



Shehryar directs to end unannounced power cuts

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Argentina stun England

Lautaro Martinez scored a 92nd minute winner as Lionel Messi inspired World Cup holders Argentina to a stunning comeback to beat England 2-1 on Wednesday and set up a final with European champions Spain.

— Story on Page 7

The Province

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Quote

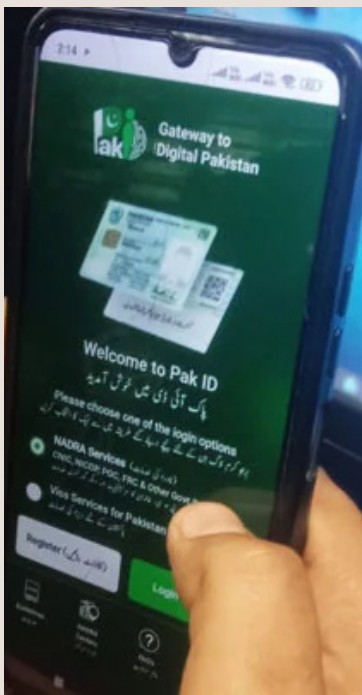


With faith, discipline and selfless devotion to duty, there is nothing worthwhile that you cannot achieve. — Muhammad Ali Jinnah



News DIGEST

No entry to Pakistan on expired Nicop under new travel rules



LONDON: Pakistan has clarified that overseas Pakistanis travelling on foreign passports will continue to be allowed entry on a valid National Identity Card for Overseas Pakistanis (Nicop), but passengers whose Nicop has expired or is invalid must obtain a Pakistani visa before travelling.

A government spokesperson told Geo News that reports suggesting all British passport holders would be barred from entering Pakistan on the basis of Nicop were incorrect and misleading.

The spokesperson said the instructions apply to passengers travelling from all countries, including Britain, the United States, European countries and elsewhere, who do not possess a valid Nicop.

Under the revised instructions, any passenger travelling on a foreign passport with an expired, invalid or cancelled Nicop must obtain a valid Pakistani visa before boarding a flight to Pakistan.

Airlines have been directed not to allow such passengers to board without a valid Pakistani visa or Pakistani passport. No exception will be made for passengers who fail to meet the required entry conditions.

The spokesperson said there had been considerable fake news and confusion regarding the directive. The restriction does not apply to passengers holding a valid Nicop, who may continue to travel to Pakistan on their foreign passports in accordance with existing rules.

Airline station managers have been instructed to brief all relevant staff and ensure that passengers are properly advised before boarding.



MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari waves to supporters upon his arrival. — PHOTO: ONLINE

Seeks high-powered commission on AJK unrest

Armed forces are our red line: Bilawal

Constitutional amendments could not be imposed through sit-ins or at gunpoint: PPP chief

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MUZAFFARABAD: Expressing concerns over violent protests in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Wednesday demanded a high-powered commission to launch an investigation according to the state laws.

Addressing the PPP leadership and ticket holders in Muzaffarabad, Bilawal said the situation in AJK was a matter of concern not only for Kashmiris but for every Pakistani.

His remarks came amid a surge in violence linked to ongoing sit-ins and protests in parts of AJK ahead of the July 27 elections for the region's 53-member Legislative Assembly.

The AJK government on June 5 declared the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) a proscribed organisation under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), saying the group was engaged in terrorism.

The ban was imposed days ahead of the banned outfit's planned June 9 protest seeking the abolition of 12 seats in the AJK reserved for refugees from Indian

Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) who migrated to Pakistan after 1947.

Bilawal called for the formation of a commission with full powers to investigate recent developments and said law enforcement agencies should conduct inquiries strictly in accordance with state laws.

The PPP chairman said politicians in Pakistan and AJK, as well as those involved in protests, should carefully reflect on their conduct.

He stressed that everyone must choose their words responsibly during the cur-

rent circumstances and urged all political parties to play their role to establish peace in the region.

Bilawal said Pakistani armed forces were a red line for his party and warned that any rhetoric directed against them would not be tolerated.

He said any statements emerging from AJK against the Pakistan Army were unacceptable and reiterated that the PPP would never tolerate anti-state narratives.

Referring to the people of Kashmir, Bilawal said his party was deeply hurt whenever offensive language was used against Kashmiris.

Four bodies recovered in Quetta

Bodies of a missing ASF inspector, ex-CTD corporal, and two others were recovered from Quetta's Shaban area

OUR CORRESPONDENT

QUETTA: Police on Wednesday recovered four bodies from the Shaban area of Quetta, including those of missing security personnel and a police officer who had been abducted nearly a month ago.

According to sources, the victims were identified as Airport Security Force (ASF) Inspector Zubair Ahmed Shahwani, former Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) corporal Syed Khalilur Rehman, retired Pakistan Army Havaladar Sadiq, and Police Constable Farid, who was previously reported to have been abducted from the Mangi Dam area.

Police authorities moved the bodies to a local hospital for the necessary legal formalities and final identification procedures.

The recovery ends the search for Inspector Shahwani and his friend,



former CTD corporal Rehman, both of whom had gone missing on June 21 after leaving Shahwani's residence in the Killi Barat area of Jinnah Town.

Meanwhile, Constable Farid had been missing since his alleged abduction from the Mangi Dam area, while retired Havaladar Sadiq had also been unaccounted for before the discovery.

Security forces cordoned off the area to collect forensic evidence and launched a comprehensive investigation into the circumstances surrounding the deaths.

Official statements on the incident are still awaited from the authorities.

PM directs FBR to provide all possible facilities to business community

Premier calls businessmen backbone of economy, asks FBR to ensure prompt resolution of their issues



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday hailed the business community as "the backbone of the national economy" and said that they should be provided with every possible facility to enhance production and boost exports.

Chairing a meeting to review the affairs of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the prime minister directed the Board to work closely with the business commu-

nity and resolve their legitimate concerns on a priority basis.

He also instructed senior FBR officials to visit Karachi during the first week of every month to maintain direct engagement with the business community and ensure the prompt resolution of their issues.

He expressed his confidence that Pakistan's economy is on the path to stability, and the current year will be marked by economic growth and the expansion of business activities.

He said companies that comply with tax laws would be officially recognised and encouraged in appreciation of their contribution.

The prime minister emphasised that the government's objective was to promote ease of doing business, encourage investment and exports, and make the tax system more transparent and simpler to strengthen the confidence of the business community.

The meeting was also briefed on the performance of the FBR and the implementation of ongoing reforms.

It was informed in the meeting that production monitoring systems had been installed in the sugar, cement, tobacco, tiles, and fertiliser industries.

The installation of production monitoring systems in the textile and beverages industries is currently underway.

During the past year, production monitoring in the sugar industry resulted in the collection of an additional Rs42 billion in taxes, the meeting was told.

In the cement industry, production monitoring led to the collection of an additional Rs 38 billion in tax revenue over the past year.

KP CM distributes appointment letters to newly recruited police constables

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Sohail Afridi, handed over appointment letters to 4,306 newly recruited police constables from all eight divisions of the province, marking a significant milestone in strengthening the operational capacity and human resource base of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police.

Addressing the ceremony held in Peshawar, the Chief Minister congratulated the newly inducted personnel and expressed confidence that they would uphold throughout their professional careers the same principles of merit, transparency, integrity, honesty, and dedication on which they had been recruited.

The provincial government, he said, has institutionalized merit and transparency as the cornerstone of governance across all sectors, ensuring that appointments and public service opportunities were based solely on competence rather than political influence or nepotism.

The Chief Minister observed that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), and Special Branch have earned nationwide recognition for their professionalism, courage, and operational effectiveness as a direct outcome of merit-based institutional reforms.

He noted that they were becoming part of a distinguished institution with a proud legacy of sacrifice and public service, urg-

ing them to safeguard the honour, discipline, and traditions of the force under all circumstances.

He paid tribute to the sacrifices made by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police during more than two decades of frontline operations against terrorism, acknowledging the force's unwavering commitment to safeguarding the lives and property of citizens.

He also honoured the sacrifices of the police martyrs, veterans, and serving personnel who have demonstrated exceptional courage in the fight against terrorism.

The Chief Minister urged the newly inducted officers to remain steadfast in the discharge of their duties, resist all forms



of unlawful pressure or interference and uphold the rule of law by prioritizing the fight against crime and terrorism. He reaffirmed the provincial government's resolve to continue its efforts until sus-

tainable peace is fully restored.

He emphasized that the defining characteristic of a professional police officer was respectful, impartial, and courteous engagement with citizens, coupled with

an unwavering commitment to justice. He assured the participants that the provincial government would continue extending full support to strengthen the institutional capacity, welfare, and professional development of the police force.

Highlighting the recruitment of women constables, the Chief Minister welcomed the increasing participation of women in the police service and reiterated that women's empowerment remains a key priority of the provincial government.

He stated that women would continue to receive equitable access to internship programmes, interest-free loan schemes, and other government initiatives to enable their meaningful contribution to the province's socio-economic development.

Sher Dil visits Shangla Press Club

SYED SAJID SHAH

ALPURI: District Emergency Officer (DEO) Shangla, Malik Sher Dil Khan, accompanied by Khan Muhammad, visited the Shangla Press Club, Union of Journalists, where he held a cordial and productive meeting with the President of Shangla Press Club, Syed Sajid Shah. During the meeting, both sides discussed various matters of mutual interest, including strengthening cooperation between the journalist community and Rescue 1122, as well as issues related to public service. President of Shangla Press Club, Syed Sajid Shah, appreciated the timely and effective services rendered by Rescue 1122 Shangla during emergencies, natural disasters, and other challenging situations. He stated that Rescue personnel serve humanity selflessly, risking their own lives to save others, which is highly commendable. He further remarked that Rescue 1122 has earned the trust and confidence of the people of Shangla through its outstanding services.

