

Pakistan rejects Taliban claim of weapons smuggling into Afghanistan

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has rejected a claim by the Afghan Taliban that weapons are being smuggled from Pakistan into Afghanistan, calling the allegation baseless.

It added that the country also has large stockpiles of weapons dating back to the Soviet era.

Linking these weapons to Pakistan, the ministry said, amounts to diverting attention from the actual source of the billion left behind by US and allied forces.

It said these groups are involved in planning and carrying out terrorist attacks in Pakistan.

Pakistan's Ministry of Information called on the Afghan Taliban to take effective action against militant groups operating from Afghan soil and to ensure that its territory is not used for terrorism against any country.

Earlier, Pakistan has rejected claims by the Afghan Taliban that it had carried out strikes on alleged militant hideouts in border areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

In a statement issued through its official fact-checking platform, the ministry described the claims as "false" and accused the Afghan Taliban of spreading misinformation through official statements and affiliated channels.

The ministry further alleged that terrorist groups operating from Afghan territory have been provided with shelter, facilitation and freedom to operate.

The ministry said Afghanistan already possesses weapons worth an estimated \$7.2

Pak-Saudi-Turkiye Defence Pact open to regional countries, says Dar

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Sunday that the defence agreement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye was open to other countries in the region that were willing to uphold its core principles.

Dar also stressed that the pact was "purely defensive" and was not directed against any country. The remarks came a day after Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan indicated that Egypt could join the agreement once certain technical issues were resolved. Fidan also said Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan wanted to see the alliance expand, and that Egypt was a potential candidate to join, among others.

In a joint statement, they said the accord intended to strengthen collective deterrence against any act of aggression and stipulates that an armed attack against any of the three would be regarded as an attack on all. Speaking to the state-run Anadolu news agency, Fidan said the new alliance was not directed against Iran or any other country, but rather served as a general pledge to support the three allies' security.

He added that the allies would decide through consultations what degree, form, and format of support they would ask for in the event of an attack, but that no country would be considered a threat as long as a member state is not attacked. Türkiye, which has Nato's second-largest army, has said the pact was open to expansion to other regional countries and did not seek to replace any existing alliances.

"Nato is a giant military alliance where there are 32 countries. We have started here as three countries and we have to take very humble but concrete steps," he said, adding efforts to finalise the pact had been underway for two years and eight months. He added that a committee of ministers similar to that within Nato would be formed as part of the alliance, as well as a general secretariat based in Saudi Arabia, but that operational details would be set at the first committee meeting.

Makkah Defence Pact to Boost Muslim Unity: Ahsan Iqbal

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday congratulated the nation on the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia-Türkiye "Makkah Joint Defence Agreement", describing it as a historic development that would contribute to regional peace and stability and open new avenues of cooperation among Muslim countries.

Talking to PTV News here on Sunday, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal said the agreement assumed exceptional significance in the context of rapidly changing geopolitical dynamics and evolving security challenges in the region.

Ahsan Iqbal said the "Makkah Joint Defence Agreement" reflected the leadership and vision of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces (COAS and CDF), Syed Asim Munir..

The Minister emphasized that the agreement was not directed against any country but aimed at strengthening collective security, promoting peace and stability, and enabling the three countries to respond effectively to emerging geopolitical challenges.

Ahsan Iqbal said the international and regional environment was undergoing rapid transformation, making mutual trust, cooperation and coordinated strategies among Muslim countries increasingly important.

He said Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye were three important Muslim countries with the potential to play a significant role in promoting peace, stability and development in the region.

The minister said the "Makkah Joint Defence Agreement" should be viewed from a broader perspective as its significance would not remain confined to the defence sector. It could also create opportunities for enhanced political, economic, diplomatic and strategic cooperation among Muslim countries.

Naqvi Orders Faster Immigration at Lahore Airport

TIMES REPORT

LAHORE: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday visited Allama Iqbal International Airport and reviewed the immigration process, directing officials to speed up procedures and ensure all counters remain operational.

During his inspection of the immigration counters, the minister spoke to staff and passengers about the time taken to complete immigration formalities.

Passengers told him that the process had taken around 30 minutes and urged authorities to improve arrangements.

Taking immediate notice, Naqvi ordered that all immigration counters be kept open to reduce delays and facilitate passengers.

He said keeping additional counters operational would help prevent unnecessary delays and provide greater convenience to travellers.

He also assured passengers that steps were being taken to make the immigration process faster.

The minister also took notice of a passenger's complaint that an agent had taken money from them.

He referred the matter to the FIA director and ordered the agent's arrest.

Interior minister directed officials not to allow anyone to travel on the basis of incomplete travel documents.

He said technology had made the immigration process easier and called for stricter action against those attempting to travel on fake documents.

"Passengers carrying complete travel documents will not be stopped from travelling," the interior minister said.

Security forces eliminate 15 militants during Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3 in Balochistan

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Security forces have killed 15 militants in intelligence-based operations conducted across several districts of Balochistan under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3, according to media reports on Sunday.

According to the channel report, the operations were carried out in Mastung, Bolan, Washuk, Awaran, Sibi, Khuzdar, Harnai, and Nushki.

During the operation, a large quantity of weapons and ammunition was also recovered from the militants, according to security officials.

Officials said the operations had caused significant damage to the militant network and restricted the movement of its members.

Security forces have pledged to continue operations under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3 without interruption until the threat of terrorism is eliminated.

Yesterday, an army officer was martyred while militants were killed during two intelligence-based operations in Hangu and Balochistan, according to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

In Hangu district, security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in the Dallan area on 7 August after receiving information about the presence of militants.

According to ISPR, troops targeted a militant hideout and forced the suspects to flee. The militants then took shelter in a mosque during their retreat, according to the statement.

During an intense exchange of fire, seven militants were killed and two wounded suspects were arrested.

Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the militants, who were accused of carrying out attacks against security forces, law-enforcement personnel, and civilians.

Twenty-seven-year-old Captain Hamza Akram was killed while leading his troops during the operation.

He was from the Narowal district and was reportedly at the front of his unit during the pursuit of the militants.

Security forces said Captain Hamza Akram sacrificed his life while defending the country.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has praised the security forces for carrying out successful intelligence-based operations in Balochistan under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3.

Naqvi commended the professional skills of the security forces after 15 militants were killed during the operations. He said the successful actions had foiled the plans of the groups described by the government as Fitna al-Hindustan and Fitna al-Khwarji.

The interior minister said the brave personnel fighting terrorism were a source of pride for the nation. He praised their efforts and sacrifices in confronting militant threats.

Naqvi said that, with the support of the people, the government and security forces would work to completely eliminate militants belonging to Fitna al-Hindustan and Fitna al-Khwarji from Balochistan.

Makkah Accord a Matter of Pride for Entire Muslim Ummah, Says Atta Tarar

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has praised the historic defense pact among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye, describing it as a matter of immense pride for both the Pakistani people and the entire Muslim Ummah.

Tarar, in an exclusive talk with media, expressed his profound gratitude to the Almighty for the blessed agreement, noting that this partnership among the three brotherly nations is a special blessing for the global Muslim community.

The minister highlighted that the entire nation is celebrating the Makkah Accord with great fervor. He pointed out that the flags of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye are proudly displayed across the country, and the public is overwhelmed with joy by this landmark development.

He commended the crucial role played by the country's leadership including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for their dedicated efforts in signing the agreement.

Through this trilateral partnership, Tarar noted that Pakistan has finally achieved a prestigious status it has dreamed of for a long time.

He remarked that Allah has blessed Pakistan with the profound honor and responsibility of being the defender and protector of the Harmain Sharifain.

The minister congratulated the Pakistani nation on this monumental achievement, emphasizing that the three countries will now move forward together in accordance with this milestone pact.

Tariq Fazal Hails Makkah Agreement for Peace

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhary on Sunday said the historic defence agreement signed in Makkah between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye had laid the foundation for lasting peace in the region.

Talking to the media, he congratulated the entire nation on the landmark agreement and said Pakistan's armed forces had played a prominent role in making the accord possible through their professional expertise under the leadership of Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir.

Dr Tariq also acknowledged the tireless efforts of the political team led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and appreciated Pakistan's diplomatic achievements that contributed to the agreement.

He said Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye already enjoyed close and brotherly relations, adding that the agreement would further strengthen ties among the three countries.

Under the agreement, an aggression against any one of the three countries would be considered an aggression against all, he said.

Dr Tariq said the pact would enhance cooperation and defence relations among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye.

He expressed confidence that the agreement would not only contribute to peace and stability but also improve coordination, connectivity and relations among the three countries in the coming days.

KP Govt Rejects Fake Notification on Ghazi Tehsil, Warns Against Propaganda

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR : The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government has strongly rejected a viral notification circulating on social media that falsely claims the inclusion of Ghazi Tehsil into the federal territory, declaring it fabricated and misleading.

In an official statement, KP government spokesperson Shafi Jan said that the dissemination of fake news and forged notifications has unfortunately become a recurring tactic by certain elements aiming to create confusion and unrest among the public.

He noted that propaganda regarding the alleged transfer of Ghazi Tehsil to federal control is entirely baseless and holds no legal or constitutional standing. The spokesperson clarified that altering the geographical or administrative status of any province or its subdivisions is a serious constitutional matter, which requires a formal amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan. Such changes cannot be executed through a simple notification, let alone an unofficial or fake document circulating on social media platforms.

Shafi Jan emphasized that the provincial government is fully committed to safeguarding the mandate given by the people and preserving the territorial integrity of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"We consider it our constitutional and democratic duty to protect the province's unity and the trust reposed in us by the public," he said.

He further warned that any attempt to undermine the province's geographical unity or to spread misinformation would be dealt with strictly in accordance with the law. The authorities have taken notice of those responsible for circulating the fake notification, and legal action will be initiated against all individuals involved in creating or sharing such fabricated content.

Reaffirming the government's stance, Shafi Jan stated that Ghazi Tehsil remains an integral part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and no false claim or forged notification can alter this fact. He urged citizens to remain vigilant and refrain from believing or forwarding unverified information.

The spokesperson also advised the public to rely only on official government channels and credible media sources for accurate information. He stressed that responsible use of social media is essential to prevent the spread of misinformation and to maintain public trust and harmony.

The KP government reiterated its resolve to counter false narratives and ensure transparency, while taking all necessary measures to uphold the rule of law and protect the province's constitutional status.

ISPR releases Balochi patriotic song 'Pak Ay Watan' for Azadi Day

TIMES REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) has released a new Balochi patriotic song, "Pak Ay Watan", on the occasion of Independence Day, with renowned Balochi singer Akhtar Chahal expressing love for Pakistan through his traditional style and passionate Balochi lyrics.

The song brings together Balochi culture and patriotism, with the colours, music and words of Balochistan reflecting a strong spirit of love for Pakistan and its security and survival. Akhtar Chahal's traditional performance gives the patriotic song a distinct Balochi character.

"Pak Ay Watan" also expresses the resolve that Pakistan is not merely a geographical territory but an identity for its people, for which they are willing to make sacrifices.

Atta Tarar condoles death of PTV News reporter's brother

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Sunday expressed grief over the death of Nasir Hussain, elder brother of Pakistan Television (PTV) News senior reporter Naveed Azhar. In a condolence message, the minister conveyed his sympathies to the bereaved family and said he was deeply saddened to learn of Nasir Hussain's death.

Tarar said he and his family shared the grief of Naveed Azhar and his family at the loss. He prayed that Allah Almighty grant the deceased forgiveness and a high place in paradise and give strength and patience to the bereaved family to bear the loss.

CityNews

Goods transporters wheel-jam strike continue for third day

OUR CORRESPONDENT

JAHANGIRA: The wheel-jam strike announced by the All Pakistan Goods Transport Alliance across the country entered its third consecutive day today. As a result, long queues of freight vehicles have formed at Khairabad, the gateway to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, causing severe difficulties for trans-



porters.

Speaking to the media, Haji Atlas Khan, General Secretary of the All Pakistan Goods Transport Alliance, said that the protest would continue until the legitimate demands of transporters are accepted.

He said that the transporters' demands include an increase in diesel prices on a daily basis, higher taxes at toll plazas, the abolition of illegal collection slips, and other related issues.

Haji Atlas Khan said that the economic exploitation of transporters would not be tolerated under any circumstances. He urged the government to immediately accept the legitimate demands of the transporters so that the strike could be called off and normal transportation services restored.

Meanwhile, protest camps have also been established by transporters at various locations across Nowshera, where the protest continued for the third consecutive day. Transporters' representatives said that the wheel-jam strike would continue indefinitely until all their demands are accepted.

Population Welfare Deptt announces Independence Day Celebrations

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A monthly performance review meeting of Family Welfare Counsellors, Field Technical Officers, and In-Charges of all Family Welfare Centres across Peshawar district was held under the chairmanship of District Population Welfare Officer Peshawar, Sami Ullah Khan Khil.

Kashif Fida, Shahid Murad, and other concerned officers and officials attended the meeting. The meeting reviewed in detail the performance of Family Welfare Centres during the previous month, particularly the family planning services provided to the public. Discussions were also held on improving the quality and effectiveness of public services, family planning initiatives, and ongoing activities of the Population Welfare Department.

