survived despite the attempted honour killing. Her story has been documented in documentaries and media reports which brought the issue of honour based violence to light and the inadequacies of the justice system. These make up situations in which women's personal decisions are intricately regulated in some parts of society.

The rising dismay and condemnation from different quarters led the government of Pakistan to introduce new laws to strengthen the various punishments for honour killing. In the past, there was a gap in the law that enabled a perpetrator to be for-

given by the family members and consequently evade punishment under the notion of "Qisas and Diyat." However the killer and the victim were usually of the same family, so criminals were often released and pardoned. After the death of Qandeel Baloch and pressure from activists, there were modifications to ensure that the penalty is more effective and that there is no forgiveness in honour killings.

These reforms were applauded but the implementation is weak, according to human rights activists. Investigations are often not thorough, evidence is not handled properly and influential people push the police/courts. Families of victims also may drop complaints for fear, poverty or social pressure. This enables perpetrators to feel like they aren't responsible. The importance of education in tackling honor killings can't be neglected. The high levels of illiteracy and lack of awareness are thought to play a major role in gender-based violence. Education fosters critical thinking, tolerance and understanding on human rights.

The empowerment of women through education and empowerment allows women to become independent and self protective of their rights. In addition, educating men and boys about respect, equality and non-violence is a crucial component to changing social attitudes. Media and civil society are also found to be quite influential in sensitising people with regard to honour killing in Pakistan. There have been newspaper reports, TV programmes, films, documentaries and social media campaigns encouraging public discussion of hidden cases and exposing them.

The Pakistani films and dramas regarding women rights and the violence against women have taken the initiative to break the silence and raise awareness about the issues of women rights among the younger generation. Even today, journalists and activists are still threatened and criticised for reporting on issues of such sensitivity.

Over and over religious scholars from all over Pakistan define honor killings as non-Islamic. In Islam, there is no room for murder; and the value of justice, compassion, respect for human life is very important. Cultural traditions have nothing to do with religion, and it is not permitted to kill another human being without the law's permission. But, errors and misuses of religion still

prevail in certain parts of the country, where the use of religious words and expressions is used to justify what is based on the tribe's traditional practices rather than on Islamic teachings.

Women's rights groups continue to petition for more protection measures for women at-risk. They stress upon providing safe shelters, emergency helplines, legal aid centers and quicker judicial processes to the victims of domestic and honour-based violence.

Further, there are a few organisations conducting awareness programmes in the schools, colleges and the villages in order to propagate awareness about women rights and legal protection. Younger generation in Pakistan shows increasing disapproval towards acts of violence in the cause of honour. The ideals of equality, freedom and justice are being championed by many young Pakistanis via social media activism, public discussion, university seminars and online campaigning. They're bringing a change to old traditional gender norms and fostering dialogue on gender discrimination and women's rights.

But if it could be done without the cooperation of all people there would not be any difference. These should be taught to the family about the need for women to have a choice, to be individuals and not be dominated by fear and violence. Human rights, tolerance and equality should be introduced to students at an early age in schools. All stakeholders, including religious leaders, politicians, teachers and media, have a role to play in denouncing harmful social norms and promote peaceful conflict resolution.

Honor killing has nothing to do with pride, dignity or respect. It's a vicious crime that attacks families, crushes the voice of women and marred the society's image. There is no custom or tradition that permits the killing of one human being. A truly progressive Pakistan can be developed when all the citizens irrespective of gender have safety, freedom and equality based on law.

Society has a contribution to make in the fight against honour killing because the government cannot do everything. The path to a future in which honour is achieved through humanness, respect and equality, not through control and violence is through education, awareness, justice and compassion.

The Case of the Sidewalks, Peshawar's Lost Beauty and the Growing Menace of Encroachments



GHANI UR REHMAN

There is an old tale about a king who once asked his minister how one could easily determine whether a city was progressing or declining. The minister replied, "Your Majesty, do not judge a city by its towering buildings, bustling markets, or magnificent palaces. Instead, observe whether an ordinary citizen can walk freely, safely, and with dignity. If pedestrians have proper pathways, markets are clean, and the rule

of law prevails equally for all, the city is on the path to progress. But if sidewalks disappear, roads become obstructed, and everyone follows their own rules, then decline has already begun." This story comes to mind whenever one walks through the historic streets and marketplaces of Peshawar. It seems as though the city's beauty and orderly development have lost their case, while the monster of encroachments continues to grow stronger with each passing day.

Peshawar, one of the oldest living cities in South Asia, is far more than a collection of buildings and roads. It is a living symbol of history, culture, civilization, and tradition. The legendary Qissa Khwani Bazaar, the Iconic Ghanta Ghar, the commercial vibrancy of Karim Pura, the historical significance of Hashtnagri, and the bustling business activities of Jhanda Bazaar once represented the true identity of this ancient city. Unfortunately, today many of these landmarks are increasingly associated with encroachments, traffic congestion, poor sanitation, and urban disorder.

Citizens often ask a simple but important question: Why has the situa-

tion deteriorated to this extent? Are government institutions and municipal authorities unable to fulfill their responsibilities? Is it really so difficult to eliminate encroachments and improve civic management?

While these questions are valid, the answers are not confined to government offices alone. They are also deeply rooted in our collective attitudes and behavior as a society.

Anyone visiting Qissa Khwani Bazaar, Dalgaran, Peepal Mandi, Ghanta Ghar, Nigraan Bazaar, Karim Pura, Chowk Shadi Pir, Jhanda Bazaar, or Hashtnagri can clearly observe that sidewalks are no longer reserved for pedestrians. Merchandise spills out from shops onto public pathways, handcarts occupy walking spaces, and illegal parking further narrows already congested roads. The new sidewalks built to protect pedestrians now seem to be in need of protection themselves.

In reality, encroachments are not merely an issue of occupying physical space. They represent an infringement upon public rights. When a shopkeeper extends beyond his legal limits, he effectively deprives hundreds of citizens of their right to move freely. When

unauthorized structures block public spaces, the consequences are borne by society as a whole.

It is easy to place all responsibility on government institutions and municipal authorities. However, an equally important question must be asked: Are citizens fulfilling their own civic responsibilities? Do we respect laws and regulations? Do we contribute to cleanliness and public order? If the answer is no, then we too are part of the problem.

There is no denying that district administrations and municipal agencies bear the primary responsibility for maintaining urban order. Their actions against encroachments must be consistent and sustained rather than limited to occasional, highly publicized operations. A comprehensive and long-term strategy is required—one that remains free from political interference, favoritism, and external pressure.

The city's sanitation challenges are equally alarming. In many marketplaces, piles of garbage, clogged drains, and unpleasant odors have become common sights, posing risks to public health and diminishing the city's appeal. Across the world, historic and tourist destinations are maintained

through strict cleanliness standards and urban management policies. Yet in a city as historically significant as Peshawar, sanitation often remains a serious concern.