Tanzeem-e-Asatiza Pakistan holds meeting in Upper Dir

SYED ZAHID JAN

UPPER DIR: The provincial chapter meeting of Tanzeem-e-Asatiza Pakistan, has started in Upper Dir. The meeting will discuss teacher welfare, organizational matters, and recommendations will be prepared for quality education. According to press release issued from Tanzeem Manzil Dir, all arrangements and preparations for the 3-day Provincial Administration Meeting of Tanzeem-e-Asatiza Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, being held in SomKot Ushari Darra, have been completed. The meeting officially began today. In this regard, Provincial Vice President Bakhtiar Zameen and Provincial Secretary Dr. Muhammad Usman conducted a detailed inspection of the venue, including the conference hall, accommodation, reception, registration, food, seating arrangements, and other administrative matters.

Shehryar directs to end unannounced power cuts

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOHAT: The authorities directed the power utilities to end unannounced electricity and gas outages and accelerate work on key infrastructure projects during two high-level review meetings held in Kohat.

The meetings were held in the Commissioner's Kohat Office, were attended by the Member of the National Assembly and former Interior Minister Shehryar Khan Afridi, Commissioner Kohat Syed Motasim Billah Shah, Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Nawaz Wazir and senior officials from PESCO, TESCO, SNGPL, OGDCL, WAPDA, the Cantonment Board and other government departments.

Officials reviewed electricity and natural gas supply, unannounced load shedding, repair and energization of faulty transformers, new electricity and gas connections, expansion of gas distribution networks, restoration of roads following development works, and the provision of essential public services, including water, health and education.



Participants were directed to avoid unscheduled power outages, strengthen coordination among departments to ensure prompt resolution of public complaints and remove delays in ongoing development schemes.

The meetings also reviewed progress on projects being implemented with support from gas companies, including three modern stadiums, four causeways, the Sodal Football Ground, technical colleges and the upgradation of the Shakardara Rural Basic Health Centre. Authorities were directed to speed up work to ensure completion within the approved timelines.

Officials also discussed a proposed Rs130 million Youth Centre, directing

the relevant departments to finalize a suitable site and complete administrative formalities so construction can begin without delay.

Following the meetings, Afridi visited several development sites in Kohat to inspect the pace and quality of work. He said timely completion of projects would remain a priority and stressed that no compromise would be made on construction standards.

The participants reaffirmed their commitment to improving coordination among government agencies to ensure timely completion of development projects and enhance the delivery of electricity, gas and other essential public services across the district.

HMC treats over 974,000 patients in First Half of 2026

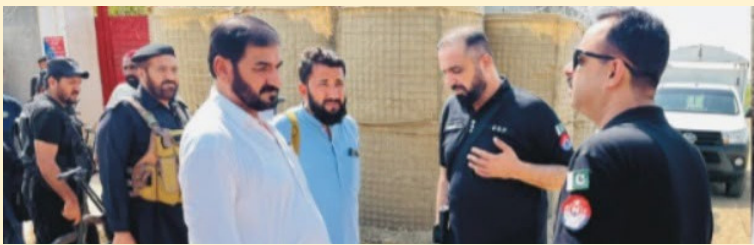
STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Hayatabad Medical Complex (MTI-HMC) provided medical services to 974,815 patients between January and June 2026, setting a new benchmark for public sector healthcare in the province, according to hospital sources. From March to June, 234,536 emergency cases were reported, reflecting the institution's emergency response capacity and rapid treatment turnaround.

Sources said the hospital's own-source revenue during this period stood at Rs 76,894,817, while sales under the Sehat Sahulat Programme reached Rs 1,144,492,283. The administration completed 1,817 new merit-based appointments, while 97 consultants are providing services to patients under the Institute Based Practice framework.

The Burns & Plastic Surgery Centre also extended modern treatment facilities to patients. According to the report, 23,181 patients were examined in the OPD, while 4,186 patients were admitted for treatment.

DPO Dera inspects Khati Check Post, Aba Shaheed Police Station



DI KHAN: District Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan, Ziauddin Ahmed, visited Khati Check Post and Aba Shaheed Police Station in the Suburb Circle to review security arrangements and ongoing construction work. DSP Suburb Muhammad Imran Kundi accompanied him during the visit. The DPO inspected security measures, checking procedures, and the performance of police personnel, directing officers to remain vigilant and ensure effective screening of suspicious individuals and vehicles. He also reviewed the progress of construction projects at both facilities and instructed the relevant authorities to complete the work promptly without compromising quality. Ziauddin Ahmed said that providing a better working environment and modern infrastructure for police personnel remains a top priority, reaffirming the department's commitment to strengthening the force's capacity and maintaining law and order across the district. MUHAMMAD REHAN

New academic block construction begins at Kohat school

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOHAT: Construction has started on a new academic block at Government High School No. 3 in Kohat, a project aimed at expanding classroom capacity and paving the way for the institution's future upgrade to higher secondary level.

The project is being financed through development funds allocated by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Minister Shafi Jan and Member of the National Assembly and former Interior Minister Shehryar Khan Afridi. It is intended to improve educational facilities and accommodate the school's growing student population.

Officials said the new block will provide additional classrooms, creating a more spacious and organized learning environment while addressing current infrastructure needs.

They added that completion of the project would facilitate the school's eventual elevation to higher secondary status, enabling local students to continue their education closer to home instead of traveling to other towns. The upgrade is also expected to reduce the financial



burden on families and improve access to quality education in the area.

Authorities said strengthening educational infrastructure remains a government priority, with development projects in education, healthcare and other public services being pursued to improve basic facilities for local communities.

Residents and education stakeholders welcomed the project, expressing hope that its timely completion would enhance learning opportunities and raise educational standards in the area.

SP Nauman Chairs Meeting on Action Against Illegal Foreign Nationals

MUHAMMAD REHAN
DI KHAN: SP City Division



Muhammad Nauman chaired a high-level meeting to review progress on the repatriation of illegally residing foreign nationals and directed officials to further strengthen and accelerate the ongoing campaign.

Held on the instructions of DPO Dera Ismail Khan Ziauddin Ahmed, the meeting was attended by the Assistant Commissioner (Revenue), DSP City Syed Sagheer Shah Gilani, DSP Suburb Muhammad Imran Kundi, Special Branch In-charge Faheem Abbas Dhandla, DSB In-charge Nisar Marwat, and other relevant officers.

Participants reviewed the current status of illegal foreign residents, ongoing operations, and inter-agency coordination. SP Nauman instructed officers to intensify legal action, enhance surveillance at sensitive locations, improve intelligence sharing, and ensure timely implementation of all measures in line with the government's policy.

CCPO Peshawar directs to intensify crackdown on crime

AMEER MUAVIA

PESHAWAR: Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar, Dr. Mian Saeed Ahmad, chaired a special meeting with police officers at Malik Saad Shaheed Police Lines on Wednesday. The meeting was attended by SSP Operations Farhan Khan, SP Investigation Ayesha Gul, Commandant Campus Mubeen-ur-Rehman, divisional SPs, SDPOs, and SHOs.

During the meetings, the CCPO urged officers to uphold honesty, integrity, professionalism, and public service as the core values of their duties. He said that protecting the lives and property of citizens, ensuring timely justice, and promptly resolving public grievances and disputes remain the police's foremost responsibilities.

Dr. Saeed Ahmad directed officers to give priority to the cases of widows, orphans, vulnerable individuals, and other deserving applicants. He also stressed the need to strengthen community policing and public outreach initiatives to further enhance public trust in the police.

The CCPO instructed all officers to dispose of pending applications within the prescribed timeframe, treat complainants



with courtesy and respect, and ensure merit, transparency, and the rule of law in every case. He made it clear that no compromise would be tolerated when it comes to public service.

He further directed police officers to

project. While addressing the ceremony, MPA Malik Gul Ibrahim Khan said that providing basic facilities to the backward areas of the province is the top priority of the current provincial government. Work is underway at a fast pace for the timely and standard completion of small energy projects in Upper Dir district and more small hydropower plants will be completed by the end of this year he added.

KP govt priorities resolution of farmers' issues: Umar

Main Muhammad Umar inaugurates Molecular Plants Laboratory at Agriculture Research Institute Mingora

STAFF REPORTER

MINGORA: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Agriculture Main Muhammad Umar chaired an Khuli Kachehri at Agriculture Department office in Swat, where he reaffirmed that resolving farmers' problems remained the provincial government's and Agriculture Department's top priority.

Members of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Fazal Hakim Khan, Sultan Room Khan and Akhtar Khan Advocate, senior officials of Agriculture Department, farmers, political and social figures, local elders and a large number of citizens attended the event.

During the Khuli Kachari participants highlighted issues facing agriculture sector in Swat, including development needs, farmers' concerns, complaints and proposals. Main Muhammad Umar listened to the participants in detail and issued on the spot directives to relevant officials for immediate resolution of several

complaints. Other matters were referred to concerned authorities for legal and administrative action with instructions to ensure prompt progress.

Addressing the gathering, Main Muhammad Umar said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was pursuing farmer friendly policies and taking effective measures to promote agricultural development, modern farming technologies, higher productivity and welfare of growers. He said farmers formed backbone of the national economy, making timely resolution of their problems one of the government's foremost priorities.

He made it clear that there was no room for corruption in the Agriculture Department and warned that misconduct by any government officer or official would not be tolerated. He urged farmers to immediately report any demand for bribes through e-Minister Portal or his office so that strict and impartial action could be taken against those responsible.

Advisor also directed officials to process



applications submitted by farmers under various agricultural schemes in Swat on a priority basis and ensure the timely release of funds. He instructed Agriculture Department officers to adopt a coordinated approach to resolving farmers' issues, improving agricultural services and ensuring the prompt delivery of government facilities.

Later, Main Muhammad Umar visited Agriculture Research Institute, Mingora,

where he inaugurated a state-of-the-art Molecular Plant Laboratory. He said that the facility would play a vital role in modernising agricultural research and developing disease resistant, high-yield crop varieties.

During the visit, he inspected various research sections of institute and received a detailed briefing on ongoing research activities, agricultural projects and institute's overall performance.

Lawyer urges restraint in remarks on martyrs

OUR CORRESPONDENT

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Shah Fahad Ansari, Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and Vice President of the High Court Bar Association, Dera Ismail Khan, has said that political and religious leaders should exercise caution while making statements relating to martyrs and national security.