On the occasion, District Population Welfare Officer Peshawar Sami Ullah Khan Khil directed that special Independence Day celebrations be organized at all Family Welfare Centres across the district in connection with Pakistan's 79th Independence Day.

He directed the concerned officials to decorate all Family Welfare Centres in Peshawar district with national flags and national colours and organize special awareness activities to promote the spirit and significance of Independence Day among the public.

Sami Ullah Khan Khil said that Independence Day provides an opportunity to renew the national commitment to the ideals behind the creation of Pakistan, national unity, solidarity, and the country's progress and development.

He further said that the Population Welfare Department Peshawar would actively participate in Independence Day celebrations and make every effort to promote national awareness, patriotism, unity, and a sense of responsibility among the people.

Youth Affairs Directorate expands outreach across KP, holds 100 plus activities in July

Active district offices, complaint cells formation, and youth engagement initiatives aimed at empowering young generation

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Directorate of Youth Affairs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has intensified its activities across the province, with more than 100 events organized in different districts during July as part of the KP government's vision to empower and engage the younger generation.

A press release states, under the direction and supervision of Director Youth Affairs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abbas Khan Afridi, the Directorate has made its district-level offices and staff fully functional across the province, enabling it to directly engage with young people and address issues concerning their development, participation and welfare. The July activities included blood donation camps, youth engagement programs on national and public-interest issues, observance of Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir, and a range of other educational, social and community-based activities. The initiatives were aimed at providing young people with opportunities to participate in constructive activities while promoting social responsibility and awareness. Abbas Afridi said that the Directorate was working to ensure that youth-related programs were not confined to major urban centres but reached the young people across all districts of the province through its active field offices and staff.

According to him, in line with the provincial government's instructions, complaint cells have also been established across KP to provide young people with a platform to raise their concerns and complaints on matters of public interest. "The initiative is intended to strengthen communication between the government and the younger population and ensure that youth voices are heard at the appropriate forums," he added.



KMU and K2X Tech sign five-year strategic partnership

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Khyber Medical University (KMU), Peshawar, and K2X Tech (Private) Limited have signed a five-year strategic partnership agreement to promote digital health, Artificial Intelligence (AI), modern healthcare technologies, research, innovation, and technology-driven solutions in the health sector.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by KMU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq and K2X Tech Chief Executive Officer Dr. Amir Saeed. K2X Tech Chairman Dr. Tahir Riaz participated online from Denmark. Director

ORIC Dr. Zohaib Khan, Additional Director ORIC Dr. Zeeshan Kabir, and Director KMU Business



Incubation Center (KUBIC) Wasim-ul-Haq were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, KMU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq said that modern technology and Artificial Intelligence can play an

important role in developing innovative, effective, and cost-efficient solutions for the health-

care sector. He said that collaboration between KMU and industry would help translate research into practical applications while creating new opportunities for students, researchers, and young entrepreneurs.

Dr. Amir Saeed, CEO of K2X Tech, said that the company would work with KMU to develop digital health platforms, advanced health information systems, and AI-based solutions aimed at addressing emerging healthcare needs.

Under the partnership, the two institutions will collaborate in joint research, development of innovative products and solutions, technology commercialization, training, and promotion of new healthcare-related business ventures.

Through KUBIC, emerging startups will also be provided mentorship, technical support, and opportunities to connect with potential investors.

WSSC DIKhan installs GPS trackers in sanitation vehicles to enhance monitoring

TIMES REPORT

DI KHAN: The Water and Sanitation Services Company (WSSC) Dera Ismail Khan has introduced a GPS-based tracking system for its sanitation vehicles to enhance transparency, accountability and operational efficiency in municipal sanitation services.

The initiative, launched under the public agenda of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, is aimed at strengthening monitoring of sanitation operations and ensuring effective utilization of the company's vehicles and field resources across the city.

Under the new system, GPS trackers have been installed in all sanitation vehicles, enabling real-time monitoring of their locations and movement. The system will also facilitate supervision of daily sanitation activities and help ensure that vehicles remain available for their assigned duties.

The technology is expected to improve operational discipline, minimize unnecessary delays and facilitate timely response to public complaints by providing an effective mechanism for monitoring field activities and vehicle deployment.

Chairman Board of Directors/Chief Executive Officer WSSC DIKhan Naimat Ullah Khan said the installation of GPS trackers was an important step towards introducing modern technology into municipal service delivery.

He said the system would ensure greater transparency in sanitation operations by enabling real-time monitoring of vehicles and helping the management assess field performance, adherence to schedules and utilization of resources more effectively.

Naimat Ullah Khan said WSSC was committed to adopting modern and technology-based solutions to improve sanitation services and ensure a prompt and efficient response to citizens' complaints. He added that the initiative would further strengthen institutional accountability and improve public confidence in municipal services.

The WSSC said the GPS-based monitoring system would contribute to better planning, supervision and management of sanitation operations and help ensure more efficient use of available resources for providing cleaner and healthier surroundings to citizens.

The company also urged citizens to cooperate with sanitation teams and play their role in maintaining cleanliness, stressing that keeping the city clean was a shared responsibility.

GGDC established in Matani, admissions to begin tomorrow

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Thanks to the special efforts of DDAC Chairman and MPA from PK-77, Sher Ali Afridi, a Government Girls Degree College has been established in Matani, with regular admissions scheduled to begin tomorrow. The initiative marks a historic and significant development toward providing higher education opportunities to female students from Matani and adjoining areas.

Nearly 79 years after the establishment of Pakistan, the setting up of a girls' degree college in Matani represents a major step toward ending the long-standing educational deprivation faced by female students

in the area. The establishment of the college will enable students from Matani and surrounding areas to pursue higher education closer to home, eliminating the need to travel to distant areas for their studies.

In his message, DDAC Chairman and MPA for PK-77, Sher Ali Afridi, said:

"Education is the fundamental guarantee of the progress of any society. The establishment of the Government Girls Degree College in Matani is an important step toward fulfilling a long-standing educational need of our daughters. I am pleased that regular admissions to the institution are beginning tomorrow. I appeal to all female students and

their parents in Matani and adjoining areas to make full use of this excellent opportunity and enroll their daughters in the institution to pursue higher education."

He further stated: "Our aim is to ensure that the daughters of Matani do not have to travel to distant areas for education, but instead have access to quality and dignified educational facilities within their own area. Women's education is a means of advancing the entire society, and our daughters, through education, can play an important role not only in the development of their families but also of the area and the country."

Patriotic Song "Junoon-e-Azadi" unveiled

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Pakistan Culture, Tourism and Arts Organization (PCTO) organized a grand unveiling ceremony of its patriotic song "Junoon-e-Azadi" in connection with Pakistan's Independence Day. The ceremony was held on August 8 at China Window, Peshawar, and was attended by artists, writers, journalists and prominent personalities from various walks of life.

The chief guest at the ceremony was Pakistan Television (PTV) Peshawar General Manager



Ibrahim Kamal. Members of the PCTO executive body, distinguished advisers and other notable personalities were also present on the occasion.

The patriotic song "Junoon-e-Azadi" has been written by renowned poet, writer and PCTO Adviser for Literature, Dr. Shahida Shaheen Sardar. The song was formally unveiled during the ceremony and was warmly appreciated by the participants, who expressed their enthusiasm and admiration for the creative initiative. The speakers said that promoting national spirit through art, literature, music and culture and familiarizing the younger generation with Pakistan's positive identity, national history and cultural values is an important need of the time.

Five Held for Wheelie Riding in Peshawar Crackdown

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: City Traffic Police Peshawar has taken action against reckless wheelie riding on Ring Road, arresting five individuals and impounding their motorcycles. According to details, on the directives of Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Zahidullah, traffic officials launched a crackdown against one-wheelie (wheelie riding). During the operation, five youths were taken into custody, and their motorcycles were confiscated under relevant legal provisions and shifted to the terminal. The traffic police also obtained written assurances from the parents of the accused, ensuring that their children would not engage in such dangerous activities in the future. Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Zahidullah stated that wheelie riding to gain attention can lead to lifelong disability and fatal accidents. He emphasized that such acts are equivalent to risking one's life, noting that many precious lives have already been lost due to this dangerous practice, turning happy homes into mourning.

He further directed officials to intensify operations against offenders, ensure strict enforcement of traffic laws, and take firm action without leniency. He added that the traffic police are utilizing all available resources to improve traffic discipline and ensure public safety. Dr. Zahidullah reiterated that awareness campaigns and strict enforcement are aimed at maintaining an efficient traffic system and protecting citizens' lives, adding that negligence in this regard will not be tolerated and strict legal action will be taken against violators.

Wajeeha Qazi defends research thesis

TIMES REPORT

HARIPUR: Wajeeha Qazi, a student of the Department of Psychology at the University of Haripur, has successfully defended her MS research thesis and has been declared eligible for the award of the MS degree. Wajeeha Qazi completed her research thesis under the supervision of Dr. Samina Humayun. The title of her research was "Mediating Role of Self-Esteem in the Relationship Between Parenting Styles and Psychopathological Problems Among Adolescents."

During the viva held yesterday, the external examiner and faculty members of the Department of Psychology appreciated Wajeeha Qazi's research work, command of the subject, and effective presentation. Following her successful defense, she was declared eligible for the MS degree. On the occasion, Wajeeha Qazi thanked Allah Almighty for her success and expressed special gratitude to her supervisor, Dr. Samina Humayun, her parents, and other teachers. She said that their guidance, encouragement, and prayers played an important role in achieving this success.

Faculty members and fellow students of the Department of Psychology congratulated Wajeeha Qazi on her achievement and expressed their best wishes for her future academic and research endeavors.

Creative Art Association forms new visual art team

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Creative Art Association (Registered) has constituted a new team for its Visual Art Department to make organizational affairs more effective and to further organize and activate the field of visual arts. According to a notification issued by the association's central secretariat, various office-bearers have been appointed following mutual consultation of the Executive Council and approval of the chairman.

According to the notification, Anila Mudassar, Assistant Professor at Benazir Women University Peshawar, has been appointed Convener, while Afshin Zaman, Lecturer at the University of Peshawar, has been appointed Deputy Convener. Quresh Khan, a set designer at PTV Peshawar, has been appointed Coordinator. Similarly, Farah Javed, Lecturer at the University of Peshawar, has been appointed Secretary, while Ajmal Shah Ajmalain, Lecturer at Beaconhouse School Mardan, has been appointed Joint Secretary. Renowned visual artist Zakir Ali has been appointed Secretary Research and Planning.

New Transformer installed in Nazargari Bhanamari

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The faulty transformer near the tube well in Nazargari Bhanamari has finally been replaced and a new transformer has been installed, bringing relief to the local residents. The people of the area expressed their gratitude to Arbab Sher Ali, Syed Qasim Ali Shah, Gohar Orakzai, Irfan Khan, Imran Khan, and other community members for their continuous efforts and practical contributions, which made the approval and installation of the transformer possible.

According to the residents, the previous transformer had become faulty, causing severe inconvenience during the hot weather, including power outages, low voltage, and other issues. Despite repairs, the transformer repeatedly developed faults again, after which efforts were initiated to secure a permanent solution, and eventually the issue was resolved. The residents once again thanked Arbab Sher Ali,

Syed Qasim Ali Shah, Gohar Orakzai, Irfan Khan, Imran Khan, and all others, stating that their collective efforts resolved a major problem in the area. The locals expressed hope that in the future as well, collective efforts will continue



for the resolution of basic community issues.

However, the residents have demanded from PESCO authorities to provide a 200 KV transformer for the Nazargari Bhanamari tube well area so that the increased electricity load during the summer season can be handled easily and the repeated failure of transformers due to overload-

ing can be prevented in the future.

The residents said that with the continuous increase in population and electricity usage, the load has also increased significantly. During the summer season, the use of fans, coolers, refrigerators, water pumps, and other electrical appliances further increases the load. In this situation, the provision of a higher capacity 200 KV transformer has become a pressing need.

The locals stated that while the installation of the current transformer is a welcome step, a stable and long-term electricity supply requires the provision of a 200 KV transformer to avoid future problems. They urged senior PESCO officials to prioritize this public demand.

Once again, the residents thanked Arbab Sher Ali, Syed Qasim Ali Shah, Gohar Orakzai, Irfan Khan, Imran Khan, and all other individuals, stating that their joint efforts resolved a major issue in the area.

Artists in poverty, govt will not remain silent: Malik Liaquat

AMJAD HADI YOUSAFZAI

PESHAWAR: Artists have for years spread happiness in society and helped people forget their sorrows through their voices, music, acting and other artistic talents. However, many of these artists are now forced to live in poverty and deprivation, which is a matter of concern for both society and the government. Adviser to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Zakat, Ushr, Special Education and Women Empowerment, Malik Liaquat Ali Khan, has said that practical steps will be taken to ensure that deserving artists receive their due rights and essential facilities at their doorsteps.