The need of the hour is a coordinated effort to restore sidewalks, remove encroachments, modernize marketplaces, develop proper parking facilities, and promote respect for civic laws. Government action alone will not be sufficient. Traders, citizens, civil society organizations, and the media must all play an active role in this collective struggle.

Peshawar's beauty is not an illusion or a nostalgic dream. It is a reality that millions witnessed in the past. Even today, with sincere intentions, effective planning, and strong implementation, this historic city can regain its lost charm and restore its original identity.

It is worth remembering that the true measure of a city's progress is not the height of its buildings but the safety of its sidewalks, the cleanliness of its markets, and the strength of the rule of law. When the sidewalks return to the people, perhaps Peshawar's lost beauty will return as well.

China's digital tourism platform offers Pakistan insights to improve services for foreign visitors: Wealth Pakistan



BUSINESS

Turkish Ambassador, ICCI President discuss roadmap for expanding bilateral trade

BY: PP

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, Dr. İrfan Neziroğlu, has emphasized the need for Pakistan and Türkiye to capitalize on the immense untapped potential in bilateral trade and investment. He said that the strong political, cultural, and historical bonds between the two brotherly countries should be translated into deeper economic cooperation. He expressed these views while talking to a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) led by its President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, which visited the Turkish Embassy.

They discussed avenues for promoting trade, investment, and business-to-business collaboration between the two countries, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. The

Ambassador recalled the longstanding and exemplary relations between Pakistan and Türkiye and noted that both nations share common values, mutual trust, and a strong sense of brotherhood. He said that despite excellent diplomatic relations, the existing volume of bilateral trade does not reflect the true potential of the two economies.

He stressed the need for greater interaction between the private sectors, chambers of commerce, and investors of both countries to unlock new opportunities for growth and prosperity. Dr. Neziroğlu assured the ICCI delegation of the Embassy's full support in facilitating stronger linkages between the business communities of Pakistan and Türkiye. He underscored the importance of regular exchange of trade delegations, business networking, and institutional

cooperation to enhance com-
munities in diverse sectors. Speaking



On the occasion, ICCI President

Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that Türkiye has always enjoyed a special place in the hearts of the people of Pakistan and remains one of the country's most important economic partners. He noted that both countries possess significant potential for collaboration in sectors such as construction, tourism, information technology, agriculture, food processing, healthcare, education, renewable energy, and manufacturing.

He said that the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry is committed to strengthening economic engagement with Türkiye and creating new opportunities for the business community. He informed the Ambassador that ICCI is planning to take a high-level business delegation to Türkiye in August 2026 to explore investment opportunities, establish direct business contacts, and promote

bilateral trade. He sought the cooperation of the Turkish Embassy in arranging meetings with leading Turkish chambers of commerce, trade bodies, and business leaders during the visit.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood further observed that enhanced collaboration between the private sectors of Pakistan and Türkiye can play a pivotal role in increasing trade volumes, attracting investment, and fostering sustainable economic growth in both countries.

He expressed confidence that stronger institutional linkages and regular business exchanges would help transform the existing friendship into a more robust economic partnership. Both sides agreed to continue working closely to promote trade and investment cooperation and facilitate meaningful engagement between the business communities of the two countries.

Restaurant Industry Seeks Relief, Flexible Business Hours in Budget 2026-27

TIMES REPORT

RAWALPINDI: President of the Restaurants, Caterers, Sweets and Bakers Association, Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry, has urged the Federal Government and the Government of Punjab to provide spe-



cial relief to traders and the restaurant industry in the upcoming Budget 2026-27.

In a statement, he said that traders and business owners across Pakistan, particularly in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, are facing serious economic challenges that require immediate attention. He stressed that meaningful consultation with the business community should be a key part of the pre-budget process. Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry stated

that rising inflation, increasing electricity, gas and water tariffs, heavy taxation, escalating business costs, and declining consumer purchasing power have adversely affected commercial activity. He added that traders in Rawalpindi and Islamabad continue to face both economic and administrative difficulties. He expressed concern that restrictions on restaurant operating hours and periodic business closures have further impacted the hospitality sector, reducing business volumes and affecting thousands of workers associated with the industry.

According to him, the restaurant, catering, sweets, and bakery sector is a significant contributor to the national economy and provides employment to a large number of people. He called on the government to introduce flexible business hours, reduce energy costs, and simplify tax procedures to help businesses remain sustainable and competitive. Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry also urged the federal government to announce special incentives for traders, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and the restaurant industry in the upcoming budget. He said the budget should promote investment, generate employment opportunities, and strengthen economic stability.

APPSMA Seeks Tax Relief and Incentives for Low-Fee Private Schools in Budget 2026-27

TIMES REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association (APPSMA) has called on the government to provide special relief for low-fee private educational institutions in the Federal Budget 2026-27.

In a joint statement, APPSMA leaders, including Central President Kashif Adeb Jawadani, Central Secretary General Amjad Ali Khan, North Punjab Vice President Colonel (R) Fawad Hanif, Secretary General Muhammad Ijaz Malik Jasyal, Lahore and Kasur President Chaudhry Muhammad Abbas, and Rawalpindi Division Women Wing President Mrs. Sakina Taj, demanded a range of

measures to support the private education sector.

The association urged the government to grant complete tax exemption to low-fee private schools until the country achieves 100 percent

of the mandatory installation of the Federal Board of Revenue's Point of Sale (POS) system for schools charging less than Rs. 4,000 per month in tuition fees, stating that the requirement imposes an

unnecessary financial and administrative burden on small educational institutions already operating under strict fee regulations. Highlighting the challenges facing the education sector, the APPSMA leadership noted that nearly 27 million out-of-school children still need to be enrolled in educational institutions. They emphasized that achieving this goal requires strengthening the private

education sector through incentives, subsidies, and policy support.

The association also called for the inclusion of teachers working in low-fee private schools in the Benazir

Income Support Programme (BISP) and other social protection initiatives to improve their financial security and welfare.

The APPSMA leadership expressed hope that the government would consider these proposals in the upcoming budget and adopt education-friendly policies aimed at increasing literacy, improving educational access, and promoting national development.

literacy, arguing that these institutions provide quality education at affordable rates and play a vital role in supporting the public education system. The leaders also

appealed to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to introduce interest-free loans on easy terms for the development of school infrastructure and the provision of modern educational facilities. They further

demanding an exemption from unnecessary financial and administrative burden on small educational institutions already operating under strict fee regulations.

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Budget-Recommendations

PAJCCI office bearer urges govt to make upcoming budget balanced, business friendly

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Senior Vice President (SVP) Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI) and Member Executive of Sarhadi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi (Sitara Intiaz) has urged the government to make the upcoming federal budget balanced, business-friendly and based on public relief so that the economy can be stabilized, industry be supported and business activities promoted.