In a statement, Mr Ansari said that Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, as a senior political leader, should have avoided remarks that could hurt the sentiments of the families of martyrs or the wider public.

He said officers and personnel of the Pakistan Army and police were laying down their lives every day for the country's security, sovereignty, integrity and peace, adding that honouring their sacrifices was a collective national responsibility.

Mr Ansari stressed that issues concerning national security and the sacrifices of security personnel should be addressed



with responsibility, restraint and a spirit of national unity. He said political and religious leaders should adopt a balanced and unifying tone to strengthen national cohesion and preserve respect for those serving in the defence of the country.

He added that safeguarding the dignity of the country's martyrs should remain above political considerations and continue to be a shared national commitment.



ABBOTTABAD: A breathtaking view of the beautiful village of Gray Mandi nestled amidst lush green mountains. — PHOTO: ONLINE

Shehryar reviews KPCIP sewage project, WSSC Kohat digital reforms

TP REPORT

KOHAT: Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Shehryar Khan Afridi on Wednesday visited the under-construction sewage treatment plant in KDA being developed under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cities Improvement Project (KPCIP), where he reviewed the pace of work and stressed the need for timely completion of the project.

He was accompanied by Commissioner Kohat Division Moatasim Billah Shah, Deputy Commissioner Kohat Muhammad Nawaz, and Chairman Board of Directors and Acting Chief Executive Officer of WSSC Kohat Muhammad Saad.

During the visit, Infrastructure Engineer

Zafarullah Orakzai briefed the delegation on the project's construction progress, technical features, and the environmental and public health benefits it will provide after completion. The delegation was informed that the modern sewage treatment plant is designed to improve wastewater management, protect the environment, and enhance sanitation services for residents of Kohat.

Shehryar Khan Afridi directed the concerned authorities to ensure high construction standards and complete the project within the stipulated timeframe. He also instructed officials to accelerate road restoration work in KDA so that residents facing inconvenience due to ongoing construction could receive relief



at the earliest.

Commissioner Moatasim Billah Shah and Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Nawaz also emphasized maintaining the quality and pace of construction, expressing confidence that the project would be

completed on schedule and deliver long-term benefits to the people of Kohat.

Later, the delegation visited the headquarters of Water and Sanitation Services Company (WSSC) Kohat, where they were briefed on the organization's digital trans-

formation and administrative reforms.

Officials informed the visitors about the implementation of modern digital systems, including the Complaint Management System, Decision Support System, Human Resource Management System, Water Asset Management System, and Fleet Management System.

The briefing highlighted that these initiatives are aimed at improving service delivery, strengthening institutional performance, ensuring efficient utilization of resources, and promoting transparency and data-driven decision-making. The delegation appreciated WSSC Kohat's efforts to modernize its operations and enhance the quality of municipal services through the use of technology.

MDCAT applicant trends reflect shift towards quality health education: VC

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: The Vice Chancellor of Khyber Medical University (KMU), Peshawar, Professor Dr. Zia Ul Haq, has said that the trends in applications for the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reflect the evolving aspirations of students and a growing inclination towards quality, innovation-driven, and diversified health education. He expressed these views while chairing a high-level meeting held at KMU to review preparations for MDCAT 2026.

Speaking on the occasion, Professor Dr. Zia Ul Haq noted that the number of MDCAT applicants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has witnessed significant changes over the years. The applicant pool increased from 13,464 in 2010 to a record 46,232 in 2022, while approximately 38,000 candidates have registered for MDCAT 2026. He emphasized that this trend should not be interpreted as a decline in students' interest in the health sector. Rather, it reflects more informed, realistic, and career-oriented decision-making by today's students,

who are increasingly exploring a broader range of academic and professional opportunities within the healthcare ecosystem.

The Vice Chancellor highlighted that contemporary students are no longer limiting their career aspirations to traditional MBBS and BDS programs. Instead, they are actively pursuing emerging and high-impact disciplines such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Science, Biotechnology, Public Health, Nursing, Allied Health Sciences, Health Informatics, and other technology-driven healthcare fields. He further observed that rising costs of medical education, the extended duration of professional degree programs, evolving employment dynamics, and rapid technological advancements are also influencing students' academic and career choices.

Professor Dr. Zia Ul Haq stated that globally, the success of leading universities is no longer measured solely by student enrollment figures. Instead, institutions are increasingly evaluated on the quality of education they provide, the impact of their research and innovation, the competencies of their graduates, and

their overall contribution to society.

Reaffirming KMU's vision, he said the University is committed to producing healthcare professionals equipped to meet future challenges. To achieve this objective, KMU is integrating Artificial Intelligence and Digital Health into its academic curricula, expanding programs in Nursing and Allied Health Sciences, strengthening research and innovation, enhancing teaching in line with international standards, and developing a skilled workforce that addresses the evolving needs of the healthcare sector.

"Our objective is not merely to increase student enrollment, but to produce competent, skilled, and responsible healthcare professionals capable of delivering high-quality healthcare services to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan," he said.

Professor Dr. Zia Ul Haq reaffirmed that, despite prevailing challenges, Khyber Medical University will continue to play its leading role in strengthening Pakistan's healthcare system through excellence in education, cutting-edge research, innovation, and dedicated public service.

FGP, Media Leadership call for stronger collaboration to advance dev agenda

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: National media institutions and the development sector must forge stronger partnerships to promote informed public discourse on Pakistan's key development challenges and equip journalists with specialized knowledge to effectively report on emerging policy issues. This shared vision emerged during an extensive meeting between a delegation of the National Press Club (NPC), Islamabad, and the leadership of Freedom Gate Prosperity (FGP) at the FGP's office in Islamabad.

The NPC delegation comprised Abdul Razzaq Sial, President, Dr. Furqan Rao, Secretary, and senior journalist Zaigham Naqvi. They were received by Muhammad Anwar, CEO of FGP; prominent business leader and trainer Tauseef Zaman; FGP Board Member and senior broadcaster Urooj Raza Sayyami; senior journalist and Strategic Advisor Shafqat Aziz; and Dr. Shahbaz Tariq, Head of Economy at FGP.

Welcoming the delegation, Muhammad Anwar highlighted the growing importance of evidence-based dialogue and



constructive engagement between media, policymakers and development organizations. He said FGP is committed to serving as a bridge among public institutions, the media, academia and the development sector to promote informed policymaking and inclusive national development. He also emphasized the need for joint capacity-building initiatives to strengthen reporting on economic, social and environmental issues.

Abdul Razzaq Sial appreciated FGP's multidimensional work and stressed that the media has a vital responsibility to bring development issues into the national mainstream. He said journalists

require continuous exposure to emerging subjects such as climate change, economic reforms, governance, artificial intelligence and sustainable development so they can better inform the public and contribute to constructive national discourse. Dr. Furqan Rao emphasized the need for structured collaboration between media organizations and development institutions to enhance professional capacity. He said specialized training, policy dialogues and knowledge-sharing initiatives would enable journalists to better understand complex development challenges and communicate them more effectively to the public.

Shahid Khattak visits DHQ Hospital Karak

RAUF KHATTAK

KARAK: Parliamentary Leader and Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Shahid Khattak paid a detailed visit to the District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital Karak to review healthcare facilities and assess the hospital's immediate requirements.

He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Asad Sarwar, Executive Engineer (C&W) Irshad Khattak, Medical Superintendent (MS) Dr. Inayat Ullah, other government officials, and senior party workers.

During the visit, MNA Shahid Khattak inspected the Emergency Department, Labour Room, Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Laboratory, and other key sections of the hospital.

He received detailed briefings from the



hospital administration regarding the available medical facilities, equipment, infrastructure, and the challenges faced by doctors and patients.

Speaking to the media after the visit, Shahid Khattak said that his goal is to equip DHQ Hospital Karak with all the facilities available in major hospitals across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He described the hospital as a major challenge and stated that he had accepted the responsibility of transforming it into a modern healthcare institution.

Minhaj-ul-Quran Women League organizes Syeda Bibi Zainab conference

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: The Minhaj-ul-Quran Women League, Peshawar, has been rendering selfless religious, social, and intellectual services for many years. One of the organization's distinguishing features is that its chief organizer, Rubina Moeen, regularly collaborates with various religious and social organizations to hold joint events aimed at promoting Islamic values and fostering intellectual awareness. As part of these efforts, a "Syeda Bibi Zainab Conference" was organized recently at Khana Farhang Iran, Peshawar. The event aimed to familiarize contemporary women, especially the younger generation, with the exemplary life, character, patience, steadfastness, and religious contributions of Hazrat Syeda



Bibi Zainab, while paying tribute to her enduring legacy.

The conference was chaired by Bushra Farrukh, Chairperson of the Karwan-e-Hawa Literary Forum, while Rukhsana Nadir attended as the chief guest. Women from various walks of life, intellectuals, speakers, poets, and distinguished guests participated in the event. All speak-

ers, scholars, and poets highlighted the greatness, resilience, and unwavering courage of Hazrat Syeda Zainab, as well as the eternal sacrifices of the martyrs of Karbala. They described her as an outstanding role model for the Muslim Ummah, particularly for women.

The ceremony commenced with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an, followed by a na'at presented by Syeda Zartaj Bukhari, District President of Minhaj-ul-Quran Women League, Peshawar.

Sabiha Ishtiaq, Vice President of the Peshawar District chapter, delivered a speech on the life and character of Hazrat Syeda Zainab. She stated that through faith, patience, perseverance, and trust in Allah, a woman of strong character can change the course of history, and Hazrat Zainab remains the finest example of this

truth.

Faiza Shehzad, Tabinda Farrukh, and Syeda Zartaj Bukhari presented manqabats and salām, while Bushra Farrukh and Rukhsana Nadir paid tribute to the martyrs of Karbala.

Among those who also expressed their devotion and admiration during the conference were Dr. Seema Shafi, Dr. Roshan Kaleem, Shazia (Executive Member, Minhaj-ul-Quran), Nargis Afroz Zaidi, Dr. Shahida Sardar, Rani Andaleeb, and several other participants. The event was hosted by Naz Parveen and Fatima Afzal.