Addressing a ceremony organized by the All Artists Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

at Nishtar Hall, Peshawar, Malik Liaquat Ali Khan said the government was fully aware of the problems faced by the artist community and would do its utmost to serve artists within the scope

spread happiness in people's lives through their talents, adding that it was the collective responsibility of everyone to address the hardships and deprivation faced by artists themselves. He main-



of its responsibilities. He said artists were an important part of society and had played a prominent role in preserving the culture, language, music and traditions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said artists

tained that temporary assistance alone was not enough for the welfare of the artist community and that coordinated and effective measures were needed to resolve their problems on a permanent basis.

Pakistan-Saudi Arabia-Türkiye defence pact historic step: Aleem Khan



TWIN CITIES

Rescue, relief operations continue after heavy rains in Upper Chitral

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Pakistan Army has launched relief and rescue operations in Upper Chitral after torrential rains triggered flash floods, damaging roads, bridges, houses and agricultural land in several areas of the district.

According to details, heavy rains caused flash floods in different parts of Upper Chitral, severely affecting roads, streets, agricultural fields and residential areas.

A large quantity of soil and debris accumulated on roads, disrupting transportation and adversely affecting routine life in the affected areas.

Personnel of the Frontier Corps Khyber Pakhtunkhwa North reached the affected areas amid continuing rainfall and initiated relief activities.

The personnel provided necessary assistance to residents affected by the flooding.

Several people trapped in floodwater were safely rescued, while heavy machinery was deployed to clear blocked roads and remove debris, restoring traffic flow in the affected areas.

Local residents appreciated the timely response and relief efforts of the Pakistan Army and paid tribute to the security forces for assisting people during the difficult situation. The security forces reiterated their commitment to standing by the people during natural disasters and other emergencies and continuing relief and humanitarian assistance whenever required.

Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig Joins Lawmakers from Around the World in Hague Dialogue on Equality and Human Rights

NADEEM FAISAL BAIGA

KARACHI: Pakistan's parliamentary representation received international recognition as Syed Naveed Qamar, President of the meeting, chaired a high-level gathering of parliamentarians at the Senate of the Netherlands in The Hague on August 7. The meeting brought together around 40 members of parliament from different countries, providing a platform for lawmakers to exchange views and develop strategies on contemporary human rights and equality issues.

MNA Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig also attended the meeting, alongside fellow parliamentarians and members of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee. His participation highlighted Pakistan's engagement in international parliamentary forums and its contribution to global discussions on issues of shared concern. Syed Naveed Qamar, who chaired the meeting, played a prominent role in facilitating the discussions and bringing together parliamentarians from diverse national and political backgrounds.

The gathering was organized by Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), the Global Equality Caucus (GEC), the Victory Institute and the Council for Global Equality.

The forum focused on exchange-

ing experiences and discussing Along with other Pakistani parlia-

The participation of lawmakers



approaches to advancing equality, human rights and the protection of vulnerable communities in different national and social contexts.

Qamar described the opportunity to chair the international meeting as an honor, noting the importance of parliamentary cooperation in addressing issues of equality and human rights.

The participation of Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig added a significant Pakistani presence to the international parliamentary gathering.

mentarians, he contributed to the broader engagement between lawmakers from different countries.

His participation underscored the role of Pakistani parliamentarians in international forums and their efforts to maintain dialogue with legislators and institutions from around the world. The meeting at the Dutch Senate provided an opportunity for parliamentarians to share perspectives, discuss challenges and explore avenues for greater international cooperation.

from numerous countries reflected the growing importance of parliamentary diplomacy in addressing global issues and promoting dialogue across national boundaries.

The Hague gathering also offered Pakistan an opportunity to showcase its parliamentary engagement on the international stage, with the leadership of Syed Naveed Qamar and the participation of Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig highlighting the country's active role in multilateral parliamentary forums.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi Praises Ombudsperson's Role in Protecting Women's Rights

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday appreciated the performance of the Provincial Ombudsperson, saying the institution was playing an important role in providing speedy and inexpensive justice to the people, particularly in safeguarding women's rights.

The Governor expressed these views during a meeting with Provincial Ombudsperson Rubab Mehdi at the Governor House, where she presented the institution's annual performance report.

During the meeting, Rubab Mehdi informed the Governor that the institution had taken effective measures to ensure women's legal rights, resulting in the restoration of properties worth approximately Rs 4.1 billion to women across the province.

She said the institution had conducted more than 19,000 hearings

during the past year and was dispo-

plaints and cases on a daily basis.



ing of an average of 80 to 200 com-

The Ombudsperson further said

that, for the first time, special open courts for women had been organized to provide justice at their doorstep, with significant participation of women in Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan.

She also informed the Governor that Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) had been signed with the National Assembly and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly to strengthen cooperation on public grievance redressal and legislation.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi commended the ombudsperson's performance and said ensuring women's legal and economic rights was a welcome development.

He said the Provincial Ombudsperson's institution was making valuable contributions towards providing prompt and affordable justice to the public and its services for the protection of women's rights were highly commendable.

KP raises special allowance for disabled employees, pensions for LB employees

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Department has increased the special conveyance allowance for eligible disabled government employees and raised the net pensions of retirees of the Local Council Board. According to a notification issued by the department, the special conveyance allowance for disabled employees has been increased from Rs6,000 to Rs10,000 per month. The revised allowance will take effect from July 1, 2026. The increase will benefit eligible disabled officers and employees of the local council board, local governance school, capital metropolitan government Peshawar and tehsil municipal administrations across the province. The department said the allowance would be paid under the terms and conditions set by the finance department.

The decision to increase the allowance was approved at a meeting of the Local Council Board. Meanwhile, the government has also approved a 7% increase in the net pensions of Local Council Board pensioners. The pension increase will also apply to retirees of the local council board, local governance school, capital metropolitan government Peshawar and tehsil municipal administrations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Two tribal elders shot dead in South Waziristan

BY: APP

PESHAWAR: In Zarmilan area of Toi Khulla tehsil of Lower South Waziristan, two local elders were shot dead by unidentified armed men, police informed on Sunday. According to police, the incident took place in Dawa Sarakai area of Zarmilan, where the attackers targeted the both elders and fled the scene after the shooting.

The deceased were identified as Malik Badshah, son of Khayal, from Kamarani branch of Suleman Khel tribe and Haji Gul, a contractor, from the Morakhan Khel branch of Suleman Khel tribe. Police said motive behind the shooting has not yet been determined. Further investigation is underway, while security and surveillance measures have been intensified in the area. Local residents have expressed deep concern over the incident and demanded a transparent investigation and arresting those responsible. Political and social circles in Waziristan also strongly condemned the incident, saying such tragic acts are highly damaging to peace and stability in the region.

D.I. Khan Board Announces Matric Results

MUHAMMAD REHAN

D.I. KHAN: The Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Dera Ismail Khan has announced the results of the Matric Annual Examinations, with Class 9 recording an overall pass percentage of 87.37 percent and Class 10 achieving 94.18 percent.

Director Elementary and Secondary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Jaffer Mansoor Abbasi was the chief guest at the result announcement ceremony. BISE D.I. Khan Chairman Prof. Dr. Ehsanullah, Controller Examinations Dr. Qaiser Anwar, Secretary Dr. Qayyum Nawaz, board officials, principals, DEOs, teachers, students and parents attended the event.

According to the results, 25,521 candidates appeared in the Class 9 examination, of whom 22,298 were declared successful. In Class 10, 24,927 candidates appeared and 23,477 passed the examination.

In the Science Group, Hafsa Noor, daughter of Muhammad Saleem, of Lead School and College secured first position with 1,177 marks. Muaz Khan, son of Syed Khan, of Cadet College Spinkai, South Waziristan, secured second position with 1,173 marks, while Misbah Aslam, daughter of

Muhammad Aslam, of Al-Abbas Science School and Muhammad Alam, secured third position with



College, stood third with 1,168 marks.

In the Arts Group, Andeela Bibi, daughter of Irfanullah, of Government Girls Higher Secondary School Malazai, Tank, secured first position with 1,073 marks. Three candidates jointly secured second position with 1,071 marks: Hazratullah, private candidate; Ayesha Nawaz, daughter of Allah Nawaz, of Government Girls High School Yar, D.I. Khan; and private candidate Razaullah, son of Kamaluddin. Muhammad Fayyaz, son of

1,070 marks.

Speaking at the ceremony, Jaffer Mansoor Abbasi congratulated the position holders, their parents and teachers. He said education was the foundation of societal development and urged students to use their abilities in positive and constructive activities.

BISE D.I. Khan Chairman Prof. Dr. Ehsanullah said the results reflected the hard work of students, teachers and parents.

Cuba Has Endured for Decades. Losing Venezuela May Test Its Limits



FIZZA QAISAR

For decades, Cuba learned how to survive pressure. It survived the collapse of the Soviet Union, decades of American sanctions, economic isolation and repeated shortages. But the latest crisis is different.

This time, one of Cuba's most important economic lifelines has been cut: Venezuelan oil.

Following the U.S. intervention in Venezuela and the disruption of Venezuelan oil supplies to Havana, Cuba has been pushed into an energy crisis that is now reaching far beyond petrol stations and power plants. Fuel shortages are affecting transportation, food distribution, tourism, industry and even the basic rhythm of everyday life.

The question is no longer simply whether Cuba can with-

stand another round of pressure.

The real question is: how will Cuba survive when the energy lifeline that sustained it for years is no longer reliable?

Cuba's relationship with Venezuela became one of the most important economic partnerships in the Caribbean after Hugo Chávez came to power. Venezuelan oil provided Havana with a critical source of relatively affordable energy, while Cuba supplied Venezuela with medical personnel and other services.

That arrangement gave Cuba something it desperately needed: energy security.

The loss of that supply has exposed just how dependent the Cuban economy had become on imported fuel.

In May, Cuba's energy minister said the country had run out of diesel and fuel oil and had no reserves. The resulting blackouts in some areas lasted as long as 20 to 22 hours a day.

The crisis has since intensified. In early August, Cuba experienced another nationwide grid collapse, its fourth major blackout in a matter of weeks, leaving roughly 10 million people without electricity.

For ordinary Cubans, this is not an abstract geopolitical confrontation.

It means buses cannot run normally. Food cannot be transported efficiently. Refrigeration

becomes difficult. Businesses lose working hours. Hospitals face enormous pressure. Tourism, one of the country's major sources of foreign currency, becomes harder to sustain.

When fuel disappears, almost everything else becomes more expensive.

Cuba has survived previous economic shocks partly because it learned to ration, centralise and improvise.

But the current crisis is testing the limits of that model.

The island's electricity system was already suffering from ageing infrastructure and years of underinvestment. Analysts have therefore pointed out that the present crisis cannot be attributed to external pressure alone. Cuba's domestic economic and energy-management problems have also contributed to the deterioration of the system.

The new U.S. sanctions framework has nevertheless made the situation substantially harder by increasing the risks for foreign companies and financial institutions that deal with Cuba.

That combination is particularly dangerous: an ageing system at home, combined with shrinking access to fuel from abroad.

Cuba's survival strategy will probably depend on diversification rather than finding another Venezuela.

Russia is one possible source.

A Russian tanker carrying hundreds of thousands of barrels of crude provided Cuba with temporary relief earlier this year, demonstrating that Moscow could help fill part of the gap. But occasional shipments cannot easily replace the scale and reliability of a long-term energy relationship.

China could become even more important, particularly in renewable energy.

Cuba has already been expanding solar generation, installing around 1,300 megawatts of solar capacity over the past two years. The problem is that generating electricity is only half the solution. Without adequate battery storage and a stable grid, much of that capacity cannot provide dependable electricity when conventional generation fails.

That means Cuba's energy future may increasingly depend on a combination of solar power, storage technology, foreign investment and a modernised electricity grid.

Perhaps the most significant change is happening inside Cuba itself.

The government has begun cautiously opening parts of the energy system to foreign and private participation. It has approved a foreign-backed fuel import initiative and autho-

rised nearly 200 Cuban businesses to participate in wholesale fuel distribution.

That may sound like a small administrative adjustment.

Politically, however, it could represent something much bigger.

For a state that has historically kept strategic sectors tightly controlled, allowing private and foreign actors a larger role in fuel distribution suggests that economic survival may be forcing Havana to become more flexible.

Ideology can survive scarcity. An economy cannot survive without adaptation.

The greatest challenge for Cuba is not simply keeping its power plants running.

It is keeping its people living and able to endure.

Extended blackouts have already disrupted daily life and triggered protests. Families have turned to generators, solar panels and rechargeable appliances to cope with unpredictable electricity. Tourism and public transportation have been badly affected, while shortages of food and medicine add another layer of pressure.

This creates a dangerous cycle.

Less fuel means less electricity and transportation.

Weaker economic activity means fewer foreign-exchange

earnings.

Fewer dollars mean less ability to purchase fuel, food, medicine and spare parts.

And that makes the next energy crisis even harder to manage.

The answer may be yes, but survival will look very different from the Cuba of the past.

Havana cannot simply wait for another Venezuela.