At present, in the current economic situation, the business community is facing severe pressure from expensive energy, high interest rates, heavy taxes and inflation, therefore, a budget is indispensable that provides real relief to industry, trade and the common man, Zia added. In a press statement issued here on Wednesday, Zia Sarhadi said

that the total volume of federal budget for the fiscal year 2025-26 was kept at Rs 17,573 billion,



while the budget deficit was Rs. 6,501 billion.

He suggested that the total volume of the budget in the next fiscal year should be kept at approximately the same level so that financial discipline is maintained and unnecessary expenses can be controlled. He said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has suffered the most due to terrorism.

Our province should be given special privileges as well as hold talks with the countries that share borders with Afghanistan and keep this issue in mind and resolve it immediately.

The loss of lives and property and the economic crisis caused to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to terrorism are irreparable and for a lasting solution to this long-standing problem, the province is in dire need of special economic packages and solid security negotiations on the Afghan border. The federal government is committed to restoring the province's damaged infrastructure, promoting industries and reducing unemployment. A special financial package should be announced for its elimination. Regular bilateral talks should be held in consultation with security agencies at the borders with Afghanistan (especially Torkham and Angor Adda) to prevent smuggling and create a safe envi-

ronment for trade.

An effective border policy should be formulated in collaboration with the Afghan government that ensures the security of both countries and does not affect the local economy. Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, who is also the President of Frontier Customs Agents Association (FCAA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said that the FBR's tax target for the fiscal year 2025-26 was set at Rs 14,131 billion, but we are of the opinion that this target should be increased by only 4 to 5 percent in the upcoming budget.

The government needs to take it seriously, stop the monthly petrol supply of hundreds of liters to millions of vehicles across the country, stop free electricity, hang hoarders upside down, instead of putting the burden of tax on the common man, tax should be imposed on luxuries, and make bread and medicines cheaper.

SCCI seeks a compensation package for traders affected by the Gas Blast in Qissa Khawani Bazaar

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry urged the provincial government of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to announce a special compensation package for traders affected by the gas pipeline explosion in historic Qissa Khawani Bazaar Peshawar.

The SCCI president Junaid Altaf, senior vice president Muhammad Nadeem and vice president Sabir Ahmad Bangash in a joint statement issued here on Wednesday stated that traders suffered millions of rupee loss due to gas pipeline explosion in Qissa Khawani Bazaar but no compensation was announced by the government for them. Traders have played an important role in economic development through paying a number of taxes, while they have generated employment for many people, senior office bearers remarked.

The SCCI said sustaining business and industry in current unfavorable conditions was not less than a holy war [Jihad] in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Senior office bearers emphasized the need for provision of compensa-

tion for the traders affected by the Gas pipeline blast in Qissa Khawani Bazaar on urgent grounds so that they will restore their businesses and continue to play a role in development of the economy.

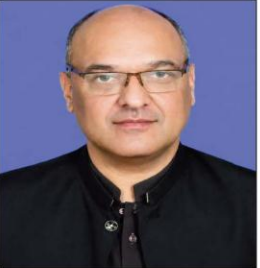
President Junaid Altaf noted traders have already been in difficult situations due to the prevailing scenario. He added industrial growth has slowed down, which has caused mass level unemployment in K-P.

The SCCI chief said while keeping in view the current situation, it is highly crucial to provide financial relief/aid and facilities to the trading community on priority basis.

The country's economy is heading to stabilize due to the collection of various taxes from the business community so that the traders must be left alone in their difficult situation, President Junaid Altaf stressed.

The SCCI chief urged the provincial government, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi and relevant institutions to immediately announce a compensation package for the traders affected by the gas pipeline explosion in Qissa Khawani Bazaar Peshawar.

Protest or Pressure Tactic? Debating JAAC's June 9 Strike in AJK



ABDUL BASIT ALVI

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is a self-governing territory formed after the partition of the subcontinent and the 1949 ceasefire line rather than a province like Punjab or Sindh. Although it has its own president, prime minister, legislative assembly and supreme court, it remains heavily dependent on Pakistan for defense, foreign policy, currency and financial support.

Due to its sensitive border with Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, one of the world's most militarized and volatile regions, Pakistan considers AJK both a strategic asset and a moral responsibility, continuing to

provide billions of rupees in grants, subsidies, development projects and infrastructure even during economic crises, inflation, debt and international financial pressure.

Despite this support, the Joint Awami Action Committee's June 9 strike call has sharply divided public opinion. Supporters see it as a democratic and peaceful effort to highlight delayed development, lack of transparency, inflation and inadequate healthcare, while a larger group including traders, shopkeepers, transporters, teachers, doctors, students and daily wage workers argues that strikes only increase hardship for ordinary people by shutting down markets, schools, universities, transport and government offices.

Critics emphasize that laborers lose wages, businesses suffer financial losses, students face academic disruption and stress, and patients experience delayed treatment and worsening health.

Many also question the timing because Pakistan itself is struggling with inflation, rising fuel and electricity prices and IMF-related tax measures while still providing subsidized flour, fuel, electricity and development funds to AJK through programs such as the Annual Development Program and the Kashmir Economic Package. Since AJK reportedly receives higher federal transfers per capita than most

provinces, many citizens and analysts in Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Kotli, Bagh and Rawalakot view the strike as disruptive, harmful to AJK's image and potentially damaging to future federal support.

Critics further argue that the Joint Awami Action Committee's repeated strikes, protests, sit-ins and road blockades have failed to resolve underlying political and economic issues while leaving ordinary citizens to bear the financial and social costs.

Many residents of AJK have become frustrated with strike culture, believing the committee leadership remains personally unaffected while workers, patients, students and the elderly suffer the consequences.

Increasingly, people are calling for dialogue, peaceful engagement and legal or parliamentary methods instead of repeated shutdowns and pressure tactics such as road blockades, transport closures and market shutdowns that deliberately create public suffering to force government action.

Concerns are also growing about the effect on young people, especially college and university students who are mobilized through rallies, pamphlets, social media campaigns and emotional speeches. Critics believe the committee encourages hostility toward the state, government, police, law enforcement agencies and even Pakistan itself by portraying every issue as oppression or

conspiracy, filling young people with anger, frustration and victimhood that can easily be manipulated for political purposes. Young protesters are often placed at the front lines where they risk injury, arrest or death, and such incidents are then used to generate further anger and recruit more supporters.

Many fear this culture of confrontation threatens AJK's traditionally peaceful, educated and moderate society and benefits Pakistan's adversaries, particularly India, which they believe uses unrest in AJK as propaganda to portray the region as unstable. As a result, ordinary citizens, civil society groups, trade unions, traders associations and religious leaders are increasingly demanding that the June 9 strike be withdrawn.

Through public gatherings, newspaper letters, social media campaigns and local radio messages, they are calling for peace, stability and the freedom to continue daily life without disruption, insisting that any genuine grievances should be addressed through negotiations, legal action and parliamentary forums rather than forcing the entire population to suffer for political objectives.

The people of AJK are demanding that the government take tangible and visible steps to stop the growing culture of hate, division and violent protests that groups like the Joint Awami Action Committee are promoting. They want

the government to enforce the law strictly against anyone who incites violence, blocks roads, damages public property or disrupts normal life.