At the conclusion of the conference, Zahida Noor, Patron-in-Chief, thanked all the participants. Rubina Moeen presented books to the chairperson, the chief guest, and other distinguished attendees. The event concluded with a collective prayer.

News BRIEFS

Maulana Qasim stresses national unity

STAFF REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: Maulana Sheikh Muhammad Qasim, Member of the Rawalpindi Peace Committee and Interfaith Harmony Punjab, said Pakistan is a great blessing and called on citizens to safeguard its peace, stability, and progress through unity and respect for the rule of law.

He urged the nation to put national interests above personal differences and prayed for Pakistan's lasting peace, prosperity, and security.



Jamshed appointed PCTO Ambassador for performing arts

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR : The Pakistan Culture, Tourism and Arts Organization (PCTO) has appointed renowned performing artist and Pride of Performance 2026 recipient Jamshed Ali Khan as its Ambassador for Performing Arts, recognizing his outstanding contribution to Pakistan's cultural and artistic heritage.

The appointment reflects PCTO's commitment to promoting the country's rich cultural legacy by engaging distinguished artists who have made exceptional contributions to the performing arts. Jamshed Ali Khan has earned national recognition for his artistic excellence, professional achievements, and lifelong dedication to preserving and promoting Pakistan's cultural identity.

According to an official statement issued by PCTO, Khan's extensive experience, exceptional talent, and unwavering commitment to the promotion of Pakistan's cultural heritage make him a valuable addition to the organization. As Ambassador for Performing Arts, he will help advance PCTO's mission of promoting Pakistan's culture, tourism, and fine arts at both national and international levels while strengthening collaboration among artists, cultural institutions, and the creative community.



The Heavenly Alignment: Witnessing the Midday Sun Over the Kaaba

AYESHA NOOR

Every year, the movement of the sun across our sky follows a path governed by the perfect balance established by Allah. Among the most profound demonstrations of this celestial precision is the event where the sun reaches its zenith—its highest point—directly above the Holy Kaaba in Makkah.

This year, this significant alignment occurs today, Wednesday, July 15, 2026.

Understanding the Phenomenon

Because Makkah is located between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, the sun's path brings it directly over the city twice a year as it shifts with the Earth's orbit. On these specific dates, when the sun reaches its peak at midday, it sits at a 90-degree angle relative to the Kaaba.

At this exact moment, the shadow of the Kaaba vanishes entirely. This is not merely a coincidence, but a predictable, recurring event that highlights the order and discipline Allah has placed into the heavens.

A Practical Guidance for the Believers

For the Ummah, this event serves as a practical, natural sign to verify the direction of the Qibla. Throughout Islamic history, scholars and travelers used the position of the sun to ensure that their prayers were directed precisely toward the House of Allah.

Even today, in an age of technological calculation, this moment offers a way for every believer to witness the link between the celestial world and our religious practices. If a person stands in an open area where the sun is visible at that exact moment (which occurs at 12:26:44 PM Makkah time), the direction of the sun is the direction of the Kaaba. For those who cannot see the sun, the shadow of any straight, vertical object will point exactly away from the Qibla, allowing one to confirm their prayer direction with simple observation.

A Reflection on Divine Order

Beyond the mechanics of shadows and angles, this event acts as a powerful reminder for the heart. Five times a day, we turn our faces toward the Kaaba in prayer, regardless of where we are on Earth. When the sun aligns itself with that same point, it serves as a visual reminder of the unity of the believers.

It is a humbling moment to consider that while we are scattered across different continents and climates, the laws of the universe are calibrated to point us back to the center of our faith. It reinforces the truth that everything in existence—from the orbits of the stars to the rhythm of our prayers—is perfectly aligned by the will of the Creator.

As we witness these signs in the sky today, it is an opportunity to renew our intention, focus our hearts, and acknowledge the beauty and precision of the faith we follow.

The Naqvi-Patel Meeting

Terrorist networks operate across borders, cybercrime has become a global challenge

JUNAID QAISER



For Pakistan, the stakes are particularly high. The country continues to confront serious threats from Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), ISIS-Khorasan, and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA).

Diplomatic meetings often come and go with little lasting impact. However, some conversations signal a broader shift in international relations. The recent meeting between Pakistan's Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and FBI Director Kash Patel at the FBI Headquarters in Washington appears to be one of those moments. While it centered on counterterrorism, cyber investigations, and law enforcement cooperation, its significance extends far beyond security. It offers a glimpse into the future of Pakistan-US relations.

For much of the past two decades, ties between Islamabad and Washington were shaped by the war in Afghanistan. Cooperation was largely driven by immediate security concerns, and when those priorities changed, so did the relationship. The result was a cycle of close engagement followed by periods of distrust and distance.

Today, however, both countries face a very different security environment. Terrorist networks operate across borders, cybercrime has become a global challenge, financial crimes are increasingly sophisticated, and extremist organizations continue to exploit instability. These are threats that no country can confront alone. They require intelligence sharing, technological cooperation, and strong institutional partnerships.

It is in this context that the Naqvi-Patel meeting deserves attention.

FBI Director Kash Patel's public appreciation for Pakistan's role in protecting US interests in the region was a noteworthy gesture. His remarks reflected more than diplomatic courtesy. They acknowledged Pakistan's continued importance in regional security and highlighted a willingness to deepen cooperation in areas such as counterterrorism financing, cyber investigations, specialized training, and capacity building.

Minister Naqvi's visit was also significant because it followed his participation in the Fifth United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS 2026) in New York. His engagement at the summit demonstrated Pakistan's commitment to strengthening international cooperation against transnational crime and emerging security threats. In today's interconnected world, effective policing no longer ends at national borders. International partnerships have become an essential part of maintaining security.

For Pakistan, the stakes are particularly high. The country continues to confront serious threats from Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), ISIS-Khorasan, and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA). These organizations have repeatedly targeted civilians, security personnel, and critical infrastructure. Strengthening investigative capabilities, disrupting terrorist financing, and improving cyber resilience are therefore not simply matters of diplomacy—they are national priorities.

The United States also has compelling reasons to strengthen this partnership. South Asia remains strategically important, and Pakistan occupies a central position in a region where developments can have global consequences. Cooperation with Pakistan provides Washington with an experienced partner that understands the region's complex security dynamics and has paid a tremendous price in the fight against terrorism.

What makes this moment particularly interesting is the broader political backdrop. Since President Donald Trump's return to the White House, Pakistan and the United States have gradually rebuilt channels of engagement. Under Pakistan's current civil-military leadership, Islamabad has pursued a foreign policy that seeks constructive relations with major powers while protecting its own strategic interests. The emphasis has increasingly



shifted from dependence to partnership.

This distinction matters.

Successful partnerships are built on mutual interests rather than mutual expectations. Pakistan and the United States will continue to have differences on various regional and political issues. That is normal in any mature bilateral relationship. What is more important is the willingness to cooperate where interests align. Counterterrorism, cyber-security, financial crime, border security, and intelligence cooperation provide exactly that common ground.

Minister Naqvi's reported discussions on facilitating communication during periods of regional tension also point to another evolving dimension of Pakistan's diplomacy. Pakistan has consistently sought to position itself as a responsible regional actor capable of engaging with different stakeholders. At a time of continuing instability across parts of the Middle East and South Asia, countries that can maintain dialogue often become valuable partners in promoting stability.

Of course, challenges remain. Human rights concerns, historical mistrust, and differing policy priorities have not disappeared. Nor should they be ignored. Long-term cooperation will require openness, accountability, and continued dialogue. A healthy partnership is one that is capable of addressing disagreements without allowing them to derail broader cooperation.

Yet it would be a mistake to judge the future solely through the lens of past frustrations. The international security landscape has changed dramatically, and both Islamabad and Washington appear to recognize that their relationship must evolve accordingly.

Diplomacy achieves its greatest value when it produces results that improve people's lives. A safer region, stronger institutions, and more effective cooperation against terrorism and organized crime serve the interests of both Pakistan and the United States.

Pakistan and the Politics of Climate Injustice

FIZZA QAISAR



The country contributes less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions, by most estimates somewhere between 0.8% and 1.02%. It has never industrialized at the scale of the economies now driving the climate crisis. Yet on the Global Climate Risk Index, Pakistan sits among the five most vulnerable nations on Earth, and on the 2026 Climate Risk Index rankings, it holds the 15th position for climate related losses in a single recent year. This is not a coincidence of geography. It is the defining injustice of the climate era: those who did the least to cause the crisis are paying the highest price for it.

Since 1750, a handful of industrialized nations have produced the overwhelming share of the carbon dioxide now warming the planet. The United States alone accounts for roughly a quarter of cumulative historical emissions. China, Russia, and Germany follow. Together, fifteen countries are responsible for close to three quarters of the CO2 increase that has driven global warming. Pakistan is not among them. Its 240 million people live downstream, literally and figuratively, of decisions made in boardrooms and parliaments thousands of miles away.

And yet Pakistan pays. In 2022, monsoon rains intensified by a warming atmosphere put nearly one third of the country underwater. Thirty three

million people were displaced or affected. The damage and economic losses were estimated at close to \$30 billion, a sum that dwarfs the country's annual development budget. Scientific attribution studies later suggested that climate change had made the rainfall up to three to seven times more likely, and intensified it by as much as 75% in the worst affected regions. This was not an act of nature alone. It was a bill presented to a country that never ran up the tab.

Pakistan's exposure is structural, not incidental. It sits downstream of the Karakoram, Himalaya, and Hindukush glacier systems, the largest volume of ice outside the polar regions, which are now melting at an accelerating rate. Its agricultural economy, supporting more than 40% of the population, depends on a monsoon system that is becoming steadily less predictable. Its coastline, especially the Indus Delta, is losing land to seawater intrusion. Its cities, Jacobabad and Karachi among them, regularly register some of the highest heat index readings recorded anywhere on the planet.

Layered on top of this is a development deficit. Pakistan's Human Development Index score of 0.544 ranks it 168th globally. Limited institutional capacity, competing fiscal priorities, and a heavy debt burden mean the country arrives at climate summits with urgent needs but constrained means to act unilaterally.