It will need multiple lifelines: Russian fuel where available, Chinese technology and investment, renewable energy, foreign capital, private-sector participation, tourism recovery and greater efficiency at home.

Cuba has already demonstrated an extraordinary capacity to endure.

But endurance is not the same as economic sustainability.

The island may survive another year of shortages through rationing, improvisation and political control. The harder question is whether it can transform that survival instinct into a new economic model before the crisis becomes permanent.

The loss of Venezuelan oil has therefore created a historic choice for Havana.

Cuba can keep surviving the old way — or it can change the way it survives.

And that may ultimately be the real test of Cuba after Venezuela.

Editorial & Opinion

The Voice of the Time

DAILY TIMES

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Planning for 400 million

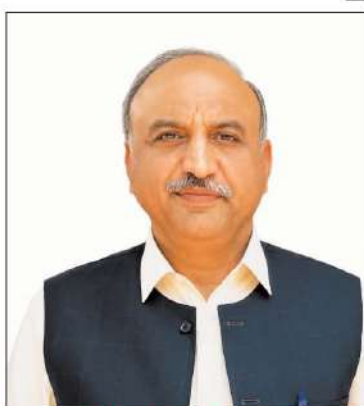
The health ministry's warning that Pakistan's population could reach 400 million by 2040 should have triggered far more than another official expression of concern. Instead, the projection announced by Minister of State for Health Dr Mukhtar Ahmad Bharath risks joining a long list of alarming forecasts that briefly dominate headlines before quietly disappearing beneath the weight of official indifference. It deserves attention because it quantifies a crisis that Pakistan has spent decades acknowledging but remarkably little time confronting. If current trends continue, the country will soon find itself attempting to provide jobs, schools, hospitals, housing, water and food for a population that its economy is already struggling to support today. Pakistan has debated population growth for decades. Governments have announced policies, launched awareness campaigns, established councils and repeatedly declared family planning a national priority. Yet the country's demographic trajectory has barely changed. Every few years another government rediscovers the problem, promises decisive action and then quietly allows the issue to drift back into the background until the next set of alarming statistics appears. The consequences have become impossible to ignore. Pakistan is already among the world's most populous countries, yet unlike most others at the top of that list it occupies a comparatively modest land area with finite natural resources and fragile public infrastructure. Every year, population growth places additional pressure on schools that cannot accommodate enough students, hospitals that cannot treat enough patients, cities that cannot provide enough housing, and labour markets that cannot generate enough productive employment. The debate is no longer about future risks. It is about a crisis that is already visible across almost every sector of national life. Perhaps the most troubling aspect is that millions of Pakistani children begin life at a disadvantage they did nothing to deserve. More than 60 percent are affected by stunting or related forms of malnutrition, limiting physical development, cognitive ability and long-term productivity. That alone should have transformed population management into one of the country's foremost national priorities. Bringing more children into circumstances where adequate nutrition, healthcare and education remain beyond the reach of many families serves neither those children nor the country's future. Population policy cannot be separated from human development because the two are inseparable.

The minister was therefore right to emphasise parental responsibility and wider access to reproductive healthcare. Modern family planning remains under-utilised, while preventable maternal health complications continue imposing heavy social and economic costs. Better awareness, stronger primary healthcare and easier access to reproductive health services are all necessary parts of the solution. They are, however, only part of it, because the larger failure lies in governance. Population management has never received the sustained political attention reserved for other national priorities. Governments have tended to approach it through periodic campaigns rather than continuous policy. The creation of another national council may well prove useful, but Pakistan has created committees, commissions and task forces before. Their existence has rarely translated into measurable improvements because implementation has consistently lagged behind official declarations. If the government genuinely considers population growth a national emergency, then it should treat it as one.

Clear national targets should be published for contraceptive use, maternal healthcare, female education, child nutrition and population growth itself. Provincial governments should be required to report progress regularly, while independent assessments should measure whether policies are actually changing outcomes rather than simply producing official statements. Public awareness campaigns cannot substitute for measurable performance.

Pakistan's demographic challenge is steadily becoming an economic challenge, a healthcare challenge, an education challenge and, ultimately, a governance challenge. Every year that meaningful action is postponed makes the eventual adjustment more difficult and more expensive. The warning of 400 million people by 2040 should therefore mark more than another moment of official concern. Pakistan has spent years talking about population growth as though it were tomorrow's problem. It has already become today's.

Makkah defence pact: A new strategic equation in the Middle East



SHAMSUL HAQ

The Middle East is passing through one of the most critical phases in its recent history, with war, diplomacy, energy security and shifting strategic alliances increasingly intertwined. Against this backdrop, the defence agreement signed by Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Turkiye in Makkah carries significance far beyond the three signatories. It could potentially contribute to a new security equation in a region already grappling with unprecedented challenges. The agreement, signed in Makkah on Friday, provides that an armed attack against any one of the three countries would be considered an attack against all three. The arrangement therefore comes close to the concept of collective defence, although the precise mechanism for its implementation and the nature of military response in different situations remain to be seen.

The development did not occur in isolation. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia had already signed a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement, under which aggression against one country was to be treated as aggression against both. The latest trilateral arrangement with Turkiye can consequently be viewed as an expansion of an existing strategic framework rather than an entirely new development.

The importance of Pakistan-Saudi defence cooperation became particularly evident during the recent Iran-Israel-US conflict. When Iranian attacks targeted Saudi Arabia, Islamabad made it clear that Pakistan would not hesitate to fulfil its commitment under the defence agreement to safeguard Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

For Pakistan, however, the situation was extremely delicate. While it had a strategic commitment to Saudi Arabia, it also shares a long border and important historical and diplomatic relations with Iran. Any direct involvement in a wider regional conflict could have carried serious consequences for Pakistan's security and economy. It was in this difficult environment that Pakistan's political and military leadership adopted a cautious and balanced approach. Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's diplomatic and defence engagement, coupled with the federal government's efforts to

promote dialogue and de-escalation, helped Islamabad navigate a highly complicated regional situation without being dragged into a broader war.

The Saudi leadership also deserves credit for exercising restraint. Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman demonstrated considerable prudence in dealing with the Iranian attacks. Instead of allowing the confrontation to escalate into a much wider regional war, Riyadh maintained its focus on national security and regional stability. This restraint was particularly important because a prolonged conflict in the Gulf would not have remained confined to the region. It could have disrupted energy supplies, affected global oil prices, threatened maritime trade and created serious repercussions for the world economy. A new strategic triangle The Saudi-Pakistani-Turkish strategic triangle brings together three influential Muslim countries with different but complementary strengths. Saudi Arabia possesses enormous economic resources and occupies a pivotal geographical position in the Gulf. Turkiye has a large conventional military, an increasingly sophisticated defence industry and decades of experience within the NATO framework. Pakistan, meanwhile, has one of the region's largest armed forces and is a nuclear-armed state with considerable military experience. The combination of these capabilities could make the trilateral arrangement an important component of a future regional security architecture.

There has already been speculation that the agreement could eventually evolve into something resembling a "Muslim NATO". Such comparisons, however, would be premature. For that to happen, additional countries would have to join, while mechanisms for joint command, intelligence sharing, defence planning, military exercises and collective response would need to be developed. The possible participation of other Muslim countries, particularly Indonesia, Malaysia and the Gulf states, could broaden the arrangement considerably.

Iran's possible future engagement in a wider regional security framework could also be important if the objective is genuine regional stability rather than the creation of competing blocs. Is Iran the target? One of the most important questions surrounding the Makkah agreement is whether it is intended, directly or indirectly, to counter Iran and groups allied with Tehran in the region. Some analysts have linked the emerging security arrangement with Iran's regional influence and its support for armed groups in Yemen and elsewhere. Others reject this interpretation and argue that the agreement is primarily defensive and aimed at strengthening the sovereignty and security of the three signatories.

The actual character of the agreement will ultimately be determined

not by speculation but by its implementation. Its future joint military exercises, intelligence cooperation, defence planning and response to regional crises will indicate whether it remains a defensive arrangement or develops into a wider strategic bloc. For Pakistan, avoiding confrontation with Iran will remain particularly important. Its geographical proximity to Iran means that any prolonged Saudi-Iranian or wider regional conflict could have direct implications for Pakistan's border security and internal stability. Implications for the United States and Israel The agreement also carries implications for the broader strategic calculations of the United States and Israel.

Washington has traditionally played a major role in Gulf security. Recent developments, however, appear to have encouraged regional countries to strengthen their own security partnerships rather than relying exclusively on external guarantees. For Israel too, a strategic framework bringing together Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Turkiye represents an important development. Yet it would be misleading to portray the agreement simply as an anti-Israel or anti-US military alliance. Its stated emphasis is collective defence, and its practical direction will depend on how the three countries interpret and implement it. The wider significance of the agreement lies in the possibility that regional states are increasingly seeking greater responsibility for their own security.

Opportunities for Pakistan For Pakistan, the agreement offers both strategic opportunities and serious responsibilities. First, it could enhance Pakistan's geopolitical importance. Islamabad can potentially emerge as an important player not only in South Asian security affairs but also in discussions concerning the security of the Middle East. Second, greater defence cooperation with Saudi Arabia and Turkiye could open opportunities in defence production, military training, technology transfer and investment. Third, the agreement could strengthen Pakistan's diplomatic standing if Islamabad combines its security commitments with an active role in promoting dialogue and de-escalation. Pakistan's ideal role would therefore not be that of a party to another regional confrontation but that of a security partner capable of contributing to peace and stability.

There are, however, considerable risks. Pakistan must ensure that the agreement does not automatically draw it into conflicts that do not directly serve its national interests. The country's economic challenges, internal security concerns and geographical proximity to Iran make prolonged involvement in another regional conflict particularly costly. An example of civil-military coordination Another significant aspect of the development is the apparent coordination between Pakistan's political and military leadership in matters of national security and foreign policy. Such coordination can be

useful when the country is confronted with rapidly changing regional circumstances. At the same time, however, agreements carrying long-term strategic, political and financial implications should enjoy broad national ownership. It would therefore be appropriate for the government to keep Parliament fully informed about the scope, obligations and future implications of the defence agreement. Parliamentary oversight would strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the arrangement and help build a broader national consensus on Pakistan's long-term security policy. Beyond a military alliance

The real test of the Makkah agreement will be whether it becomes an instrument of confrontation or a mechanism for preventing confrontation. If Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Turkiye develop mechanisms for intelligence sharing, joint defence planning, military exercises, defence production and coordinated crisis management, the agreement could become the foundation of a broader regional security framework. But its success will ultimately depend on whether the Muslim world can overcome its internal divisions. Differences between Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkiye and other regional powers remain substantial. Without confidence-building and dialogue among these countries, the creation of a comprehensive Islamic security arrangement would remain difficult. Perhaps, therefore, the greatest potential of the Makkah agreement is not that it becomes an "Islamic NATO", but that it opens a new debate about collective security, strategic autonomy and peaceful conflict resolution in the Muslim world.

A delicate road ahead

The Makkah defence agreement comes at a time when the traditional security architecture of the Middle East is undergoing profound transformation. The emerging Saudi-Pakistani-Turkish strategic triangle could strengthen the defence capabilities of the three countries and contribute to a new balance of power.

For Pakistan, however, the real challenge begins now. Islamabad will have to deepen its strategic relationship with Saudi Arabia and Turkiye while simultaneously avoiding unnecessary confrontation with Iran, maintaining balanced relations with major global powers and protecting its economic interests.

The Makkah agreement could become a historic step if it is used to promote collective defence, regional stability and the prevention of war. But if it becomes the foundation of another bloc confrontation, it could add to the very instability that the region desperately needs to overcome. Its ultimate success will therefore depend on whether the signatories choose to use their growing collective strength not merely for deterrence, but also for diplomacy, restraint and peace.

The writer is senior journalist and former director of Directorate General Information and Public Relations Peshawar.

New provinces debate and the good governance challenge



DR SYED AKHTAR ALI SHAH

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's recent remarks - that the current political system has collapsed and that politics is increasingly being pursued by a few families and elites - have evoked an intense debate on Pakistan's political and constitutional landscape. Simultaneously, a map proposing new provinces is also circulating, further fueling speculation that the country may be entering another phase of constitutional experimentation and administrative change. Amid all this, another voice, that of Dr Ishrat Husain, declares that good governance is the basic issue. A prominent economist, academic and civil servant, Dr Hussain opines that institutional effectiveness, economic stability and public trust are the fundamental pillars of national security. From the aforementioned interconnected views and narratives, one reality that emerges is that Pakistan is facing an acute crisis of governance. Undoubtedly, this bitter reality is reflected in the title of the book *Governing the Ungovernable*, authored by Dr Husain.

These days, the word 'good governance' is being floated as a panacea for all ills. Undoubtedly, good governance is a prerequisite for the well-being of the public. But the fundamental question is

not whether governance matters; it is: what do we actually mean by good governance?