They want the government to work with educational institutions to teach students about peaceful and legal methods of protest, and to protect young people from being exploited by political groups.

They also want the government to improve governance, transparency and service delivery so that genuine grievances are addressed before they can be exploited by pressure groups. If the government delivers good governance and listens to the people, then groups like the Joint Awami Action Committee will have no excuse to call strikes.

But even if governance is not perfect, the people of AJK have made it clear that they prefer dialogue over strikes and peace over chaos.

They understand what is good for them and what is bad for them, and they have decided that the strike culture is bad.

Therefore, they are speaking with one voice to say that the June 9 strike should be cancelled, that the Joint Awami Action Committee should change its approach, and that the government should act firmly to protect the peaceful and prosperous future of Azad Jammu and Kashmir for generations to come.

SPORTS



Abrar Ahmed, Shaheen Afridi climb ICC ODI rankings after Australia series impact

National Junior Squash Championship 2026 Begins in Peshawar

Advisor Taj Muhammad Tarand Inaugurates Event Featuring Over 100 Young Players from Across Pakistan

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The All Pakistan National Junior Squash Championship 2026, organized by the Directorate of Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, commenced at the Qamruzman Squash Complex in Peshawar with the participation of more than 100 male and female players from across the country.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sports and Youth Affairs, Taj Muhammad Tarand, formally inaugurated the championship. The event is being contested in the Under-15 category and features players from all four provinces, Islamabad, Pakistan Army, and Pakistan Air Force.

The opening ceremony was attended by Secretary Sports Muhammad Asif Khan, Additional Director General Sports Rashida Ghaznavi, Deputy Director Nematullah, Director Sports Operations Jamshed Baloch, Organizing

Secretary Munawar Zaman, Secretary Mansoor Zaman, Chief Coach Shafiqullah, and other officials and representatives of the Provincial Squash Association.

Addressing the ceremony, Taj Muhammad Tarand said the provincial government is actively organizing junior-level championships in various sports to provide young athletes with opportunities to showcase and refine their talents. He described the national junior squash championship as an important step in promoting sports among youth.

He further announced that Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Sohail Afridi, will formally inaugurate a series of upcoming sports activities in the province. He emphasized that national-level competitions not only offer players competitive exposure but also help improve their technical skills and overall performance.

Tarand said the provincial government is taking practical measures to promote sports and

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary Sports Muhammad Asif Khan highlighted the broad

He said efforts are continuing to improve sports infrastructure while ensuring the regular orga-

national competitions. The championship will continue over the coming days, pro-



expand modern facilities across all districts, enabling athletes to excel at national and international levels.

participation in the championship and noted that sports development remains a priority of the provincial government.

nization of sporting events, allowing players from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to perform successfully in national and inter-

viding a platform for emerging squash talent from across Pakistan to compete and demonstrate their abilities.

Pakistan women's netball trials set for June 7 in Karachi

BY: APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Netball Federation (PNF), in collaboration with Pakistan Sports Board (PSB), will conduct one-day open trials for the selection of the national women's netball team on June 7 at the PSB Coaching Centre, Karachi.

The PNF President Sameen Malik confirmed that the trials will commence at 5:00 pm and said preparations are well underway to ensure their successful conduct. Female netball players from across the country are expected to participate, and instructions have already been issued to all affiliated provincial associations, regional bodies and departmental teams to nominate and facilitate eligible players.

The players selected through these trials will represent Pakistan in the Asian

Women's Netball Championship, scheduled Kong. The continental event carries added significance this



from August 7 to 16 in Hong year as it also serves as the

Asian qualifying round for the Netball World Cup, to be held in Australia in 2027. According to World Netball (WN) stipulations, only the winner and runner-up of the championship will earn qualification to the game's marquee competition Down Under.

The championship is expected to feature some of Asia's leading netball nations, including Singapore, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, India, Maldives, Chinese Taipei, Japan, Bahrain, Thailand, South Korea and hosts Hong Kong, alongside Pakistan.

The federation expressed optimism that the open trials would help identify talented players and strengthen the national squad ahead of what promises to be a high-stakes continental showdown with a coveted World Cup berth on the line.

Kane Williamson set for emotional final Lord's Test appearance against England

BY:WEB DESK

LONDON: Veteran New Zealand batter Kane Williamson is set to bid farewell to Lord's as he prepares for what will be his final appearance at the iconic venue during the opening Test against England. During his press conference on Tuesday, the 35-year-old briefly paused with a touch of humour when he realised the significance of the occasion. "Yeah it probably is, eh? And you're delaying my lunch, which isn't very good of you," Williamson will earn his 110th Test cap on Thursday, and if all goes well, he will have six more lunches to enjoy before the end of the match.

His first appearance at Lord's came in 2013, while his association with the ground stretches back even further to 2012, when he played for Gloucestershire against Middlesex in a Clydesdale Bank Pro40 fixture as an overseas signing. Beyond his four previous Test appearances at the Home of Cricket, Williamson's only other first-class outing at the venue came for Yorkshire in 2014, a match remembered for Middlesex chasing

down 472 with relative ease. Last summer, Williamson also signed a unique arrangement with the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), allowing him to feature for both Middlesex and London Spirit in The Hundred. That move came after he opted out of his New Zealand central contract the previous year, missing two Test matches against Zimbabwe as a result.

Still without a national contract in the twilight of his career, and with uncertainty over New Zealand's future tours amid the absence of a Future Tours Programme beyond 2027, Williamson is expected to savour every moment of his final week in NWS. "It's always a special Test," Williamson said. "I think if you look over your career, you only get... well depends on how long you play for... but yeah, I've played for a while and you only get a handful of opportunities to come to Lord's and play. "I think the way they maintain the tradition is quite special. It's unique to Lord's; the history that surrounds it, the effort that goes into all of that.

Tarapta Super League Season 6 Kicks Off in Dir Upper

SYED ZAHID JAN

UPPER DIR : The grand opening ceremony of Tarapta Super League Season 6 was held with support from the District Administration and District Sports Office Dir. A total of 16 teams are participating and will showcase their talent during the tournament.



District Sports Officer Sadiquallah, Engineer Zaher Shah, Village Chairman Malik Imran, and other political and social figures and players were attended the opening ceremony. The chief guest met players, encouraged them, and wished for the tournament's successful conduct.

Speaking on the occasion DSO Sadiqullah and other said that the sports play a key role in the physical and mental development, health of youth and promoting positive activities. They pledged to continue such programs to promote sports and encourage young talent in the area.

A large number of sports fans

attended the opening ceremony and welcomed the start of the tournament.

Tarapta Super League Season 6 is expected to further boost sports activities in the region and provide opportunities for youth to showcase their skills.