The international response has not matched the scale of the injustice. The Loss and Damage Fund, formally operationalized at COP28 in Dubai, was meant to let historically low emitting, high impact countries like Pakistan access compensation for climate harms already locked in. But COP28 and COP29 both concluded without delivering the scale of finance vulnerable nations had asked for. For a country still rebuilding from 2022 while bracing for the next flood season, the gap between promise and delivery is measured in unrepaired embank-



Since 1750, a handful of industrialized nations have produced the overwhelming share of the carbon dioxide now warming the planet



ments and farmers who have not recovered their land.

Pakistan has tried to respond on its own terms. Its third Nationally Determined Contribution, submitted in September 2025, commits to a 50% reduction in economy wide emissions by 2035 against business as usual and raises its unconditional mitigation target from 15% to 17%. The Billion Tree Tsunami program, which planted over a billion trees by 2023, has been cited internationally as a model of scalable ecosystem restoration. But mitigation was never Pakistan's primary obligation in this crisis. Adaptation and recovery are, and those require financing only the international community can provide at scale.

The climate justice framing is not a rhetorical device. It is a factual description of asymmetry:

contribution near zero, consequence near catastrophic. For a global institution built on collective responsibility, Pakistan's case is close to a textbook example of why differentiated responsibility must move from declaration to disbursement.

The 2022 floods offered a preview of what climate injustice looks like when unaddressed. The next one is not a hypothetical. Glacial melt does not pause for financing negotiations, and monsoon volatility does not wait for the next COP to conclude. What Pakistan is asking for, at forums from Dubai to New York, is not charity. It is accountability, proportional to harm, delivered at the speed the crisis demands.

The data is no longer contested. The only open question is whether the institutions built to act on it will move before the next flood does.

BRA intensifies campaign to enforce revised 4 percent sales tax on food services

QUETTA: The Balochistan Revenue Authority (BRA) has accelerated its awareness and monitoring campaign to implement the revised 4 percent sales tax rate on restaurants, hotels, cafes, coffee houses, food huts, ice cream shops, and other food service providers under the Balochistan Sales Tax on Services Act, 2015.

BRA teams visited several outlets, the businesses were informed that under the Finance Act 2026, the sales tax rate on food services has been increased from 2 percent to 4 percent.

Officials directed service providers to ensure compliance with all legal requirements, including tax collection at the revised rate, timely filing of returns, payment of due taxes, registration with BRA, and effective use of Point of Sale (POS) systems.

The BRA emphasized that full compliance with tax laws is a legal obligation for all service providers. In cases of non-compliance, legal action will be taken under the Balochistan Sales Tax on Services Act, 2015.

The authority reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining a transparent tax system, fostering a business-friendly environment, and increasing provincial revenue. Awareness and enforcement campaigns will continue across Balochistan without interruption. — APP

SBP Governor outlines vision for a more inclusive, digital and resilient payments ecosystem

KARACHI: Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Jameel Ahmad on Wednesday welcomed the launch of the HBL, UnionPay International and PayPak co-badged debit card, describing the partnership as an important milestone in Pakistan's journey toward a modern, resilient and inclusive digital payments ecosystem that supports the Prime Minister's vision of a Cashless Pakistan.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Governor SBP said the co-badged payment solution combines the strength of Pakistan's domestic payment infrastructure with the international acceptance of a global payment network. He said the initiative reflects SBP's long-term vision for PayPak—to establish a secure, cost-effective and locally governed payment scheme capable of supporting the country's growing digital economy while enabling customers to transact seamlessly within Pakistan and abroad.

The Governor noted that the initiative is aligned with SBP Vision 2028 and the Prime Minister's Cashless Pakistan Initiative, which seek to make Pakistan's financial system more inclusive, more digital and more resilient. He said the objective is not merely to digitize payments but to create an ecosystem where individuals and businesses can transact seamlessly, safely and efficiently.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, holding a meeting with Jane Marriott CMG OBE, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, to discuss Pakistan's reform agenda and Pakistan–United Kingdom economic cooperation, in the Federal Capital. — PHOTO: PID

FinMin, British HC discuss economic cooperation

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday held talks with British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott on Pakistan's macroeconomic outlook, ongoing reforms and measures to strengthen bilateral economic and development cooperation.

The minister appreciated the United Kingdom's continued support for Pakistan's economic reforms and acknowledged the longstanding partnership between the two countries across a range of sectors, including economic governance, fiscal reforms, climate resilience, public finance, health, and social development, said a press release issued here by finance ministry.

The meeting reviewed Pakistan's recent macroeconomic progress, including the

successful passage of the Federal Budget 2026-27, ongoing fiscal consolidation efforts, and measures aimed at promoting sustainable economic growth while maintaining macroeconomic stability.

Aurangzeb highlighted the government's commitment to implementing structural reforms, broadening the tax base, improving public financial management, and strengthening investor confidence.

The two sides also exchanged views on Pakistan's population management and public health initiatives.

The Finance Minister appreciated the United Kingdom's continued technical support in these areas, particularly its collaboration on population stabilization interventions.

He emphasized the importance of institutionalizing population planning through a coordinated national framework with

measurable outcomes, while drawing on international best practices to promote women's education, workforce participation, and greater public awareness.

He underscored that sustained collaboration in these areas would be critical to improving long-term human development outcomes and supporting Pakistan's sustainable economic growth. The Finance Minister highlighted the government's strategy to deepen access to international capital markets and diversify financing sources.

He noted ongoing work on sovereign financing initiatives, including international bond issuances, Sukuk, Panda Bonds, and innovative financing instruments such as the tokenization of sovereign debt, as part of the government's Medium-Term Debt Management Strategy.

He emphasized that continued engagement with international investors and

financial institutions would remain central to Pakistan's efforts to strengthen its external financing profile.

The meeting also reviewed ongoing reforms within the Federal Board of Revenue. The Finance Minister highlighted the government's efforts to modernize tax administration through technology-driven, faceless, AI-enabled, and risk-based systems aimed at improving transparency, reducing discretionary intervention, facilitating compliant taxpayers, and enhancing revenue mobilization.

Discussions further covered progress on the government's broader structural reform agenda, including energy sector reforms, privatization of selected state-owned enterprises, and measures to improve governance, efficiency, and service delivery across public institutions.

PSX rebounds, gains over 1,766 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) staged a strong recovery on Wednesday, gaining 1,766.97 points, a positive change of 1.02 percent, to close at 175,285.78 points against 173,518.82 points recorded on the previous trading day.

During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 583.805 million shares with a traded value of Rs26.045 billion, compared to 912.614 million shares valuing Rs45.614 billion in the previous session. The market capitalization increased to Rs19.783 trillion from Rs19.584 trillion a day earlier.

Out of 495 active companies in the ready market, 361 advanced, 104 declined, and 30 remained unchanged. K-Electric Ltd. led the volume chart



with 52.695 million shares, followed by Cnergycio PK with 37.967 million shares and TPL Properties with 27.820 million shares.

The top gainers included PIA Holding Company LimitedB, which surged by Rs688.00 to close at Rs18,294.00, and Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited, which gained Rs165.00 to settle at Rs25,525.00.

On the losing side, Khairpur Sugar Mills Limited declined by Rs131.02 to close at

Rs2,310.46, while Shield Corporation Limited fell by Rs39.95 to settle at Rs750.15.

In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 133.839 million shares with a traded value of Rs6.255 billion, compared to 223.550 million shares worth Rs11.398 billion in the previous session.

Out of 302 futures-market companies, 235 advanced, 64 declined, and three remained unchanged.

Uzbekistan embraces ESG-driven growth to build transparent economy

ISLAMABAD: Uzbekistan is accelerating its transition toward a sustainable development model by embedding Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into national policy making, positioning the country to strengthen investor confidence, modernize its economy, and improve the quality of life for its citizens.

According to an article by A. Nizamov, head of department at the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the republic of Uzbekistan, issued here by the embassy of Uzbekistan, the country has adopted ESG not merely as a corporate framework but as a comprehensive governance strategy aligned with its long-term

development goals.Uzbekistan embraces ESG-driven growth to build a green, inclusive, transparent economy.

Globally, ESG standards have evolved from voluntary commitments into essential benchmarks for evaluating governance quality, environmental responsibility, and economic resilience.

With global ESG assets surpassing an estimated US\$ 30 trillion in 2022 and projected to reach US\$ 40 trillion by 2030, sustainable finance has become an integral part of the international financial system. The issuance of sustainable bonds, which reached approximately US\$ 1.1 trillion in 2025, further reflects this global shift.

Against this backdrop, Uzbekistan has crafted its own sustainable development model tailored to national priorities, including water and energy security, employment generation, social welfare, transparency in governance, and enhanced investment attractiveness. These priorities are being pursued under the Uzbekistan–2030 Strategy and a broader reform agenda led by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

A major milestone in this journey came with Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 221, adopted on May 4, 2026, which established formal rules for implementing ESG principles, preparing sustainability reports, and disclosing environmental, social, and governance information.

China-Russia Cooperation as a vital constant amid century-defining changes sweeping across the world

July 16 marks the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation between China and Russia – a landmark document that laid a solid foundation for the comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for the new era between our two countries.

The Treaty formalised the historical tradition of good-neighbourliness and friendship between China and Russia, consolidated the existing ties in conformity with the interests of our peoples, and opened a new chapter in bilateral relations. Built upon the principles of equality, mutual respect, good faith, and win-win cooperation, it has stood the test of time. What began as a commitment to strengthen neighbourly relations has evolved into a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for the new era, setting a prime example of a new type of major-country relationship, and serving as a vital constant amid century-defining changes sweeping across the world.

This year is rich in symbolic dates. We also commemorate the 30th anniversary of the 1996 Joint Declaration proclaiming the development of “relations of equal and trusting partnership aimed at strategic cooperation in the 21st century.” These foundational documents reflected our peoples’ conscious choice and continue to define the trajectory of bilateral relations.