During all these discussions, Shehzad Roy's satirical song, *Laga Reh*, flashed through my mind. Satirically, he narrates Pakistan's political history since independence. He reminds us that successive governments have kept promising change but have often been greasing their own palms and pursuing narrow self-interests instead of really developing institutions and ushering in reforms. The central idea of the song - that everyone tries to serve their own interests while the country's fundamental structural problems remain untouched - points to a bitter truth. This same reality is narrated in the Hindi proverb, *dhaak ke teen paat*. This proverb portrays a situation that does not change despite repeated efforts. It can be translated into English as 'the same old story'.

Pakistan has passed through parliamentary governments, presidential systems, martial law, caretaker setups, constitutional amendments, accountability drives, and repeated promises of a "new beginning". Yet, having experimented with all models, the country is facing the same problems and is back at square one i.e. *dhaak ke teen paat*. It may not be out of context to mention here that I have recently been back from a long visit to the UK and the US. What appealed to me most there was that good governance was reflected not just in how institutions perform, but in people's daily lives too. I realised that the rule of law is the hallmark of good governance. Those countries were administered by elected local governments, but they operated within a clear legal framework and planning principles. Parks, roads, commercial centres, residential areas, playgrounds, recreational facilities, and public services - all have been developed and maintained according to the law, not

personal discretion.

More significantly, the enforcement of law is impartial and non-discriminatory. Freedoms are enjoyed within the bounds of the law. The moment a violation occurs, the law is sure to take its course, and the violator is brought to justice. The law is universally applied - ensuring that no one is above the law. This certainty of the enforcement of law is the essence of good governance, which differentiates it from mere political sloganeering. Adherence to the rule of law ensures that real freedom flourishes. Freedom without law inevitably turns into chaos. This sentiment is echoed in the words "Thy liberty in law" from the patriotic song, *America the Beautiful*, penned by the famous American poet Katharine Lee Bates. The Constitution always remains the supreme law of the land; therefore, respect for it is paramount to good governance. Unfortunately, our constitutional history is filled with accounts of constitutional provisions being mutilated, ignored, or bent to suit political expediency and tailored to favour specific individuals.

This brings us back to the debate on new provinces. Changing administrative boundaries and creating several new provinces may appear sound to many, but it runs the risk of sidelining the real issue of governance itself. Whether Pakistan has four provinces or fourteen, the real question is whether the state can ensure good governance by providing every citizen with quality education, accessible healthcare, employment opportunities, public safety, robust infrastructure and timely justice. These undertakings require massive funding, something that necessitates a broad-based tax system. But, unfortunately, the majority of the affluent class remains outside an effective tax system. At the same time, regions like Malakand, the ex-Fata region, Gilgit-

Baltistan, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir are out of the pale of the federal and provincial tax systems, even though they require heavy public investment for socio-economic development. Virtually dismantling the existing federal structure or ignoring the constitutional framework of the National Finance Commission would further compound the problem. The real solution lies in expanding the economy, broadening the tax net, strengthening institutions, ensuring the equitable distribution of resources, and making targeted investments in underdeveloped areas. If governance really is Pakistan's main problem, then we must realise that good governance, in essence, means efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability, and - above all - the rule of law, which includes respect for the Constitution.

Creating new provinces, boundaries or administrative structures would only add to administrative costs, further shrinking the fiscal space for development, and proving counterproductive. For the desired results, the enforcement of law is imperative. Otherwise, once another political cycle is complete, we will find ourselves standing exactly where we are today: new faces, new promises, but the same problems. Once again, Shehzad Roy's satire and the old Hindi proverb, *dhaak ke teen paat*, will reflect our political reality. In short, good governance does not lie in new provinces, new slogans or repeated constitutional experiments. Its real essence lies in respect for the Constitution, strong institutions, and - most of all - the effective, fair and impartial enforcement of the law. That is the true and lasting solution to Pakistan's problems.

The writer is a former Secretary to Government, Home & Tribal Affairs Department and a retired IG. He can be reached at syed_shah94@yahoo.com

Ministry of Commerce sanctions Rs.10 Billion to support export sectors



BUSINESS

SCCI, CBP decided to nominate focal persons of various bazaars to address traders grievances

TIMES REPORT
PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Cantonment Board Peshawar decided to nominate focal persons for various bazaars under jurisdiction of the board to address the issues being faced by the trading community on priority basis.
The decision was made during a meeting between SCCI President Junaid Altaf and CEO Cantonment Board Peshawar Chuadhry Babar Hussain here at the chamber house.
Meeting was attended by SCCI Senior Vice President Muhammad Nadeem, former president Riaz Arshad, Haji Muhammad Afzal, Fazal Moqem Khan and Zahidullah Shinwari, and members of the chamber's executive committee



Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, Shamsur Rahim, Ishfaq Ahmad, Gul Zaman, Aftab Iqbal and Haji Amin Hussain Babar, Hasnain Sheraz, Sumeer Chaudhry, Zakiullah, Monawar Khurshid, Malik Sanaullah, Zahoor Khan, Waqar Ahmad, Rashid Iqbal Siddiqui, Nisar Ahmad and Naeemur Rehman, and SCCI Secretary General Muqtasid Ahsan, presidents and office bearers of Saddar Cantt Bazaar, Shehneri Masjid, Arbab Road, Sekarno Chowk, Shoba Bazaar and others.
President Junaid Altaf in opening remarks highlighted the several commercial and residential issues of Saddar Cantt bazaars, mostly relating to transfer property/mutation, JLR, property tax with exorbitant rate, electricity, traffic, U-turn, encroachment, sanitation, poor cleanliness system, pipes, non-availability of ATM Cantonment Board

Goods Transporters Protest Over Taxes, Fuel Prices

SHAHZAD RASHEED
PESHAWAR: President of Goods Care Association Hussain General Shahid, President of Shaheen Goods Association Haji Waheed Gul, and General Secretary Habib Gul, in a joint statement, said that goods transporters have been forced to

He further claimed that more than 5,000 trucks are currently in government custody, describing the situation as unfair and unjust. He said that when goods-laden trucks are detained, the goods are eventually released, but unfortunately the trucks themselves are not released, causing significant financial losses to transporters.
Officials from various trader organizations, along with Sarhad Chamber of Commerce President Junaid Altaf, Senior Vice President Nadeem Rauf and former president Fazal Muqem, visited the protest camp and expressed solidarity with the transporters.
Addressing the gathering, Sarhad Chamber of Commerce President Junaid Altaf said that goods transportation plays a vital role in trade and economic activity. He urged the government to sit with representatives of the transporters, listen to their grievances and take immediate steps to resolve their problems.
He called on the government to address the transporters' genuine concerns on a priority basis and resolve the issue through negotiations so that trade and transportation activities could return to normal.

Major irrigation development project planned in KP
BY: INP
ISLAMABAD, Aug 8 (INP-Wealth Pakistan) -- A major irrigation project is set to expand water availability to areas adjoining the proposed CPEC City near Swabi district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), with plans to develop irrigation infrastructure across a command area covering over 10,930 acres, according to official project documents obtained by Wealth Pakistan.
The documents show that the Pehur High Level Canal Extension (PHLCE) Project - Additional Area: Lot-4 is being implemented with Asian Development Bank support. The project proposes extensive irrigation and command area development (CAD) in strategically located agricultural zones surrounding the CPEC City.
According to the project layout, Lot-4 comprises three major components: the Indus Ambar Additional Command Area (3,234 hectares), the Indus Ambar HEIS/PDN Area (464 hectares), and the Nandrak Area (726 hectares).
The documents reveal that one of the project areas lies south of the M-1 Motorway and west of the Indus Branch Canal, with its western boundary adjoining the proposed CPEC City. The report states that full development of irrigation infrastructure and command area development has been proposed for this zone.
Another component, the Nandrak Area, is located south of CPEC City and north of the Kabul River. According to the document, portions of this

Over 300,000 Pakistanis await corneal transplants amid donor shortage

TIMES REPORT
RAWALPINDI : More than 300,000



people suffering from corneal blindness in Pakistan are awaiting sight-restoring transplants, while Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital performs only about 800 corneal transplant procedures a year, highlighting a severe gap between demand and the availability of donor tissue.
Al-Shifa Trust, which operates one of the country's major corneal transplant centres, said Pakistan continues to depend on imported donor corneas because of limited local donations and the absence of a nationwide eye-banking system capable of meeting demand.
Talking to media, Al-Shifa Trust President Maj Gen (Retd) Rehmat Khan said the shortage of donated corneas had left hundreds of thousands of patients without access to transplantation. He urged people to pledge their eyes for donation after death, saying a single donor could potentially restore sight to two people.
The scale of the shortage becomes clearer when compared with global supply. Khan cited an international survey covering more than 95 percent of the world's population, which found that about 185,000 corneal transplants are performed annually in 116 countries, while around 284,000 donor corneas are recovered in 82 countries. By comparison, Pakistan performs only about 1,500 corneal transplants a year.
International partnerships have helped sustain transplantation services in Pakistan but have not eliminated the supply gap. US-based Eversight has partnered with Al-Shifa since 2017 to support corneal donation and eye-banking services.

Proud History of Bengali Muslim Leaders in Pakistan Movement

DR SHAHJAHAN KHAN OAM
Over the past decades, many aspects of the history of the Indian subcontinent have been revisited and reinterpreted. One of the most contested issues concerns the role of the Muslims of East Bengal—today's Bangladesh—in the Pakistan Movement. According to a growing narrative, East Pakistan was imposed on the people of East Bengal against their wishes by leaders from West Pakistan. However, historical records present a different picture. The movement for Pakistan was not solely driven by leaders from north-western India. Bengali Muslims played a central role in shaping, supporting and ultimately securing the creation of Pakistan in 1947. Their political leadership, electoral mandate and administrative contributions were instrumental in the birth of the new state. Understanding this history is essential for appreciating the political evolution of South Asia and recognising the significant role played by the Muslims of Bengal, especially their wise and farsighted leaders.
Bengali Muslims: The Political Heartland of India
Under British rule, Bengal was the largest Muslim-majority province in India. According to the 1941 Census, Muslims made up approximately 54 per cent of the province's population. Bengal was not only one of the most populous provinces but also among the most economically significant and politically farsighted.
No constitutional arrangement for Muslim India could realistically succeed without the support of Bengali Muslims. As a result, Bengal became one of the strongest centres of the Pakistan Movement following the establishment of the All-India Muslim League.
The Muslim League Was Born in Dhaka
The All-India Muslim League, the political party that led the Pakistan Movement, was founded in Dhaka in 1906 under the leadership of Nawab Sir Khwaja Salimullah Bahadur. The party was established to protect Muslim political and economic interests amid growing concerns about underrepresentation within the Indian National Congress and the dominance of Hindu landlords over many Muslim farmers in Bengal.
The creation of the Muslim League marked the beginning of an organised political movement of Indian Muslims that would eventually lead to the establishment of separate state for the Muslims of India, Pakistan including East Bengal. The Lahore Resolution: A Heroic Bengali Leader One of the defining moments in the Pakistan Movement came on 23 March 1940 at the annual session of the All-India Muslim League in Lahore. The historic Lahore Resolution was moved by Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq, then Premier of Bengal.
The resolution called for independent states in the Muslim-majority regions of north-western and eastern India. Although the word "Pakistan" did not appear in the resolution, it later became the

constitutional and political foundation for the creation of Pakistan.
A K Fazlul Huq went on to serve as the second Governor of East Pakistan and remains one of the most influential political figures in Bengal's history.
The 1946 Elections: A Bengali Mandate
Perhaps the strongest evidence of Bengali Muslim support for Pakistan came during the provincial elections of 1946, widely regarded as a referendum on the Pakistan demand.
Among Muslim-reserved seats, the Muslim League won 113 of 119 seats (95%) in Bengal; 31 of 34 seats (91%) in Assam; 73 of 86 seats (85%) in Punjab; and 27 of 35 seats (77%) in Sindh.
Across British India, the Muslim League secured an overwhelming majority of Muslim-reserved seats. Bengal's result was particularly significant because of the province's size, population and political influence.
These results demonstrated that support for Pakistan extended well beyond political elites and enjoyed broad backing among Muslim voters in Bengal.
Attempts at Hindu-Muslim Unity
Before demanding a separate homeland, several prominent Muslim leaders worked towards Hindu-Muslim political cooperation within a united India. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, during his early political career, advocated constitutional cooperation. Similarly, A. K. Fazlul Huq, while serving as General Secretary of the Indian National Congress, and Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy as the President of Muslim League sought to promote peaceful coexistence between Hindus and Muslims.
According to this interpretation of history, these leaders eventually concluded that Muslim political interests could not be adequately safeguarded