Pakistan Storm into U-18 Asia Cup Hockey Semi-Finals with Dominant Win Over Bangladesh

TIMES REPORT

TOKYO: Pakistan secured a place in the semi-finals of the U-18 Asia Cup Hockey Tournament with a commanding 5-2 victory over Bangladesh in a crucial match played in Japan.

The contest began on an exciting note, with both teams launching attacking moves and creating scoring opportunities. Bangladesh's defense initially kept the Pakistani forwards under pressure, while Pakistan's backline effectively neutralized the opposition's attacks. The first quarter ended with both sides locked at 1-1.

The second quarter witnessed equally intense competition as both teams exchanged attacks and counterattacks. Despite several attempts from both sides, neither team managed to break the deadlock, and the score remained 1-1 at halftime.

Pakistan returned strongly after the break, with the coaching staff's strategy producing immediate

take firm control of the match. In the fourth and final quarter, Pakistan main-

and former Olympians have praised the young national side for its outstanding performance and



diated results. The Green Shirts dominated the third quarter, displaying excellent teamwork, swift passing, and aggressive attacking play. Pakistan's forwards dismantled the Bangladeshi defense and scored a series of goals to

tained its momentum and defensive discipline, sealing an impressive 5-2 victory.

With this comprehensive win, Pakistan has officially qualified for the semi-finals of the tournament. Hockey enthusiasts

expressed optimism that the team can continue its winning run and reach the final.

Pakistan's semi-final opponent will be determined following the completion of the remaining group-stage matches.

Dragon Boats to Race on Kabul River in Landmark Pakistan-China Cultural Event

SHAKEEL UR REHMAN

PESHAWAR: Preparations have officially begun for the celebration of Pakistan's first-ever Dragon Boat Festival, a landmark event that will introduce one of China's most cherished cultural traditions to the people of Pakistan. The festival is expected to strengthen cultural ties between the two iron-brother nations while also promoting sports, teamwork, and healthy competition.

The Dragon Boat Festival, known in China as the Duanwu Festival, is one of the country's oldest and most celebrated traditions, with a history spanning more than 2,000 years. The festival commemorates the patriotic Chinese poet Qu Yuan, who is remembered for his loyalty and devotion to his homeland. According to tradition, local people raced their boats in an attempt to save him and later continued the practice as an annual cultural event. Over time, these boat races evolved into the modern Dragon Boat

Festival, which is now celebrated across China and many other parts of the world.

Today, dragon boat racing has become an internationally recognized sport that combines speed, endurance, teamwork, and discipline. The colorful dragon-shaped boats, synchronized paddling, and exciting competitions create a spectacular sporting event that attracts both participants and spectators. The festival not only preserves a rich cultural heritage but also encourages physical fitness, sportsmanship, and community engagement.

The institution making history by introducing this unique event in Pakistan is China Window, a leading Chinese cultural center based in Peshawar. Over the years, China Window has played a vital role in promoting Pakistan-China friendship through cultural exchanges, exhibitions, educational activities, language programs, and public diplomacy initiatives. The center has become a symbol of friendship and mutual under-

standing between the peoples of

many of these successful initiatives stands Amjad Aziz Malik, a long-standing friend of China and a prominent figure in Pakistan. Recognized for his outstanding services to society and international friendship, he has been awarded the prestigious T a m g h a - e - i m t i a z by the Government of Pakistan. An accomplished journalist, sports commentator, social worker, and cultural ambassador, Amjad Aziz Malik enjoys immense respect across

strengthening Pakistan-China relations has earned him admiration from both Pakistani and Chinese communities. The proposed Dragon Boat Festival will not only showcase an important aspect of Chinese culture but will also open a new chapter in Pakistan's sporting and cultural landscape. As the two nations celebrate decades of enduring friendship, this historic event promises to become a symbol of unity, cultural harmony, and people-to-people connectivity between Pakistan and China.

The festival will be held on June 14 in the Kabul River, approximately 20 kilometers from Peshawar. Around 100 paddlers will participate in the competition, divided into ten different teams. Special boats have been prepared locally for the festival, blending traditional craftsmanship with the spirit of dragon boat racing. Adding to the excitement, each boat will feature local drummers whose rhythmic beats will synchronize with the paddlers' strokes, creating a captivating atmosphere

and enhancing the spectacle of the race. Cash prizes have also been announced for the winning teams, while the riverbanks will be decorated with the national flags of Pakistan and China, symbolizing the enduring friendship between the two countries.

Event organizer Adnan Bashir Khan told this correspondent that they are preparing to host a major event of unprecedented scale. He said that participants are eagerly awaiting the festival and that the organizing team is equally excited about bringing this historic occasion to life.

However, he emphasized that ensuring the safety and security of all participants and spectators remains their top priority, and comprehensive arrangements are being made in this regard. He expressed confidence that once introduced in Peshawar, the Dragon Boat Festival will grow in popularity and become a celebrated annual event across Pakistan in the years to come.



Pakistan and China. Behind the country. His dedication to

Pak-Italy sign agreement to abolish requirement of visas for diplomatic passports



Italy National Day Celebrated in Islamabad:

Pakistan-Italy Partnership Highlighted at Grand Reception

SHAHID QURESHI

ISLAMABAD: Italy's National Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at a prestigious reception in Islamabad, bringing together senior government officials, diplomats, parliamentarians, business leaders, and members of civil society to commemorate the enduring friendship between Pakistan and Italy.

Federal Minister for Petroleum Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik attended the event as the chief

guest. Among the distinguished guests were Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Senator Sherry Rehman, Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi, diplo-

mat, members of the National Assembly and Senate, as well as renowned businessmen and representatives from various sectors.

The chief guest, accompanied by the Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan and other dignitaries, participated in a ceremonial cake-cutting marking Italy's National Day celebrations.

Addressing the gathering, the Italian Ambassador said she was honored to be the first

woman Ambassador appointed to Pakistan since Italy recognised the country soon after its inde-

pendence in 1947 and established formal diplomatic relations in 1948," she said.



The Ambassador noted that over the past 78 years, Pakistan and Italy have developed a broad and dynamic partnership encompassing migration, trade, culture, science, development cooperation, multilateral engagement, defence, and security. "It is a relationship rooted in mutual respect, shared economic interests, common ethical and social values, and joint diplomatic engagement in multilateral fora," she remarked.

Highlighting growing economic cooperation, the Ambassador said the opening of the Italian Trade Agency Office in Islamabad in 2023 had further strengthened commercial ties between the two countries.

She also underscored the success of Italy's flagship "Scale-Up Olive Culture" Programme, which has expanded olive cultivation to more than 6.9 million trees across 60 districts of Pakistan. The initiative contributed to the formulation of Pakistan's first National Olive Policy in 2025, helping reduce dependence on edible oil imports and supporting the establishment of the National Olive Oil

Council.

The Ambassador further highlighted development cooperation in Gilgit-Baltistan, where the Economic Transformation Initiative, co-financed with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), is supporting approximately 40,000 farmers through improvements in rural infrastructure and agricultural value chains.