Political mutual trust remains the hallmark of China-Russia relations. It is enshrined as the fundamental principle of

the 2001 Treaty and continues to guide our cooperation across all domains. Head-of-state guidance is the greatest advantage of and fundamental guarantee for the high-level development of China-Russia relations. Regular reciprocal visits by the heads of state are complemented by frequent meetings between the two governments, close coordination between foreign ministries, and a broad variety of specialised mechanisms.

On May 19-20 this year, during President Vladimir Putin's state visit to China, he and President Xi Jinping held substantive talks covering the full spectrum of cooperation and addressing major global issues. International security and economic ties were in the spotlight of the discussions that culminated in signing a substantial package of 40 agreements – from transport, trade, customs, and industry to nuclear energy, innovation, culture, sport, youth policy and education. The two countries expressed their intention to align national development goals even more closely. A particularly important milestone was the adoption of the joint statement on further strengthening comprehensive strategic coordination and deepening good-neighbourliness and friendly cooperation.

Last year, commemorative activities in Beijing and Moscow marking the 80th anniversary of victory in World War II once again demonstrated our shared commitment to preserving historical truth and memory and reminded the community of nations of the immense value of peace and sovereignty.

Building on this common historical legacy, our strategic partnership plays an



important stabilising role on the global stage. It is based on shared interests and similar approaches to key international and regional issues rather than on bloc confrontation. Synchronized Chinese and Russian approaches are especially relevant at a time when the global system is undergoing a profound transformation.

China and Russia consistently advocate for a harmonious process of shaping an equal and orderly multipolar world and international relations of a new type, including a more just and rational system of global governance. It is heartening to note that Pakistan ascribes to a similar view. At the UN, China, Russia and Pakistan can often be seen jointly upholding the principles of international law, fairness and sovereign equality of states. As members of the United Nations Security Council, our three countries share principled approaches to the most pressing issues on its agenda.

China and Russia often work in tandem at other multilateral fora, including the BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, G20 and APEC. Established on the foundation of the spirit of trust and good-neighbourliness embodied in the 2001 Treaty, the SCO has evolved into one of the most influential multilateral organisations across Eurasia. China and



Russia consistently work together within the SCO to bolster regional security, combat terrorism, separatism and extremism, deepen economic and humanitarian cooperation, and promote dialogue among diverse civilisations and political systems. In an era of growing geopolitical fragmentation, the SCO represents a model of equal partnership free from bloc mentality.

China and Russia act in concert to uphold solidarity and equal cooperation across our shared Eurasian continent, promote peaceful conflict resolution, and strengthen mechanisms of regional stability. The two countries will step up coordination on Afghan affairs at both the bilateral level and under multilateral frameworks, and support Afghanistan in achieving long-term stability and security at an early date. The two sides attach great importance to and endorse the positive and constructive role played by regional platforms in advancing a political settlement of the Afghan issue, including the Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan, the Foreign Ministers' Meeting of Afghanistan's Neighbouring Countries, the China-Russia-Pakistan-Iran Quadrilateral Mechanism, and the SCO, and stand ready to assist Pakistan and Afghanistan to resolve their current

differences as soon as possible through political and diplomatic means.

China and Russia are actively advancing the alignment of the Belt and Road Initiative with the development of the Eurasian Economic Union, while promoting its parallel and coordinated development with the Greater Eurasian Partnership. The two countries support the development of transport, trade and energy corridors establishing strong linkages across the Eurasian space, including between South Asia and its neighboring sub-regions. With its strategic location, Pakistan has the potential to become an essential node in the Eurasian connectivity network. Hence, it is natural that both China and Russia attach particular importance to this aspect of their relations with Pakistan.

Bilaterally, the China-Russia partnership possesses a strong economic dimension that directly contributes to the prosperity of our peoples. Mutual trade has exceeded \$200 billion for three consecutive years and continues to grow steadily, with settlements conducted almost entirely in Chinese yuan and Russian rubles.

Energy cooperation has taken on a truly strategic character and serves as one of the key drivers of our practical ties. At the same time, both countries are actively developing new growth factors in innovation, industry, and cutting-edge technologies.

The strength of China-Russia relations lies not only in interstate cooperation, but also in the strong cultural and humanitarian bonds between our peoples. The successful China-Russia Years of Culture (2024–2025) brought our societies even

closer together. More than 400 events, including exhibitions, concerts, and theatre companies' tours, further enhanced our nations' affinity. In May 2026, the 10th China-Russia Summer Youth Games were held in Kaliningrad, with over 300 athletes competing in 12 sports nurtured the already robust people-to-people contacts.

2026–2027 were declared the China-Russia Years of Education by Presidents Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin. The initiative is bound to accelerate dynamic development in this vital area. Today, there are more than 72,000 Chinese students in Russia, while over 28,000 Russians are pursuing their studies in China. New ambitious projects are underway, including joint research platforms, university campuses and innovation centres. By combining scientific, technological and intellectual potential, our countries are investing in the future, as research capabilities are instrumental to long-term strategic development.

Over the past quarter century, China and Russia have come a long way and are now looking confidently to the future. Guided by the principles enshrined in the Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation, we stand ready to deepen political trust, expand mutually beneficial cooperation, strengthen coordination on international affairs, and promote common development for the benefit of our peoples and the wider international community. Our two countries' regional and global initiatives are intended to create shared prosperity for all, and Pakistan will undoubtedly continue to play an important role in relevant projects.

World Cup

Argentina stun England in comeback

Lionel Messi provided both assists in 2-1 victory

ATLANTA: Lautaro Martinez scored a 92nd minute winner as Lionel Messi inspired World Cup holders Argentina to a stunning comeback to beat England 2-1 on Wednesday and set up a final with European champions Spain.

England had been on course to reach their first World Cup final since 1966 after Anthony Gordon fired them into the lead 10 minutes after half-time in the semi-final in front of 68,239 fans in Atlanta.

But the great rivalry between these nations has produced several memorable contests on the World Cup stage down the years and this will be remembered as the stuff of legends in Argentina as the South Americans denied England with two late sucker punches.

Messi set up Enzo Fernandez to fire in an 85th-minute equaliser and then, with extra time looming, crossed for substitute Lautaro Martinez to head in the winner in the second minute of stoppage time.

It was maybe not quite up there with Diego Maradona's legendary display in putting England to the sword in 1986, but the goals this time brought Argentina back from the dead and kept alive their hopes of winning back-to-back World



Cups.

No team has retained the trophy since Brazil in 1962, and now Messi will become just the second player after Brazilian great Cafu to appear in three World Cup finals.

The game will take place at the MetLife Stadium on Sunday in New Jersey, as the first 48-team World Cup boils down to a confrontation between the reigning champions of Europe and South America.

Messi had waited until the age of 39 to get the chance to play against England, and now he will face Spain for the first time in a competitive game.

His career appeared to be complete

when he dragged Argentina to glory in 2022 in Qatar, but he is clearly not done yet.

England, though, will have huge regrets as they head to Miami to play France in Saturday's third-place play-off, a game neither team will want to contest.

The prospect of a first World Cup final appearance since their sole triumph 60 years ago was a momentous one, and they were so close, but will live to regret sitting back after Gordon's opener.

The key men for Thomas Tuchel's side during this campaign have been Jude Bellingham and captain Harry Kane, yet they failed to deliver on this occasion, and England's players slumped to the turf at full time.

Lautaro winner

Given the deep-rooted rivalry between these nations, this was always likely to be a game with an edge and there was a tangible feeling of tension in the Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

Argentina's players were clearly fired up, partly by a determination to hold onto their World Cup crown but also by a sense of what this fixture means.

That translated into a niggly contest pockmarked by fouls in the first half, in-

cluding Elliot Anderson being booked for scything down Messi.

There were no real chances to speak of in the first half, but England struck in the 55th minute.

Kane was involved in the build-up as the ball eventually came to Morgan Rogers on the right, and he whipped in a low cross towards the back post where Gordon stole in front of Nahuel Molina to score.

But this was the stadium where Argentina produced a stunning comeback from 2-0 down to beat Egypt in the last 16, and they were not done.

They threw everything at their opponents, as Jordan Pickford made a great save from a Nico Gonzalez header, and Alexis Mac Allister was then denied by the post in the 76th minute.

Fernandez was denied from range by Pickford, but moments later he equalised, controlling a Messi pass on the edge of the area and letting fly past the goalkeeper.

Argentina smelled blood, and Mac Allister again hit the post before England failed to clear and Lautaro Martinez headed in the winner from an exquisite Messi cross to spark chaotic scenes of celebration and leave England completely deflated.

KPK team shies in ongoing Micro Futsal Championship



SPORTS REPORTER

ABBOTTABAD: The KPK team under the leadership of coach Rafiq Khan and manager Malik Zahoor performed brilliantly in the ongoing Micro Futsal Championship in Faisalabad. They defeated their rival Wapda team and won the final.

All the players participating in the team, Daniyal Hamza, Shakir Sujawal, Atiq Hammad Abdul Rahman and others, say that the team's success is a testament to the tireless work of coach Rafiq Khan and the players' passion for the game. Insha Allah, due to the high morale of the players, they also won the final.

The match was tied at two goals each until the stipulated time and KPK won the title on penalty kicks and received a beautiful trophy. Hamza Shabbir was the top scorer with 14 goals and was declared the best player of the tournament, while Daniyal Shaukat won the award of the best goalkeeper.

Gill stars as India beat England in 1st ODI

LONDON: India captain Shubman Gill continued his Edgbaston love-affair as his side beat England by six wickets in the first one-day international on Tuesday. Set 259 to win, India cruised home with 28 balls to spare to go 1-0 up in a three-match series. It was their first triumph of a tour where they had suffered 2-0 and 4-0 T20 series losses to Ireland and England respectively.

Gill top-scored with 80, from just 75 balls, before limping off with what appeared to be cramp. A team spokesman told AFP after stumps that Gill was expected to be fit for Thursday's second ODI in Cardiff.

It was at Edgbaston last year that Gill, also India's red-ball skipper, became the first batsman to make a double century in one innings of a Test match and a score of 150 in the other. But for his retirement, the 26-year-old might have had another hundred at Warwickshire's headquarters.