within a united India and therefore supported separate Muslim-majority states. As a result, all Bengali Muslim leaders supported the two-nations theory of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This is a historical concept stating that Hindus and Muslims are two separate nations with distinct religions, cultures, and ways of life.
Bengali Leadership in Pakistan
Following independence in 1947, Bengali Muslims occupied many of Pakistan's highest offices. From East Pakistan came four Prime Ministers of Pakistan Khawaja Nazimuddin, Mohammad Ali Bogra, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, and Nurul Amin.
Pakistan's first President, Iskander Ali Mirza, also hailed originally from Murshidabad in Bengal. In addition to these offices, Bengali Muslims served as Governor-General, cabinet ministers, speakers of the National Assembly, provincial governors, senior diplomats, judges and senior civil servants, reflecting East Pakistan's significant role in the country's leadership during its early decades.
The valiant role of the East Bengal Regiment in the 1965 India-Pakistan war and the bravery of (the then) Major Ziaur Raham is another great contribution of Bengali Pakistanis at the time. The great act of shooting down five Indian Hawker Hunters with his F-86 Sabre fighter plane in less than a minutes by Bengali fighter Squadron Leader M M Alam is a world record and will be remembered by generations of Bangladeshis and Pakistanis.
A Missing Chapter in Bangladesh's History
Many young Bangladeshis know relatively little about the leading role played by Bengali Muslims in the Pakistan Movement. As a result, important historical questions often remain unexplored.
Why did so many Muslims in East Bengal support Pakistan? Why did the Two-Nation Theory gain such widespread acceptance in Bengal? What role did Bengali leaders play alongside Muhammad Ali Jinnah and other Muslim League leaders? Supporters of this perspective argue that historical narratives in Bangladesh have increasingly overlooked or minimised these questions, leaving younger generations with an incomplete understanding of the events that led to both Pakistan's creation in 1947 and Bangladesh's independence in 1971. If our visionary ancestors did not establish East Bengal (as a part of Pakistan) in 1947, there would have been no Bangladesh in 1971.
The Great Calcutta Riot
The communal violence in Calcutta between 16 and 19 August 1946 remains one of the most tragic episodes preceding Partition. Thousands of people, mainly Bengali Muslims, were killed during the riots. During October-November 1946, there was another communal riot in Noakhali causing scores of deaths and loss of properties.
For many Bengali Muslims, these events reinforced the belief that only a separate homeland for minority Muslims of India could guarantee their political rights, security and religious identity. Supporters of the Pakistan Movement argue that the sacrifices made during this period reflected a determination to secure a safer future for Muslims across the subcontinent.
Remembering a Shared Legacy
History is best understood through balanced examination rather than selective memory. The creation of Pakistan was a collective effort involving Muslims from many regions of British India. Within that broader movement, Bengal occupied a

central position. Bengali Muslims supplied one of the strongest electoral mandates for Pakistan, produced influential political leaders, introduced the Lahore Resolution through Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Huq, and contributed significantly to the administration and institution-building of the new state. Recognising these contributions is not about reopening old political debates. Rather, it is about acknowledging an important chapter in South Asian history and giving due recognition to those whose efforts helped shape one of the twentieth century's most significant political transformations.
Conclusion
Pakistan was not imposed upon the Muslims of East Bengal. Rather, Bengali Muslims played a leading role in the Pakistan Movement, contributed decisively to its success, and later occupied many of the highest offices in the new state.
According to this historical perspective, the people of East Bengal secured freedom from British colonial rule while seeking political security, religious identity and protection of their rights. The creation of East Pakistan in 1947 is therefore viewed as an important stage in the historical evolution that eventually led to the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971. The July-August 2024 revolution is a continuation of the struggle of the people of Bangladesh for a democratic system based on equity, dignity, justice, opportunities and freedom from political exploitation and cultural hegemony.
Dr Shahjahan Khan OAM is Emeritus Professor at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia; former Vice-Chancellor of the Asian University of Bangladesh; and Expatriate Fellow of the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences.

SPORTS



Alex Scott, Antony sent off in Bournemouth-Real Betis pre-season draw

Mike Hesson holds meeting with National Champions Cup team coaches

BY: WEB DESK

MULTAN: Pakistan men's white-ball head coach Mike Hesson met with the coaches of the four National Champions Cup teams on Sunday ahead of the start of the domestic tournament on 11 August. All matches will be played at Multan Cricket Stadium and begin at 3pm local time.

Hesson, who has arrived in Multan for the competition, held discussions with the coaching staff of Pakistan Greens, Pakistan Gold, Pakistan Whites and Pakistan Blues regarding player development and preparations for the seven-match 50-over tournament.

The meeting was attended by the four head

coaches which included Iqbal Imam and Aizaz Pakistan white-ball bowl-



Misbah-ul-Haq, Ijaz Junior, Cheema, along with ing coach Ashley Noffke

and National Cricket Academy (NCA) Head of Coach Education Shahid Aslam.

The discussions focused on improving players' 50-over skills and other aspects of their development during the tournament, which runs from 11 to 18 August.

The National Champions Cup will mark the start of Pakistan's 2026-27 domestic cricket season and is also part of the national team's preparations for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027 in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. The seven-match List A tournament will feature four teams — Pakistan Greens, Pakistan Whites, Pakistan Blues and Pakistan Gold — competing

in a single round-robin format. The top two teams at the end of the league stage will qualify for the final on 18 August.

The national selection committee has announced fixed playing XIs for each team, along with a 13-player reserve pool.

The selected XIs must remain unchanged throughout the tournament, while reserve players can only replace players who are injured or have suffered a concussion. The reserve players will remain with their respective squads during training sessions and on match days.

Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shadab Khan, Saim Ayub and Sahibzada Farhan will captain the four sides respectively.

Rabada feels no added pressure ahead of 2027 World Cup on home soil

BY: WEB DESK

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa fast bowler Kagiso Rabada believes there will be no additional pressure on the Proteas when they play on home soil at next year's ICC Men's Cricket World Cup. South Africa will co-host the 14th edition of the 50-over World Cup with Zimbabwe and Namibia in 2027, with Rabada eagerly anticipating the global showpiece.

The Proteas head into the tournament with growing confidence after producing consistent performances across formats in recent years. Their progress was underlined by their triumph over Australia in the ICC World Test Championship final at Lord's in 2025. While South Africa's improved performances have raised expectations, Rabada insists the team will not feel extra pressure when the World Cup gets underway. "I think there's a lot more to it at the moment with us hosting it," Rabada told the ICC at the official Cricket World Cup 2027 venue and brand announcement event in Johannesburg.

"It's almost like freedom as well. I don't feel the pressure of us playing at home and feeling the need to win it. "It's almost like we're at home and we're going to defend this

fortress. And that's what it means to me. It's about representing the badge."

Rabada featured in South Africa's two most recent 50-over World Cup campaigns in 2019 and 2023. However, when reflecting on the tournament, the fast bowler's thoughts go back to a famous final played before he was born. One of the World Cup moments that continues to inspire Rabada is Pakistan great Wasim Akram's match-winning spell against England in the 1992 final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Akram played a pivotal role in Pakistan's maiden World Cup triumph, taking 3-49 as the Imran Khan-led side defeated England by 22 runs.

Rabada said he would love to produce a similar performance for South Africa when they compete for the title on home soil in 2027.

"One World Cup moment from the past that I'll never forget, because I'm a bowler, I'm going to go to the bowlers' club, was Wasim Akram against England in the final," Rabada said.

"Him just cleaning up the stumps and putting on a show to take it home for his country and showing the passion and the skill.

AWKUM Wins Cricket, Press Club Takes Tug-of-War

TIMES REPORT

MARDAN: Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) won the Independence cricket match against the Mardan Press Club, while the Press Club team emerged victorious in the tug-of-war competition held as part of a three-day Independence Sports Gala organised by the Mardan Press Club.

The cricket match was played at the university's Garden Campus and witnessed an exciting contest between the two sides. AWKUM clinched the trophy after putting up an impressive performance.

The university team was led by Director Transport Haji Ibrar Khan Umarzai, while the Mardan Press Club side was captained by senior journalist and General Secretary Hidayat-ur-Rehman Hoti. Players from both teams displayed good sporting skills during the match.

In the tug-of-war compe-

dition, the Mardan Press Club team secured a convincing victory and won the trophy. Senior journalists, including M. Bashir Adil and Shamsul Haq Yousafzai, also

Arif, Imad, Bakht Mohammad and Mohammad Asi faced defeat. In the final, Hoti and Daniyal defeated last year's winning pair, Shehab Akbar and Khurshed



actively participated in the sporting events.

In the bedminton competitions, Hidayat-ur-Rehman Hoti and Daniyal Shams emerged victorious after defeating their opponents in closely contested matches. In the first round, Mohammad

Wahab, after a thrilling contest to claim the trophy.

The AWKUM administration warmly welcomed the journalists from the Mardan Press Club. The reception was led by security in-charge Pappu Khan.

At the concluding cere-

mony, Director Sports Muhammad Farooq Khan, Director ORIC Dr Tariq Mahmood, Professor Dr Muhammad Idrees, Professor Fazal Sattar and senior journalist Musarrat Khan Asi distributed prizes and trophies among the successful players. Special award was presented to former director of Information Department on his retirement from government services.

Young businessman Mohammad Amir, who is based in Spain, also attended the event as a special guest.

The speakers said organising sports competitions provided journalists, students and people from different sections of society with opportunities for healthy activities and played an important role in promoting social interaction, positive engagement and a healthy environment.

The university administration also hosted a dinner in honour of the Mardan Press Club team at the conclusion of the event.

Pakistan players start arriving in Multan for National Champions Cup 2026

BY: WEB DESK

MULTAN: Several Pakistan players have started arriving in Multan ahead of the National Champions Cup 2026, the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) flagship domestic List-A tournament, which will take place from August 11 to 18.

The PCB shared photographs of several players arriving in the host city, including opening batter Fakhar Zaman and Salmaan Mirza, who will represent Pakistan Greens, while all-rounder Arafat Minhas and spinner Sufiyan Mueem will feature for Pakistan Blues.

"Player arrivals in Multan. The National Champions Cup will take place from 11 to 18 August at the Multan Cricket Stadium," the PCB said in a social media post. The seven-

match 50-over tournament will mark the start of Pakistan's 2026-27 domestic cricket season,



with all matches scheduled as day-night fixtures at the Multan Cricket Stadium. Each game will begin at 3pm local

time. Four teams Pakistan Greens, Pakistan Whites, Pakistan Blues and Pakistan



Gold — will compete in a single round-robin format. The top two teams at the end of the league stage will advance to the

final, which is scheduled for August 18. The national selection committee has named fixed playing XIs for each team, along with a 13-player reserve pool. Teams will be required to field their announced XIs throughout the tournament, with reserve players permitted to replace only injured or concussed players. The reserves will remain with their respective squads during training sessions and on match days.

The tournament will feature four high-profile captains, with Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shadab Khan, Saim Ayub and Sahibzada Farhan appointed to lead their respective teams. According to the PCB, the 44-player squads and reserve pool have been selected as part of Pakistan's preparations for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027.

Sabalenka suffers Toronto setback as Ekaterina Alexandrova reaches quarter-finals

BY: WEB DESK

ONTARIO: World number one Aryna Sabalenka suffered a setback in her preparations for the US Open after losing to Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova 7-6(3), 4-6, 6-4 in the fourth round of the Canadian Open here at SoBeys Stadium on Saturday.

Sixteenth seed Alexandrova produced an impressive performance to defeat the four-time Grand Slam champion in a contest lasting nearly two and a half hours.

Sabalenka, the reigning US Open champion, made a strong start by breaking early in the opening set. However, Alexandrova responded strongly to force a tie-break, which the Russian won to take the lead.

The Belarusian raised her level in the second set, securing a crucial break to move 4-3 ahead before holding her serve to level the match and force a deciding set. Alexandrova

remained aggressive in the final set and capitalised on a rise in unforced errors from Sabalenka. The Russian held her nerve when serving for the match at 5-4.

Sabalenka saved two match points, but a double fault on the third handed Alexandrova a memorable victory.

Reflecting on her triumph, Alexandrova said she stayed composed under pressure and was delighted to win after feeling her opportunity had slipped away following the second set. "I just tried to play every single point as if it was the last one because with her, you don't (get) a lot of chances during the match," Alexandrova said. "Honestly, I was trying not to think about the score or anything. Just hit the ball, and that's it. "I'm super happy that I could win because after the second set, I thought (the chance) was already past me."

Algeria qualify for first-ever FIFA Women's World Cup

BY: WEB DESK

JOHANNESBURG: Algeria secured a historic first qualification for the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup after reaching the semi-finals of the Women's Africa Cup of Nations on Saturday, while hosts Morocco also booked their place at next year's global tournament in Brazil. Algeria came from behind to beat 10-player Ivory Coast 2-1 in Casablanca, while Morocco



defeated defending champions South Africa by the same score in Rabat on Saturday. The four semi-finalists at the Women's Africa Cup of Nations will automatically qualify for the World Cup, which will be held in Brazil from June 24th to July 25th.

Ivory Coast and South Africa still have a chance to reach the tournament through the FIFA inter-confederation play-offs, with three additional World Cup places available.

Both teams will play in Thursday's play-offs to determine which African sides advance to the inter-confederation stage.

Algeria fell behind when Ines Konan put Ivory Coast ahead, but second-half goals from Ines Khiri and Amira Ould Braham completed the comeback.

Ivory Coast were reduced to 10 players in the 41st minute when Nsira Ouedraogo was dismissed for a high

challenge that struck Algerian goalkeeper Chloe N'Gazi in the face. Rebecca Eloh later missed a penalty, hitting the post with the score level.