She added that dairy and food processing sectors are also

being explored as promising areas for future bilateral cooperation.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Guest Ali Pervaiz Malik congratulated the people and



government of Italy on their National Day and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations. He appreciated Italy's longstanding support for development initiatives in Pakistan and expressed confidence that cooperation in trade, agriculture, energy, and investment would continue to expand in the years ahead.

The reception concluded with renewed commitments from both sides to deepen people-

to-people contacts, enhance economic engagement, and build upon the strong foundation of friendship that has characterized Pakistan-Italy relations for nearly eight decades.



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Ambassador Mumtaz Zahra Baloch Celebrates Eid with Pakistani Community in Toulouse

TIMES REPORT

TOULOUSE: Pakistan's Ambassador to France, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, joined members of the Pakistani community in Toulouse to celebrate Eid, extending warm greetings and best wishes on the joyous occasion.

During the gathering, Ambassador Baloch interacted with community members and highlighted the important role of over-

seas Pakistanis in strengthening Pakistan's image abroad and promoting closer people-to-people ties between Pakistan and France.

She appreciated the contributions of the Pakistani diaspora and encouraged continued engagement with initiatives aimed at enhancing cultural, educational, and economic links between the two countries.

Members of the com-

munity welcomed the Ambassador and was marked by a spirit of unity, friendship, and cel-



expressed their appreciation for her outreach and engagement. The event

celebration as families came together to observe Eid festivities.



Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman elected president of 81st UN General Assembly

BY: APP

UNITED NATIONS: Khalilur Rahman, Bangladesh's foreign minister, was elected President of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly, set to start this September. He secured the victory in a vote held in UN General Assembly, defeating Cyprus's candidate Ambassador Andreas S. Kakouris by a margin of 99 to 91 votes. One hundred and ninety ballots were cast.

Rahman will officially assume his duties in September 2026. His election marks a significant milestone for Bangladesh, as he becomes the second Bangladeshi diplomat to hold the presidency, following Humayun Rasheed Choudhury's tenure in 1986. Former German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, the current General Assembly president, "warmly" congratulated Rahman over his election. Pledging to work together until Rahman takes office, she said: "The role of the president of the General Assembly is no longer simply procedural, reading out notes, because even in the procedural rules themselves, they are being challenged, as we have experienced many times before."

Noting that the 81st session will not become "any easier over the next three months," Baerbock stressed that Rahman is "more than prepared" for the position, adding that "your decade of diplomatic and multilateral experience will serve you well during what promises to be a particularly consequential 81st session as your work to build a more effective, responsive, and trusted multilateral

system." In his remarks, Rahman pointed to the challenges that the UN is facing, saying that it is "being tested on multiple fronts, scourges of conflict and war, from which our organization aimed to save our suc-



ceeding generations, continue to inflict untold sufferings."

"Taken together, these challenges tend to undermine the public trust and confidence in the ability of our organization to deliver its promises, and this is a challenge that I will confront together with all of you," he said. He vowed to take "a holistic approach to peacekeeping and peace building that prioritizes prevention and political solution, strengthens peace building, and protects civilians." "I will support dialogue to make even peacekeeping more fit for purpose and advocate for greater representation of women in peacekeeping," he said, further pledging to be "mindful of achieving gender equality and full and meaningful participation of women and girls in all walks of life."

The Exploitation of Innocents:

Women as Weapons in Balochistan's Terror Campaign



MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL

In the rugged and resource-rich expanse of Balochistan, a troubling new chapter has unfolded in the long-standing insurgency waged by the Baloch Liberation Army and its affiliates. What was once a campaign marked by sporadic guerrilla strikes has evolved into a calculated exploitation of women, drawn or compelled into the ranks of terrorism as instruments of violence. This shift not only reveals the desperation of these separatist elements but also underscores the profound human cost borne by the people of the province, where families are torn apart and communities live under the shadow of fear.

As the Holy Qur'an declares, "Whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely" (Al-Ma'idah, 5:32). Such sacred words remind us that the taking of innocent life stands as a grave transgression against the divine order, a corrup-

tion upon the earth that no cause can sanctify. Yet the militants persist in their path, heedless of this eternal injunction.

The Balochistan Liberation Army has increasingly turned to female operatives, deploying them in suicide missions that target security forces, infrastructure, and even civilian-linked sites. This tactic marks a grim departure, transforming women—traditionally pillars of Baloch society—into weapons in a war that promises only destruction. Pakistani authorities have documented multiple such cases, many involving young women who were either radicalised or, as confessions later revealed, coerced through manipulation, blackmail, or false promises of empowerment.

One of the earliest and most notable instances came in April 2022, when Shari Baloch, a 30-year-old science teacher and mother of two, detonated explosives at the Confucius Institute within Karachi University. The blast claimed the lives of three Chinese instructors and a Pakistani driver. Claimed by the BLA as its first female suicide operation, it signalled the group's intent to expand its reach beyond traditional battlegrounds. Shari's involvement stunned many, raising questions about how educated women from seemingly stable backgrounds could be drawn into such extremism.

Subsequent cases followed a similar pattern. In June 2023, Sumaiya Qalandrani Baloch carried out an attack on a military convoy in Turbat. Later operations saw Mahal Baloch and others participating in assaults. By early

2026, the trend had accelerated dramatically. During coordinated attacks across Balochistan in late January and February, women played prominent roles. Asifa Mengal, a 24-year-old who had reportedly joined the group on her 21st birthday, was among those involved in strikes on security installations. Hawa Baloch featured in videos released by the BLA, shown engaging forces before her death in Gwadar. Zareena Rafiq rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into paramilitary headquarters in Nokundi in November 2025, becoming one of several female bombers in a short span.

Many of these women, when captured before completing their missions, have offered confessions that paint a darker picture of exploitation rather than voluntary zealotry. Adeela Baloch, for instance, a former health worker, revealed under interrogation how she had been subjected to psychological pressure and coercion by BLA handlers. Others described being lured with narratives of resistance only to find themselves trapped in networks that brooked no exit. Pakistani officials note that while some may embrace the ideology, a significant number appear manipulated, their personal vulnerabilities—economic hardship, family pressures, or social grievances—weaponised against them and, ultimately, against the state.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) forbade the killing of women and children even in the heat of legitimate battle, condemning such acts as contrary to mercy and justice. In one narra-

tion, when a woman was found slain in a campaign, the Messenger of Allah disapproved strongly and forbade the killing of women and children. How then can those who claim kinship with the faith justify thrusting their own daughters and sisters into the fires of suicide attacks, acts that Islamic tradition further condemns as self-destruction? The Qur'an warns, "And do not kill yourselves. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful" (An-Nisa, 4:29), and "do not throw yourselves into destruction with your own hands" (Al-Baqarah, 2:195). These divine and prophetic teachings stand as a solemn rebuke to the militants' cynical strategy.