Gill and T20 captain Shreyas Iyer shared a century partnership after India lost Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in quick succession to be 48-2.

England did reduce India to 160-4 after Gill retired.

But Washington Sundar (52 not out) and Axar Patel (57 not out) put the result beyond doubt with a blizzard of boundaries in an unbroken stand of 102.

Patel, who had previously taken four wickets in England's 258 all out, completed a fine fifty when he slog-swept off-spinner Will Jacks for a fifth four in 39 balls faced.

Sundar ended the game in style, with a straight six off leg-spinner Adil Rashid that saw him to his fifty.

Governor Kundi vows support for sports infrastructure, youth talent in KP

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday said the province's youth possessed immense talent but lacked quality sports facilities and modern training, pledging all-out efforts to promote sports, nurture young athletes and improve sports infrastructure across the province.

Addressing an interactive session organized by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sports Writers Association at the Governor House, he said providing modern sports facilities and professional coaching was essential to enable talented athletes to compete successfully at national and international levels.

The session discussed sports promotion, development challenges and future strategies in the province. It was attended by International Sports Press

Association (AIPS) Asia Secretary General and Pakistan Sports Writers Federation President Amjad Aziz Malik, KP Sports Writers Association President Asim Shiraz, Secretary Shahid Afridi and a large number of sports journalists.

Governor Kundi distributed awards and certificates among distinguished sports journalists in recognition of their services.

He regretted that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa did not have a single fully developed first-class cricket stadium and said athletes continued to face an acute shortage of playgrounds and basic sports facilities.

He said many players failed to progress in international competitions due to the lack of quality infrastructure, modern coaching and advanced training.

The Governor said promoting sports would not only provide positive opportunities for youth but also strengthen peace,



harmony and healthy social values.

He said that more than half of Pakistan's national cricket team players belonged to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, reflecting the province's exceptional sporting talent.

Expressing concern over the decline of squash and hockey, he said Pakistan had dominated world squash for 16 consecutive years, but no player had matched the achievements of Jahangir Khan and Jansher Khan in recent decades, while the country's national game, hockey, also required urgent revival measures.

Governor Kundi said preparations for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Champions League were in full swing and the opening ceremony would be held on July 18.

He said six teams would participate in the league, with each team required to include one national cricketer.

He thanked Pakistan Cricket Board

Chairman Mohsin Naqvi for issuing the no-objection certificate (NoC), saying it would help boost cricket in the province.

He said sponsorship had already been arranged for several players and more talented athletes would be supported to help them represent Pakistan at national and international forums.

The Governor also praised the achievements of athletes from the province, including Pakistan's mountain adventurer Samar Khan, describing her as a source of pride and inspiration for young people.

He announced that a special ceremony would soon be held in honour of the families of martyred journalists of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and reaffirmed that Governor House would continue supporting sports promotion, youth development and the welfare of the journalist community.

Three-time national champion Shayan Afridi eyes ITF glory

PROVINCE REPORT

PESHAWAR: Pakistan's emerging junior tennis star, Shayan Afridi, has begun preparations for the International Tennis Federation (ITF) Junior Championship, scheduled to start in Islamabad on August 15. He expressed confidence that he will give his best performance and compete strongly for the junior title.

Shayan Afridi is currently in outstanding form, having won three consecutive national junior tennis championships. He first claimed the National Junior Tennis Championship title in Sahiwal, followed by victories in the Bank of Punjab National Junior Tennis Championship and the Shahryar Malik National Junior Tennis Championship, both held in Lahore.

Speaking upon his return to Peshawar, Shayan said winning three successive national titles has boosted his confidence and motivation. He added that he is training hard for the ITF Junior Championship and hopes to bring another major honor to Pakistan through a strong performance.

Shayan said representing Pakistan at the international level is every athlete's dream, and he is determined to make the most of the opportunity by showcasing his talent on the international stage.



Aqib Shah, Ayesha among champions at Inter-Academy Badminton event

PROVINCE REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Inter-Academy Badminton Championship, organized by the Directorate General of Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, concluded successfully with exciting finals across different age categories.

In the Under-13 Boys final, Aqib Shah defeated Huzafa to claim the title, while Ayesha emerged champion in the Under-13 Girls category after overcoming Hamna. In the Under-17 Boys final, Talha defeated Abdul Basit, while Abeera won the Under-17 Girls title by beating Hina.

Badminton promoter Sofyan attended the closing ceremony as chief guest and distributed trophies, medals, certificates, and cash prizes among the winners. Chief Coach Shafqat Ullah, coaches Hayat Ullah and Faraz Ahmad, and female coach Bushra were also present.

Addressing the ceremony, Sofyan reaffirmed his commitment to promoting badminton and supporting both junior and senior players. He said discovering and nurturing young talent remains his mission and pledged continued support for the sport.

During the event, Pakistan's leading badminton players, Qari Muhammad Adnan and Najam Saqib, were pre-



sented with special awards in recognition of their impressive victories at the Fatehpur Badminton Championship and the Lahore Badminton Championship.

Speaking on the occasion, Qari Muhammad Adnan and Najam Saqib thanked coach Hayat Ullah for honoring and encouraging them, saying the recognition had further boosted their confidence. They vowed to continue working

hard to bring more laurels to Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Tournament organizer and coach Hayat Ullah, along with coach Bushra, said the championship was aimed at identifying and developing emerging talent. They expressed satisfaction over the successful discovery of promising young players and pledged to continue their training so they can represent the province and Pakistan at national and international levels.

ICC approves sweeping overhaul of ODI, T20 World Cup formats

Board also approves qualification pathway for 2028 ICC Men's T20 World Cup

KARACHI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has approved major changes to the formats of its flagship men's global tournaments, introducing new competition structures for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in a bid to increase competitiveness and ensure every match carries greater significance.

The decisions were taken at the ICC Board's annual meetings in Edinburgh, where the Board approved recommendations from the Chief Executives' Committee aimed at creating more meaningful contests, strengthening the competitive structure of the tournaments

and enhancing the experience for players and fans.

While the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup will continue to feature 14 teams, the tournament will now follow a three-stage format before the knockout rounds.

Under the revised structure, the teams ranked 12th, 13th and 14th will first compete in a round-robin "Super Series", with the winner advancing to the main competition.

The second stage will feature two groups of six teams each. The top three teams from each group, along with the next highest-placed team across both groups, will qualify for a newly introduced

"Super 7" stage.

The Super 7 will be played in a round-robin format, with the top four teams advancing to the semi-finals. The semi-finals will see the first-placed team take on the fourth-placed side, while the second-placed team will face the third-placed team, with the winners progressing to the final.

According to the ICC, the new structure has been designed to ensure every stage of the tournament carries greater consequence, with meaningful contests from the opening match through to the final while continuing to provide emerging nations with opportunities to compete on cricket's biggest stage.

The ICC also approved significant changes to the Men's T20 World Cup, retaining the 20-team event while ex-

panding opportunities for teams to remain in contention deeper into the tournament.

The group stage will now consist of five groups of four teams instead of four groups of five. The top two teams from each group will qualify for a new Super 10 stage, replacing the previous Super Eights.

The Super 10 stage will comprise two groups of five teams. The winners of each group will qualify directly for the semi-finals.

A new Eliminator stage will also be introduced, with the second-placed team in one Super 10 group facing the third-placed team from the other group. The winners of the two Eliminators will claim the remaining semi-final berths.

The ICC said the revised format was influenced by the performances of emerg-

ing teams at the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup and is intended to increase competitive intensity while ensuring the closing matches of the Super 10 stage remain significant.

The ICC Board also endorsed a proposal for a new 16-team global tournament exclusively for Associate Member nations, which is expected to be played before future Men's T20 World Cups.

The proposed event aims to improve competitive standards among Associate teams while providing them with a marquee global competition. The proposal remains subject to final approval by the ICC Finance and Commercial Affairs Committee at its November meeting.

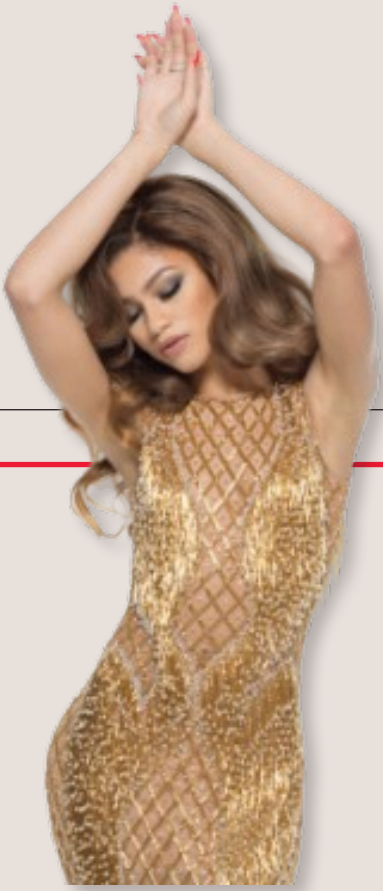
The Board also approved the qualification pathway for the 2028 ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

Scotland will enter directly into the Europe Regional Final due to exceptional circumstances surrounding its participation in the 2026 tournament.

Teams that featured in the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup but did not secure automatic qualification for 2028 will advance directly to the Global Qualifier.

The remaining eight places in the Global Qualifier will be filled through regional qualification, with two teams each qualifying from Africa, Asia and Europe, and one team each from the Americas and East Asia-Pacific.

The highest-placed team from each region at the Global Qualifier, together with the next three highest-placed teams overall, will qualify for the 2028 ICC Men's T20 World Cup, subject to minimum performance criteria.