Morocco took control against South Africa through Sakina Ouzraoui and Hanane Ait El Haj, who converted a penalty. Thembi Kgatana reduced the deficit midway through the second half, but Morocco held on to secure their second successive World Cup appearance.

Pakistan's Zubair crowned Tekken 8 champion at Esports World Cup 2026

BY: WEB DESK

PARIS: Pakistan's Khawaja Muhammad Zubair produced a stunning run at the Esports World Cup 2026 to claim the Tekken 8 title after defeating South Korea's LowHigh 5-0 in the grand final at Paris Expo Porte de Versailles in France.

The Tekken 8 competition was held from 5 to 8 August, with 32 players competing for a share of the prize pool. Zubair finished the tournament as champion, earning \$300,000 in prize money and 1,000 Club Championship points.

Zubair defeated LowHigh, one of the established names in the international Tekken scene, in a dominant grand-final performance. The Pakistani player did not drop a single game in the deciding match, completing a 5-0 victory to secure the biggest title of his career.

His triumph was particularly remarkable given his relatively limited experience on the international stage.

According to the Esports World Cup, Zubair made his international debut just two months before the tournament, when he was eliminat-

ed in the pools.

He returned to Paris for the Last Chance Qualifier, where he fought his way back

into contention before going on to claim the Tekken 8 title. He subsequently battled through the EWC qualification route before defeating several high-profile oppo-

nents during his title-winning campaign. His run included a crucial victory over fellow Pakistani star Arslan



Ash, while Australia's Yagami finished third and Arslan Ash placed fourth.

Zubair topped the final standings ahead of South Korea's LowHigh, with

Yagami in third and Arslan Ash fourth. LowHigh received \$130,000 in prize money, while Yagami earned \$70,000 and Arslan Ash took home \$50,000.

Zubair's achievement adds another significant chapter to Pakistan's growing reputation in competitive Tekken. The country has established itself as a powerhouse in the fighting game, with players such as Arslan Ash and Atif Butt already recognised internationally.

The victory is significant not only for the prize money but also for the manner in which Zubair reached the top. After securing his place in the EWC through the qualification route, the Pakistani player overcame experienced international opposition before producing a commanding performance against LowHigh in the final.

The official Tekken esports database lists the champion as Khawaja Muhammad Zubair, who competes under the name AG M. Zubair. His 2026 season record also includes participation in the Tekken World Tour, further strengthening his credentials on the international competitive scene.

Former US president Biden's cancer has spread: son

WORLD NEWS

Zelensky makes landmark visit to Russia ally Serbia

BY: AFP

BELGRADE: President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday began his first official visit to Serbia to discuss security with a rare European country

Energy Minister Dubravka Djedovic Handanovic, Zelensky had dinner with Serbian counterpart Aleksandar Vucic. "We will discuss expanding economic ties between our countries, relations with the European Union,

torically close to Russia, Vucic has refused to sanction Moscow, a move that has irked the EU and slowed Belgrade's path to joining the bloc. Vucic and Zelensky are to hold official talks on Saturday at the pres-

A senior Ukrainian official told AFP ahead of the trip that it was an attempt to "pull the Serbs away from Russia's side", but Vucic has remained adamant that his decision not to sanction Moscow would not change.

"I am sure Volodymyr Zelensky, in line with his struggle and his views, will say what he thinks about sanctions against the Russian Federation, but the Republic of Serbia set out its position four and a half years ago, almost five years ago, and has not changed it since," Vucic told media on Thursday.

"That will remain the case until further notice," he said.

Zelensky -- who has toured much of the world since Russia's 2022 invasion seeking support -- has not visited Serbia since he became president in 2019.

Although heavily dependent on cheap Russian gas and one of the rare European leaders to still visit Moscow, Vucic has also supplied non-military aid to Kyiv.

The Kremlin has accused Serbian firms of selling munitions to Ukraine, a claim Vucic has repeatedly denied.

Vucic went to Ukraine for a regional summit last year and visited Kyiv this year. He has promised assistance to Ukraine but avoided signing a formal declaration of support in the war.

Five dead in new Russia, Ukraine strikes

BY: AFP

KYIV, Ukraine: Russian strikes killed two people and wounded dozens across Ukraine overnight Saturday and Sunday, while a Ukrainian drone attack killed three people in Russia's Belgorod region.

More than four years after the start of Russia's large-scale offensive against Ukraine, the two warring countries are ramping up long-range strikes, causing a growing number of civilian casualties. Russia is relying on "ballistic terror," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on social media, stating that 61 missiles of various types had been fired at his country this week. "More pressure, more sanctions against Russia and more air defence for Ukraine are needed," he said.

The two people killed by a Russian drone strike were in the major northeastern city of Kharkiv, where four floors of a residential building were also destroyed, Zelensky.

Twenty-three people were also injured, according to regional governor Oleg Syngoubov. Images he shared show a gutted building with emergency services working at the scene.

According to the Ukrainian president, eight people were also injured overnight in Odesa, where strikes damaged the power grid, the port, and residential buildings. Zelensky condemned another "absolutely brutal" strike targeting energy infrastructure near a shopping centre in Pavlohrad, in the Dnipropetrovsk region. Nine people, including four children, were injured there, he said.



still closely allied with Moscow since Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Welcomed at Belgrade airport by

other areas that can benefit our nations, and security issues," Zelensky said on X. With Serbia his-

idential palace and make a statement to the press, according to the Serbian presidency.

UAE says Iran targeted tanker as Oman cites progress in Hormuz talks

BY: AFP

DUBAI: The UAE accused Iran on Saturday of targeting a tanker belonging to its state-owned oil company in the Strait of Hormuz, even as both Iran and Oman suggested talks on administering the vital waterway were progressing.

Iran has imposed an effective blockade of the strait and wants to charge users for passage, repeatedly attacking ships it accuses of attempting to circumvent its preferred route.

The US vehemently opposes any Iranian tolls in the strait, though a June deal struck by the warring parties does allow Tehran to hammer out arrangements for the "future administration" of Hormuz in conjunction with fellow coastal state Oman.

Continued attacks in the strait, which was free to transit before the war, led to the collapse of an April ceasefire, and mediators have since urged both sides to return to the terms of the June memorandum.

The United Arab Emirates' foreign ministry on Saturday condemned what it called a "hostile Iranian attack that targeted a tanker belonging to ADNOC (Abu Dhabi National Oil Company) with a missile while it was transiting the Strait of Hormuz, without causing casualties". Later on Saturday, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said a ship was hit by a projectile off Oman in the Strait of Hormuz, causing a fire that was extinguished but no casualties. It was unclear whether they were referring to the same ship. On Friday, ADNOC

had put out a statement saying that since the start of the war, 15 of its vessels had been attacked in Hormuz, "including three vessels this week alone".

Oman's foreign ministry on Saturday condemned "repeated attacks on vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz", without naming Iran. It also said that "ongoing negotiations regarding navigation arrangements in the Strait of Hormuz are proceeding in a positive and constructive atmosphere", and urged against any actions that might jeopardise the progress.

The previous Iran-US deal -- meant to serve as a jumping-off point for negotiations on a permanent settlement -- had said Iran and Oman would hash out future arrangements for the strait in discussion with other Gulf countries and "in line with the applicable international law".

International law generally forbids tolling in such waterways. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said that talks with Oman were "approaching the final stages", but cautioned that "this is not a sign of the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz". "The reopening of the Strait of Hormuz is subject to other conditions and compensation for the violation of the memorandum of understanding by the United States," he said, referencing the June deal. Iranian security chief Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr on Saturday laid out a laundry list of preconditions for reopening the strait, including an end to the "war and aggression against Iran and its allies in Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, and Iraq".

Rwanda High Commission Marks Umuganura in Islamabad

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Rwanda High Commission in Pakistan celebrated Umuganura, Rwanda's National Harvest Day and Thanksgiving Festival, on August 7, bringing together members of the Rwandan community, government officials, diplomats, business representatives and media professionals.

Umuganura is celebrated annually on the first Friday of August and holds special significance in Rwanda's cultural heritage. The traditional festival reflects the values of gratitude, unity, hard work and shared prosperity, while providing an opportunity to celebrate the fruits of collective efforts.

The gathering in Islamabad highlighted Rwanda's rich cultural traditions and provided an opportunity for the Rwandan community and its friends in Pakistan to come together in a spirit of friendship and solidarity. The celebration also reaffirmed the enduring values that

continue to support Rwanda's sustainable development, national unity and collec-

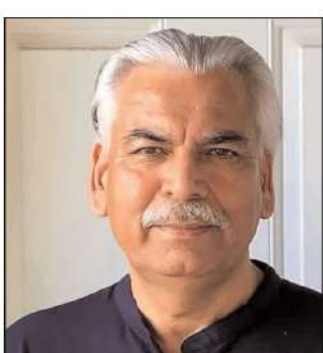
the cultural significance of Umuganura and its message of cooperation, gratitude



tive progress. Participants appreciated and shared prosperity.



When Power Admits Failure, What Comes Next?



BARRISTER USMAN ALI

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's statement that "whether anyone accepts it or not, our system has collapsed or failed" cannot be dismissed as routine political rhetoric. However one chooses to qualify, reinterpret or explain away his remarks, one fact remains unavoidable: a senior and powerful member of the government has publicly acknowledged the failure of the existing system. That admission matters because it did not come from an opposition leader, an anti-government commentator or a frustrated citizen. It came from someone who is himself part of the governing structure and directly involved in exercising state authority and implementing public policy.

When someone at the centre of power concedes that the system is no longer delivering the results expected of it, the discussion should not end with the admission. That is precisely where the real discussion must begin. Why has the system failed? Who is responsible for that failure? And, most importantly, what will be done to fix it? No state system collapses overnight. Institutions do not suddenly become dysfunctional. The rule of law does not disappear in a single day. An economy does not fall into recurring

crises because of one bad decision, nor is public confidence in the state destroyed by one isolated event. Systemic failure is usually the cumulative result of years—often decades—of misplaced priorities, weak institutions, flawed decision-making and an unwillingness to accept accountability. Pakistan's predicament cannot be attributed exclusively to one government, one political party or one institution. Its history demonstrates what happens when constitutional boundaries become blurred, institutions move beyond their prescribed roles, the law is applied differently to the powerful and the powerless, loyalty takes precedence over merit, and accountability becomes an instrument of political convenience rather than a consistent principle.

Over time, such practices do not merely produce poor governance. They weaken the foundations of the state itself. One of Pakistan's most persistent mistakes has been the tendency to place faith in individuals rather than institutions. Every few years, the country is presented with a new leader, a new coalition, a new political arrangement or a new administrative experiment, accompanied by the promise that this time things will be different. Governments change and personalities come and go, yet many of the fundamental failures of governance remain remarkably unchanged. The result is predictable: individuals become powerful while institutions remain weak. The true measure of a functioning state is not the number of grand projects it announces, the scale of its publicity campaigns or the ambition of its political slogans. The real test comes when an ordinary citizen walks into a police station, approaches a court, seeks treatment at a pub-

lic hospital, sends a child to a government school or visits a public office to obtain a service to which they are legally entitled.

If that citizen needs political influence to secure a basic right, must wait years for justice, is expected to pay a bribe for a routine service, or cannot trust the law to be applied equally, then the system is failing at its most fundamental level—regardless of what official statistics or government advertisements may claim. The same structural weaknesses are visible in the economy. No country can build sustainable prosperity on perpetual borrowing, a narrow tax base, unproductive expenditure and chronic policy uncertainty. When a disproportionate share of the tax burden falls on salaried workers and documented sectors of the economy while large segments of economic activity remain inadequately taxed, the problem is not merely one of revenue collection. It is also a question of economic fairness and the credibility of the state. Education and healthcare are equally fundamental. They are not peripheral welfare concerns; they determine the future capacity of the state itself. When access to quality education and reliable healthcare depends primarily on a family's ability to pay, society gradually divides into two parallel realities: one for those who can afford to escape the failures of the public system, and another for those who have no choice but to depend on it. Yet perhaps the deepest problem is not simply a shortage of resources. It is the persistent refusal to accept responsibility. Politicians blame the establishment. State institutions point to political incompetence. Bureaucrats cite political interference. Incumbent govern-

ments blame their predecessors, while almost every new administration claims that the crisis it faces was inherited from the one before it.

There may be some truth in each of these arguments. But if responsibility always belongs to someone else, who exactly is responsible for reform? There is a simple principle at the heart of public administration: Authority and accountability must go together.

Those who exercise power must also accept responsibility for the consequences of how that power is used. It is therefore not enough for those in government to diagnose the system as broken. They must explain what they are doing, within the authority already available to them, to repair it. Ordinary Pakistanis have been saying for years that the system does not work. They do not need those in power merely to repeat the diagnosis. The difference between a citizen and a government official is that the latter has the authority, and therefore the responsibility, to do something about it. If meaningful reform is genuinely the objective, the first requirement must be the equal and consistent application of the rule of law.