This brazen use of women as suicide attackers has not gone unnoticed on the international stage. The Western world, including the European Union and several allied nations, has firmly endorsed Pakistan's right to employ all lawful and proportionate measures to counter this sponsored terrorism. Statements from global forums have condemned the attacks unequivocally, stressing the need to dismantle networks that export violence and instability. There is broad recognition that such acts threaten not only Pakistan's security but regional peace, particularly given Balochistan's strategic importance and ongoing development projects.

Yet even as the international community lends its voice to Pakistan's defensive stance, troubling allegations persist regarding external patronage. Pakistani authorities have long pointed to India and certain like-minded

actors as playing a shadowy role, providing support from behind the scenes to fuel discontent and sabotage progress in Balochistan. New Delhi has consistently rejected these claims, but the pattern of accusations, bolstered by intelligence reports and past incidents, continues to strain relations and complicate efforts to isolate the true sponsors of terror.

The human toll remains the most poignant aspect of this conflict. Balochistan's women, whether victims of coercion or willing participants, embody a tragedy that extends far beyond the battlefield. Captured operatives often express regret once removed from militant influence, highlighting how terrorism preys upon the vulnerable. Pakistani security forces, in response, have intensified operations to neutralise threats while emphasising rehabilitation for those mislead.

As this insidious strategy unfolds, it serves as a stark reminder of the lengths to which insurgent groups will go to perpetuate chaos. The people of Balochistan deserve peace and prosperity, not to be sacrificed in a war that exploits their daughters and sisters. Pakistan's resolve, backed by international solidarity and rooted in the timeless principles of justice and mercy enshrined in faith, must remain steadfast in rooting out these elements while addressing genuine local grievances through development and dialogue. Only then can the cycle of violence, and the cynical use of women within it, be brought to an end.

REAR WINDOW

Governor Kundi, Senate Chairman Gilani discuss KP issues, wheat supply

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on

confronting the province, particularly obstacles in wheat transportation and inter-provincial movement, saying the restrictions were causing diffi-

culties for the public, farmers, and business community and required effective federal intervention.

He stressed that all constitutional and democratic forums must play an active role in resolving public issues, ensuring timely completion of del-

public welfare were also discussed. Senate Chairman Gilani expressed keen interest in addressing the province's issues and emphasized that unity among the political leadership was essential for protecting the rights of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and discussed the overall political situation, parliamentary affairs, and key issues facing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Governor highlighted various administrative, economic, and public challenges

Governor KP, Minister Law discuss constitutional matters, lawyers' welfare

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday met Federal Minister for Law and Azam Nazeer Tarar and discussed constitutional and legal matters, the prevailing political situation, and issues related to the legal fraternity.

During the meeting, the two leaders exchanged views on the supremacy of the Constitution and rule of law in the country, as well as constitutional issues arising from the current political situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. They also discussed the establishment of constitutional courts and the role of the provincial government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regarding related matters.

Governor Kundi apprised the federal minister of the issues being faced by lawyers, particularly in the southern districts of the province. Matters relating to the provision of grants to the High Court Bar Association, District Bar Associations of Dera Ismail Khan, Tank and Pabharpu, as well as Tehsil Bar Associations of Kulachi, Parova and Daraban also came under discussion. The meeting further reviewed proposals for the provision of computers and modern technology to bar councils and bar associations to improve legal services and administrative efficiency.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Kundi said that strong and active bar associations played a vital role in the administration of justice, adding that the provision of better facilities to lawyers would help make the judicial system more effective. The two sides also discussed various proposals and measures aimed at resolving the problems faced by the legal community, improving the judicial system and enhancing legal facilities.

Governor KP, Iranian envoy discuss regional peace, trade cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday met Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam at the Governor House here, where they discussed regional peace, bilateral relations, trade cooperation and economic opportunities between Pakistan and Iran.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said an end to the Iran-US conflict and the establishment of lasting peace were essential for regional and global prosperity. He said Pakistan desired peace and was making efforts to promote stability in the region. He expressed the hope that Iran would emerge stronger from recent challenges through unity, patience and resilience, adding that Pakistan wished to see its neighbouring and long-standing friend progress and prosper.

LG reps pay tribute to WASA team for excellent performance

OUR CORRESPONDENT

DIKHAN: Local elected representatives and dignitaries of various union councils of Ismail Khan paid tribute to the entire WASA team for their good performance and timely services during the recent Eid-ul-Adha. According to the details, a simple and dignitary ceremony was held at the WSSC Dera (WASA) office in Dera yesterday. Jamshed Khan, known as Achi Pehlwan, Lala Qamar Zaman Khan, known as Guru, Lala Yousaf Zargar, Shahzad Khan, Zohaib Hassan, Rizwan Khan, and other public representatives of various union councils participated in the ceremony. On this occasion, Chairman WASA Nematullah Khan Gandapur thanked all the dignitaries who participated in the ceremony and said that providing services, be it religious festivals or daily life, is part of our professional responsibilities, which we try to provide despite limited resources. On the special instructions of Chief Executive WASA Deputy Commissioner Hikmat Khan, the entire WASA team has provided services day and night. No institution can provide its services without public cooperation, and just as the public's cooperation with the WASA team And the love and affection we received is unparalleled, for which no matter how much we thank the people, it is still insufficient. Insha Allah, in the same way, with mutual cooperation, we will all together make the Dera a credit to Dera Phalan in the true sense.

PJHRO concerned over excessive power outages after Eid ul Azha

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of Peace and Justice Human Rights Organization (PJHRO), Syed Numan-ul-Din Advocate, has expressed grave concern and strong condemnation over the hours-long unannounced load shedding continuing even after Eid-ul-Adha in various areas of Peshawar, including Ejaz Abad, Gulbahar, Shaheen Muslim Town, Haji Camp, Sethi Town, and Ring Road. He stated that the poor performance and irresponsible attitude of PESCO (Peshawar Electric Supply Company) have made life miserable for the citizens. Due to continuous power outages, freezers and cooling systems have failed, causing sacrificial meat to spoil and inflicting heavy financial losses on the public.

He highlighted that hours of unannounced load shedding during intense summer heat is causing severe distress to women, children, the elderly, and patients. Business activities are being paralyzed, acute water shortages are emerging in mosques and homes, and students and ordinary citizens are suffering from mental and physical agony. Depriving people of a basic facility like electricity is a direct violation of fundamental human rights and constitutes gross negligence on the part of the concerned authorities.

KP govt is actively pursuing an agenda of rule of law, Aftab Alam

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law, Human Rights, and Parliamentary Affairs, Aftab Alam, stated that the provincial government is actively pursuing an agenda of rule of law, transparency, and institutional reforms. He emphasized that resolving all public interest matters in accordance with the constitution and law remains the government's topmost priority. He expressed these views while chairing a meeting of the Cabinet-constituted Standing Committee. The meeting was attended by Minister for Public Health Engineering Fazal Shakoor Khan, Advisor on Forests and Environment Pir Musawwir Khan Ghazi, and Advisor on Finance Muzammil Aslam via Zoom. Senior officials,

including the Secretaries of Local Government, Forests and Environment, Relief and Civil Defense, Transport, Home, and Finance, alongside representatives from the Advocate General's Office and the Forest Department, were also present.