Zendaya under fire for wearing ‘gold earrings’

ISLAMABAD: Online reactions to Zendaya’s recent jewelry selection at The Odyssey photocall in London have been highly critical. The 29-year-old showbiz celebrity sported earrings crafted from prehistoric gold discs believed to be between 2,000 and 3,000 years old. London jeweler Glenn Spiro used gold and diamonds to incorporate the ancient artifacts into a contemporary design. While many admired Zendaya’s striking appearance, others questioned whether genuine antiquities should be fashioned into high-end luxury jewelry. Concerns regarding the origin of the gold pieces were also voiced by archaeology content creator Dr. Z. “We know nothing else about their provenance, meaning their journey from their homeland, which is probably Iran,” Dr. Z remarked in a video online. She continued, “They were acquired by [Spiro’s] son by means undisclosed”. Dr. Z strongly objected to the practice of utilizing authentic artifacts rather than replicas. “These artifacts are likely looted from Iran, and they are gracing the ears of an American actress from a country that just bombed Iran,” she stated. She further argued that exploiting genuine historical objects turns cultural heritage into “a commodity stolen for the elite”. The creator went on to characterize the practice as “fetishizing the past” and a form of “class signaling”. The earrings are currently part of the private collection of Mayfair-based dealer Barron London. Ultimately, the controversy has sparked a much larger global debate about the ethical ownership of antiquities, shifting the focus away from Zendaya’s red-carpet style.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaulah Tarar along with Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. İrfan Nezirolu viewing the photographs during a ceremony on the occasion of 10th Turkish Democracy and National Unity Day at Turkish Embassy in the Federal Capital. — PHOTO: ONLINE

KP should receive its due rights under the Constitution: Kundi

Kundi assures action on Waziristan’s security, infrastructure, public service issues

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday stressed the need for collective efforts to eliminate militancy from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, saying peace was essential for the development and prosperity of the province.

Talking to a delegation of the South Waziristan Lower Ahmadzai Wazir Jirga at the Governor House, led by Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Waziristan General Secretary Imran Mukhlis, the Governor said the resurgence of militancy should be taken seriously and tackled with unity and determination.

The delegation included Jamal Nasir, Nasrullah, Mir Ghulam and Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Farzand Wazir:

Governor Kundi said the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) were promised three percent share under the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, amounting to around Rs100 billion annually, and stressed that the commitment should be fulfilled.

He strongly condemned the imposition of taxes in the erstwhile FATA and PATA, saying the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) chairman should personally visit these areas to assess the ground realities before enforcing any taxation measures.

The Governor criticized the provincial government’s performance on law and order, alleging that it had failed to address the deteriorating security situation. He said he had asked the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to jointly resolve the tax is-

sues relating to the merged districts. He said despite producing electricity, oil and natural gas, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continued to face energy shortages, adding that the province should receive its due rights under the Constitution. He also underscored the importance of protecting the 18th Constitutional Amendment and utilizing provincial powers for the welfare of the people.

Governor Kundi had expressed concern over the reported wheat shortage in the province and reiterated the need to collectively struggle for the constitutional and economic rights of the province.

He assured the delegation that issues relating to district administration, the Gomal Zam Road and NADRA facilities would be taken up with the relevant authorities and resolved on priority.

Speaking on the occasion, members of

the jirga highlighted worsening law and order, lack of security for schools and health facilities, rising incidents of extortion and the destruction of trade and fruit businesses in South Waziristan Lower.

They urged the government to reopen the Angoor Ada border crossing, which has remained closed since 2023, saying it would revive trade and economic activity in Tank, Dera Ismail Khan and South Waziristan.

The delegation also demanded the establishment of a women’s hospital, tax relief for local residents, provision of free electricity, increase in teachers’ posts, construction of the Gomal Zam Road up to Angoor Ada, promotion of tourism in Waziristan, development of a picnic point at Gomal Zam and establishment of BISP and NADRA registration centres in every tehsil.

BISP introducing modern digital wallet system

PESHAWAR: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Rubina Khalid on Wednesday visited the BISP Tehsil Office Town-I Garhi Rajkol, Dalazak Road and Tehsil Office Town-II Warsak Road in Peshawar.

During the visits, she reviewed the facilities being provided to deserving women, examined office operations, and assessed staff performance.

At the Town-I office, Office In-Charge Muhammad Sajjad briefed the Chairperson on the institution’s performance and the challenges it faces.

Rubina Khalid inspected various sections of the office, discussed issues with staff, and listened directly to complaints from beneficiary women.

She issued on-the-spot directives to resolve several complaints and said that the government is committed to addressing the problems of poor and deserving families on a priority basis, ensuring that every eligible woman receives her rightful benefits.

Addressing the women, she said that



if any official mistreats them or makes an illegal demand, they should report it immediately.

Strict action will be taken against those responsible. She also instructed that all beneficiary women must bring their mobile phones when visiting the office, as under the new digital system, every eligible woman will be provided with a free SIM card.

The office staff will activate the SIM, and all financial assistance will be transferred through it. She warned that if any woman is processed without a mobile phone, disciplinary action, including suspension, could be taken against the responsible staff member.

Govt taking measures to resolve public issues at people’s doorsteps: Fakhar

Minister directs decisive action against ice drug mafia in Charsadda within one month

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control Syed Fakhar Jehan has said that, under the vision of PTI Founder Chairman Imran Khan and the leadership of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the provincial government is taking practical steps to ensure prompt resolution of public grievances, transparent governance, effective service delivery and the provision of quality public services at citizens’ doorsteps.

He emphasized that indiscriminate action under the government’s Zero-

Tolerance Policy against narcotics will be further intensified to protect the younger generation from the devastating effects of drugs, particularly crystal meth (Ice).

He further directed the Police and Excise Department to produce decisive results against the Ice drug mafia in District Charsadda within one month.

He expressed these views while addressing an Open Public Forum (Khuli Kachehri) regarding Excise and Anti-Narcotics held in Charsadda on Wednesday.

The event was attended by Provincial Minister for Minerals Development Arif Ahmadzai, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Social Welfare Malik Liaqat

Ali Khan, Special Assistant on Prisons Ifthikharullah Jan, Secretary Excise Khalid Ilyas, Secretary Social Welfare Sharif Hussain, Director General Excise Abdul Haleem Khan, Deputy Commissioner Charsadda Dr. Azmatullah Wazir, District Police Officer Charsadda Rifatullah Khan, Excise and Taxation Officer Charsadda, other officers of the Excise Department, representatives of civil society, local elders, political and social figures, and a large number of youth.

During the open forum, the Provincial Minister listened in detail to the grievances and suggestions of local elders, political and social personalities, youth and members of the public.

He issued on-the-spot directives for the immediate resolution of several complaints and instructed the concerned au-



thorities to further improve the quality of public service delivery.

He said that, in line with the vision of PTI Founder Chairman Imran Khan and the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the government is taking concrete measures to resolve public issues at people’s doorsteps, strengthen transparent governance and promote a people-centric

administrative system.

He added that the purpose of holding open public forums is to strengthen direct interaction between the government and citizens, address public grievances on the spot, and further improve the services of the Excise Department.

The Minister directed all concerned officers to ensure timely, transparent and

respectful delivery of public services, warning that negligence or unnecessary delays in resolving legitimate public issues would not be tolerated.

He also issued immediate directives regarding several matters of public interest and instructed the relevant departments to adopt effective and long-term measures for their resolution.

Speaking on the issue of narcotics, Syed Fakhar Jehan said that drug abuse in the region is part of an organized conspiracy targeting the younger generation, while highly addictive substances such as Ice have destroyed countless families.

He said that drug addicts not only endanger their own lives but also pose a serious threat to their families and society, making firm and decisive action essential for eradicating this menace.

Spot ON

Transgender killed, another injured in Chamkani shooting

PESHAWAR: A transgender was killed and another injured in a shooting incident in Chamkani area of Peshawar on Wednesday, police said.

According to police, the incident occurred near Dando Bridge close to the Sabzi Mandi, where unidentified armed assailants fired at the transgender in a deserted field.

The deceased transgender was identified as Mashal, aka Mishi Jan, aged around 25. The injured person, identified as Baseer, 22, son of Syed Wali, belonging to the Afridi tribe was shifted to a hospital for medical treatment.

KP releases over Rs80b for development projects

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has released more than Rs80 billion for ongoing development projects under the Annual Development Programme (ADP) 2026–27. According to KP Finance Secretary Kamran Ahmad Afridi on Wednesday, the funds will be utilized for development schemes across various sectors of the province. The Finance Department said Rs61 billion has been allocated for ongoing projects in the settled districts. Sector-wise allocations include Rs12 billion for roads, Rs8.8 billion for urban development, Rs5.8 billion for irrigation.

Maulana Nauman shot dead in Charsadda

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: A young religious personality identified as Maulana Nauman was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Nista Police Station jurisdiction of Charsadda district on Wednesday.

According to police, the victim was a resident of Surpul locality. He died at the scene after unknown gunmen opened fire on him.

Authorities have launched an investigation into the incident. The motive behind the killing has not yet been determined and efforts are underway to identify and arrest those responsible.

Cop dies, four injured as police van meets accident in Swabi

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: A police mobile vehicle met with an accident on the motorway near the Colonel Sher Khan Interchange in Swabi, leaving five police personnel seriously injured.

According to Rescue 1122, medical teams rushed to the scene immediately after receiving the emergency call. The injured officials were provided with first aid before being shifted to Mardan Hospital for further treatment. Hospital officials later confirmed that one of the injured cop, identified as Faheem succumbed to his injuries.

42000 Afghans repatriate from Nowshera

PESHAWAR: Authorities in Nowshera district have intensified operations against illegally residing Afghan nationals, with more than 42,000 Afghans repatriated to Afghanistan so far, according to the district administration on Wednesday. Officials said the crackdown is being carried out in line with directives issued by the federal and provincial governments. As part of the operation, three Afghan settlement camps have been completely cleared.

The district administration added that identification of undocumented Afghan nationals living in villages and towns across Nowshera is ongoing to ensure implementation of the government’s repatriation policy.

Authorities also warned that legal action will be taken against Pakistani citizens who rent out properties to undocumented Afghan nationals or engage in business partnerships with them.

Deputy Commissioner Nowshera in a statement said that all operations are being conducted in accordance with government policy and relevant legal provisions. He said Afghan nationals will be repatriated with necessary facilitation once the process is completed.

According to the district administration, more than 42,000 Afghan nationals have voluntarily returned to Afghanistan, adding that operations against illegal residents will continue under a zero-tolerance policy.