No system can remain stable when the powerful and the powerless effectively live under different legal standards. Accountability must apply to everyone. Justice must be accessible to everyone. Constitutional limits must bind everyone. The second requirement is to free institutions from dependence on personalities and political expediency. The police, civil service, accountability bodies, regulatory institutions and local administration should function according to law, merit and established procedure, not

according to the preferences of whoever happens to hold office. A strong state is not one in which the prime minister, chief minister or cabinet minister must personally "take notice" every time an ordinary citizen encounters an administrative failure. A strong state is one in which the system works without requiring the personal intervention of the powerful. The third essential reform is genuine devolution of power. Every broken road, blocked sewer, neglected park, local transport problem or failure of municipal services should not become a matter for provincial or federal politics. In functioning democracies, much of the state's day-to-day interaction with citizens takes place through empowered local governments.

Pakistan needs local institutions with genuine authority, reliable financial resources and clear democratic accountability. Beyond this, judicial reform is unavoidable. Chronic delays in litigation must be reduced. Merit must become the foundation of recruitment and advancement in the police and civil service.

The tax system must become broader, simpler and fairer. Public expenditure must be more transparent. Education and healthcare must be treated as long-term national investments rather than routine budgetary obligations. Without reforms of this kind, talk of "systemic change" will remain little more than a slogan. Above all, Pakistan must rebuild trust between the citizen and the state.

States are not held together merely by constitutions, government buildings, laws or official institutions. Their real strength lies in the confidence of their citizens: the belief that the law will protect them, the

courts will give them a fair hearing, the police will treat them impartially, their taxes will be used responsibly and their voice will matter.

That trust cannot be manufactured through advertising campaigns, press conferences or speeches. It has to be earned through the everyday conduct of the state. Mohsin Naqvi's remarks are important because they give official expression to something ordinary Pakistanis have felt for years. But the significance of that admission will depend entirely on what follows it.

If it becomes the starting point for serious institutional reform, it may eventually be remembered as a moment of necessary recognition. But if the same methods of governance remain weak, standards remain unequal and those in authority continue to shift responsibility elsewhere, then this statement, too, will become little more than a headline that briefly dominates public debate before disappearing into the archives.

Pakistan does not need another set of slogans. It needs adherence to a different set of principles: the rule of law, institutional independence, merit, transparency, accountability and continuity of policy. The central question is no longer whether the system has failed. If those exercising power are themselves acknowledging its failure, that debate has largely been settled. The questions that matter now are harder: Who allowed the system to fail? Who will repair it? How will it be repaired? And when will that process begin? Those who possess authority cannot merely diagnose failure; they bear the first responsibility for correcting it. Pakistan does not need another admission of failure. It needs action.

REAR WINDOW

Governor condoles with Barrister Gohar over mother's demise

TIMES REPORT

BUNER: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday visited the residence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan here to offer condolences on the demise of his mother.

The Governor expressed heartfelt sympathy with Barrister Gohar Khan and the bereaved family, offered Fateha, and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul, her elevated ranks in Jannat, and strength and patience for the family to bear the irreparable loss.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Kundi said his thoughts and prayers were with the bereaved family in this difficult time.



SACM Samiullah condoles with Barrister Gohar Ali over death of his mother

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Transport and Mass Transit, Samiullah Khan, visited Buner and expressed his heartfelt condolences to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman and Member of the National Assembly, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, over the sad demise of his mother. On the occasion, Special Assistant Samiullah Khan expressed his deep sympathy with Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and his bereaved family and offered Fateha for the

departed soul. He also prayed for the forgiveness and elevation of the deceased's ranks in

this hour of grief and shared their sorrow. He prayed that Allah Almighty may



the hereafter. Samiullah Khan said that the death of a mother is an irreparable loss and a deeply painful moment for any family. He said that he stood with Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and his family in

bless the departed soul with a high rank in his mercy, elevate her ranks in the hereafter, and grant Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and all bereaved family members patience and strength to bear this great loss.

Federal Constabulary operational training concludes in Nowshera

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A four-week special operational training programme for personnel of the Federal Constabulary (FC), conducted by the Pakistan Army in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has successfully concluded.

The concluding ceremony was held at Jalozi Camp in Nowshera, where the Corps Commander Peshawar, Lieutenant General, Syed Omar Ahmed Bukhari attended as the chief guest.

A total of 187 Federal Constabulary personnel from nine platoons successfully

completed the operational training programme.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Corps Commander Peshawar praised the personnel for their high morale, discipline and professional capabilities. He said that high-quality professional training and operational preparedness were essential to meet modern security challenges.

He stressed that well-trained personnel could play an effective role in safeguarding national security, maintaining internal peace and conducting counter-terrorism operations.

The Corps Commander said the Pakistan Army would continue to support law-enforcement agencies in enhancing their operational capacity.

He also appreciated the bravery, discipline and sense of duty demonstrated by Federal Constabulary personnel, saying they were playing an important role in maintaining peace and stability in the country.

At the conclusion of the programme, the trainees demonstrated the professional skills and operational capabilities they had acquired during the training.

Petroleum Levy Blamed for Rising Inflation: JJ

MUHAMMAD REHAN

D.I. KHAN: Jamaat-e-Islami Dera Ismail Khan staged a protest sit-in and blocked the road at Qureshi Mor against the increase in petroleum prices, petroleum levy and rising inflation.

The protest was held on the call of Jamaat-e-Islami central emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman and was led by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa South President Yousaf Khattak, District Emir Manzoor Masood Khattak, Zahid Mohibullah Advocate, Maulana Saleemullah Arshad, Asad Jan and other leaders.

IG FC chairs grand Jirga, discusses law and order situation

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: A Grand Jirga, chaired by the Inspector General of Frontier Corps KP (North), was held at the Dir Scouts Headquarters with the Malaks and elders of Lower Dir.

The Jirga discussed a comprehensive review of the current law and order situation in the area. The Jirga was attended by the Regional Police Officer of Malakand, the Deputy Commissioner, and the District Police Officer of Lower Dir,

alongside local elders. peace and stability the Tehsil Lal Qilla,



During the Jirga, the ICFC KP (North) Maj Gen Rao Imran Sartaj said that ensuring lasting

across the respective areas is a mutual responsibility. Special emphasis was placed on

highlighting the critical need for enhanced cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and security forces.

The elders pledged their unconditional cooperation with the government, police, and security forces, explicitly consenting to cooperate in targeted operations in sensitive areas. At the end, special prayers were offered for the lasting peace and prosperity of the area.

Symposium held at GIKI Swabi to highlight significance of mineral sector

PESHAWAR: A national symposium titled "Minerals for Prosperity: Opportunities, Challenges and the Way Forward" was held at the Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute (GIKI) of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIK Institute) in Swabi.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Mines Arif Ahmad Zai was the chief guest at the event that was also attended by experts, faculty members and stu-



dents from Abbottabad University, FATA University, GIK Institute, AST and other universities. The symposium provided a platform for detailed discussions on the effective utilization of the province's mineral resources, mineral testing, strengthening analytical capabilities and developing stronger linkages between academia and industry.

Speaking on the occasion, provincial minister Arif Ahmad Zai said that our province was rich in natural resources and valuable minerals but modern scientific research, quality mineral testing and strong collaboration between industry and academia were essential to derive maximum benefit from these resources.

He emphasized that the involvement of students and utilization of their research capabilities were crucial for accelerating development in the minerals sector as well as strengthening the provincial economy.

He said stronger cooperation among educational institutions, researchers and industry stakeholders would help transform the province's mineral wealth into sustainable economic opportunities.—APP

RBC DI Khan Calls for Support to Boost Blood Donation

TIMES REPORT

DI KHAN : The Regional Blood Centre (RBC) Dera Ismail Khan has intensified efforts to strengthen institutional coordination, promote component-based transfusion, facilitate timely blood availability for patients and encourage voluntary blood donation through a series of meetings and visits involving members of the Board of Governors of Medical Teaching Institute (MTI), Defence Security Forces (DSF) and senior medical professionals.

As part of these activities, members of the Board of Governors (BoG), MTI Dera Ismail Khan, Dr. Ashfaq Khan and Engineer Zubair Khan, visited the Regional Blood Centre, Emergency Specialist Dr. Muhammad Asad and Director HR Dr. Ubaidullah accompanied them.

The visiting BoG members met Manager Regional Blood Centre Dr. Muhammad Rizwan Rajput at his office and were subsequently taken on a detailed tour of different sections of the centre. They were briefed about blood collection, screening, processing, component prepara-

tion, storage and transfusion-related services being provided to patients.

The meeting focused particularly on the proposed Thalassemia Unit at DHQ Teaching Hospital MTI Dera Ismail Khan and the possibility of establishing a structured mechanism for



provision of blood and blood components to patients who would be treated at the proposed unit.

Dr. Muhammad Rizwan Rajput assured the visiting BoG members that the Regional Blood Centre would extend maximum possible cooperation for the timely provision of safe blood and blood components to thalassemia patients. He also expressed willingness for formalising the cooperation through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the relevant institutions.

The Regional Blood Centre manager also drew the attention of the BoG members towards the shortage of staff at the centre, particularly security guards and watchmen. He said the shortage had affected the operation of the centre's gate located opposite the Women & Children



Hospital, which often remained closed due to inadequate security arrangements.

The BoG members assured the Regional Blood Centre management of their all possible cooperation in resolving the issue and arranging the required security staff.

In another important engagement, Regional Blood Centre Manager Dr. Muhammad Rizwan Rajput met Brigadier Rizwan-ul-Haq, Commandant Defence Security Forces (DSF), Pakistan Army, at his office in Dera Ismail Khan Cantonment.

Farzand Ali Wazir Attends PRCS KP Volunteer Training

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR : Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Khyber

Department of PRCS KP under the YOUR-CAP Urban Resilience Project.

The training, supported by the Italian

and skills in project planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and teamwork.

The programme focused on equipping young volunteers to play a more effective role in humanitarian services, community resilience and organized project implementation.

On the occasion, PRCS KP appreciated the dedication and active participation of the volunteers and reaffirmed its commitment to continued training and capacity-building initiatives to promote youth leadership, volunteerism and stronger, safer and more resilient communities.



Pakhtunkhwa Branch, Farzand Ali Wazir, attended as chief guest a two-day Project Management Skills Training organized by the Youth & Volunteer

Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), aimed to enhance volunteers' practical knowledge

Engr Amir Muqam attends Barrister Gohar's mother funeral

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister and President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Muqam, attended the funeral prayer in Daggar Kalay, Buner



district, for the mother of member of the national assembly (MNA) and Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan. She was also mother of Johar Ali Khan, and the grandmother of Kamran Khan. Federal Minister Engineer Amir Muqam expressed his deep condolences and sympathy to Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Johar Ali Khan, and other members of the bereaved family.

He prayed for the elevation of the deceased's ranks in Janatul Firdus and for patience and strength for the bereaved family. On the occasion, PML-N District President Haji Salar Khan, General Secretary Advocate Haji Shah Bakht Rawan Khan, along with other party office-bearers and leaders, were also present with the Federal Minister.

PPP Must Strengthen Public Outreach: Irfan Afridi

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Peoples Youth Organization Deputy Information Secretary Muhammad Irfan Afridi has called for the reorganization and reactivation of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) organizations to strengthen public outreach ahead of the upcoming local government and general elections.

Speaking exclusively to Daily Times, Afridi said strong grassroots organizations were essential for maintaining close contact with the people and ensuring effective participation in election campaigns. He described the PPP as Pakistan's largest democratic party, with a long history of sacrifices for democracy, constitutional supremacy and public rights.

Afridi praised President Asif Ali

Zardari for his political leadership and expressed confidence that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would become the country's future prime minister. He also commended Governor



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi for his public service and efforts to address people's issues. He praised Senator Rubina Khalid for carrying forward Shaheed Benazir Bhutto's vision through the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), saying millions of deserving women had bene-

fited from the initiative.

Afridi said the Pakistan Peoples Youth Organization was providing an important platform for young people, adding that youth would play a decisive role in shaping Pakistan's political future. He criticized the KP government over what he described as failures in addressing law and order, unemployment, inflation and development issues. He also termed the campaign for the release of former Prime Minister Imran Khan a political exercise that, in his view, had failed to gain nationwide momentum.

Afridi said PPP workers would continue to uphold the political legacy of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and work to strengthen the party ahead of the forthcoming elections.

RPO Malakand Visits Kabal Blast Martyrs' Families

SOHAIL BACHA

SWAT : Regional Police Officer (RPO) Malakand, Syed Fida Hassan Shah, visited the homes of police martyrs who lost their lives in the Kabal suicide blast and expressed condolences to their families.

The RPO met the families of Constable Ameen Khan, Constable Khalid Khan and Constable Mukarram Khan and paid tribute to their sacrifices for the department and the nation.

During the visits, he also met the children of the martyrs,

inquired about their wellbeing and offered them words of comfort. He prayed for the departed souls and for the elevation of their

every difficult time and extend all possible support.

He said the sacrifices and services of the brave police personnel



ranks. Syed Fida Hassan Shah assured the bereaved families that the police department would stand by them in

would never be forgotten. He also expressed affection towards the young children of the martyrs and presented them with gifts.