The committee deliberated on a proposal to allocate land for the establishment of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and China Cultural Centre. The forum was informed that this project would further strengthen cultural ties between the two nations and open new avenues for cultural and educational activities in the province. The committee directed the relevant departments to submit final recommendations after fulfilling all legal and administrative requirements. Furthermore, the meeting reviewed pending financial matters between the Peshawar Cantonment Board and the Bus Rapid Transit project. Officials briefed the committee on the ongoing progress, noting that efforts are under-

CM Aide's orders further improvement in Agri Deptt Performance

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Agriculture Mian Muhammad Umar visited Directorate General Agriculture Extension Peshawar, where he inspected various wings of Agriculture Department and received a detailed briefing on ongoing activities and development projects.

During the visit, Main Muhammad Umar also paid tribute to martyrs of Agricultural Training Acedmay tragedy by laying a floral wreath at the martyrs' memorial and honoring their sacrifices.

During the visit, Advisor Agriculture also toured Agriculture Services Academy and Bureau of Agriculture Information, where officials provided comprehensive briefings on institutional performance, ongoing initiatives and future strategies. Mian Muhammad Umar reaffirmed his

commitment to making the Bureau of Agriculture Information more active, effective and aligned with

was held with senior officers of Agriculture Department to discuss departmental affairs, ongoing



modern requirements, emphasizing that timely and accurate dissemination of agricultural information to farmers is essential for agricultural development.

development projects, agricultural reforms and challenges faced by farmers.

Addressing the meeting, Advisor Agriculture directed that department be made a genuinely

farmer-friendly and public service-oriented institution at district level to ensure timely and effective delivery of all services to growers.

He stressed the need for an effective system of accountability and incentives within department, making it clear that strict action would be taken against officials displaying negligence, inefficiency, or irresponsibility in discharge of their duties, while officers and employees demonstrating outstanding performance would be encouraged and rewarded.

Mian Muhammad Umar also directed practical measures for promoting biological control of pests that damage fruits and vegetables. He stated that reducing excessive and unnecessary use of pesticides on agricultural produce is a pressing need of the time. He emphasized the promotion of modern and environmentally friendly farming practices to ensure food safety and protect public health.

Production of cheap electricity essential for the industrial sector: Nazir Abbasi

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Energy and Power Nazir Ahmad Abbasi has said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a province rich in energy resources. Taking revolutionary steps for the development of the industrial sector in the province through maximum utilization of natural resources and production of cheap electricity is the top priority of the current provincial government.

The ongoing solar energy projects including hydroelectricity projects of the Department of Energy and Power in the province will prove to be a game changer for the development of the province in the coming days. Timely and quality completion of energy projects in the province is the biggest challenge for us. All matters in the department will be dealt with on merit, while dealing with matters

with merit and transparency is important for all of us. He expressed these views dur-

ing a briefing given by the Paktunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO), a subsidiary of the department, after taking charge of his portfolio as Minister Energy & Power Department.



On this occasion, Secretary Energy Nisar Ahmed and PEDO Chief Executive Engineer Anwar ul Haq gave a briefing and said that under the supervision of PEDO,

work is going on rapidly on various energy projects for the production of cheap hydropower in the province. A total of 224 MW of electricity is currently being generated from the hydropower projects completed under PEDO, which are generating billions of rupees annually. Similarly, 7 projects including 300 MW Balakot Mansehra, 157 MW Madin Swat, 88 MW Gabral Work is progressing rapidly on Kalam, 84 MW Mittaltan Swat, 69 MW Lawi Chitral, 10.5 MW Chapri Charkhel Kurram and 6.9 MW Mujahideen

Power Project Torghar projects, while work is also progressing rapidly on the project to lay the province's own 40-kilometer long 132/220 KV transmission line from Mittaltan to Madin.

Meanwhile, under the PEDO department, several projects have been completed to convert thousands of schools, mosques, and basic health centers to solar energy, while practical work is also being started on the project to provide free solar systems to 130,000 deserving families.

Provincial Minister Nazir Ahmad Abbasi, while expressing satisfaction with the performance of the department, stressed that no delay in public interest projects will be tolerated. He expressed hope that the department's income will be further increased by completing the ongoing energy projects on time.

Team constituted to eliminate fake currency and other crimes

CORRESPONDENT

TAKHT BHAI: On the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Malakand & Commandant Levies Force Muhammad Fayaz Sherpao, and on the orders of Assistant Commissioner & Deputy Commandant Dargal Muhammad Ali Khan Masood, Naib Subedar Saif ur Rehman formed a team comprising jawans Noman Khan and Faisal Khan under his own supervision for Levies Force Sakhakot, Thana Waqel ur Rehman Shaheed, to eliminate fake currency and other crimes. During a search operation, the team arrested a suspicious suspect, Fazal Bacha s/o Gul Hasan Shah, resident of Old Sakhakot, and recovered from his possession fake Pakistani currency: 10 notes of Rs 1000, 1 note of Rs 500, 1 note of Rs 75, and 9 fake UAE 100 Dirham notes.

Criminology Students briefed on Safe City Project and Modern Policing

AMEER MUAVIA

PESHAWAR: In line with the modern policing vision of Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Zulfiqar Hameed, and under the Safe City Project established with the support of the provincial government, Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar Dr. Mian Saeed Ahmed delivered a comprehensive briefing to students of the Department of Criminology, University of Peshawar, at Malik Saad Shaheed Police Lines.

The CCPO stated that the Safe City Project is a significant milestone in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police's modern policing strategy. The project utilizes advanced digital surveillance technology and an integrated Command and Control System to help maintain law and order, effectively prevent crime, identify suspicious activities in a timely manner, and ensure a rapid response during emergencies.

The visiting delegation was also given a tour of the

Command and Control Centre, where students were briefed on the practical use of the latest surveillance systems, panic buttons, and intelligent monitoring technologies.

Dr. Mian Saeed Ahmed



informed the participants that, in accordance with the vision of IGP Zulfiqar Hameed, the Safe City Project has become a reliable and effective platform for the timely detection of crimes, tracing suspects, monitoring sensitive locations, collecting evidence, and providing immediate assistance to citizens. He added that the use of modern technology has significantly enhanced transparency, accountability, and professional standards

within the policing system. SP Headquarters Ali Gohar, DSP Operations Safe City Project Wajid Shah, and Assistant Professor Abrar Khan were also present on the occasion.

Addressing a question-

and-answer session, the CCPO said that Peshawar Police is actively utilizing the Safe City Project, an extensive camera surveillance network, and body-worn cameras to safeguard lives and property, combat street crime, and strengthen law enforcement efforts.

The delegation also visited the Police Martyrs' Memorial and offered prayers for the departed souls of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police martyrs.