



Seerat-un-Nabi ceremony held at WUM

Women University Mardan organized a special Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH) ceremony in connection with the blessed month of Rabi-ul-Awwal. The event was attended by Syeda Nazia Shah, former President of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mardan and Provincial Vice President of Pakistan Muslim League (N), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as the Chief Guest.

Detailed story on Page 2

Wasim urges club cricket revival

Former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram on Friday called for the revival of club cricket and greater consistency in team selection, saying talent must be developed through the domestic structure after the Green Shirts' losses to England in the ongoing Test series.

— Story on Page 7

The Province

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66 Wisdom Quote!



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

— Muhammad Ali Jinnah

News DIGEST

CDF Munir, services chiefs pay tribute to Major Raja Aziz Bhatti Shaheed



STAFF REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of the Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, NI, NI (M), T Bt, Chief of the Naval Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, NI (M), HJ, Chief of the Air Staff, General Syed Aamer Raza, NI (M), S Bt, Commander National Strategic Command on behalf of the Armed Forces of Pakistan, solemnly commemorate the 61st martyrdom anniversary of Major Raja Aziz Bhatti Shaheed, Nishan-e-Haider and pay rich tribute to his exceptional courage, leadership and supreme sacrifice.

During the 1965 War, Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed defended the Burki sector near Lahore with extraordinary valour, holding his ground against relentless enemy assaults for five days and nights. His resolute leadership and indomitable spirit halted the enemy's advance and became an enduring symbol of courage, duty and sacrifice. His legacy lives on as an inspiration to the nation and generations of Pakistan's defenders.

Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed's selfless devotion to duty, unwavering courage and supreme sacrifice remain an enduring inspiration for generations. The Armed Forces of Pakistan reaffirm their steadfast resolve to defend the country's sovereignty and security with the same courage, determination and spirit of sacrifice that he embodied.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh, Syed Nehal Hashmi along with Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah and others are offering Fatiha for Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on his death anniversary, at Quaid's mausoleum, in the Provincial Capital. — PHOTO: ONLINE

Diesel price tops Rs400 per litre, petrol rises above Rs375

Revised rates set petrol at Rs375.82, HSD at Rs403.32 per litre, reads notification

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Friday increased the price of petrol and high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs5.02 and Rs5.28 per litre, respectively, till September 14.

According to a notification issued by the Petroleum Division, the price of petrol was fixed at Rs375.82 per litre, while HSD would cost Rs403.32 per litre from September 12 to September 14.

The latest revision comes a day after the government increased the price of petrol and HSD by Rs3.05 and Rs5.37 per litre, respectively, for September 11.

Oil prices fell on Friday but remained on course for a weekly gain of more than 9%, while US diesel prices hit a record high as

attacks along Middle East shipping routes stoked concerns about prolonged supply disruptions.

Brent crude futures were down \$2.46, or 2.29%, to \$105.17 a barrel at 11:33 am. US West Texas Intermediate crude fell \$2.44, or 2.38%, to \$100.04 a barrel. Both benchmarks hit their highest levels since mid-May earlier in the session.

Both reversed early gains after the Financial Times reported that foreign ministers in the Middle East were trying to work out a temporary deal with Iran to manage shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

On July 17, the government announced a new pricing mechanism under which petroleum product prices would be reviewed and notified on a daily basis, re-



placing the weekly pricing mechanism, as renewed tensions between the United States and Iran continued to drive volatility in global oil markets and raise concerns over fuel supplies.

According to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2024-25, petroleum products constitute one of the country's largest import categories, making the economy highly vulnerable to changes in global crude oil prices.

Domestic refineries satisfy only part of national demand, while the remainder is met through imports of crude oil and refined petroleum products. Consequently, every increase in international oil prices raises Pakistan's import bill, pressures foreign exchange reserves, and contributes to inflation.

Five terrorists killed in CTD operation in Peshawar



STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Five terrorists, including a wanted commander of a banned militant organisation, were killed during a

Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) operation in Peshawar, police officials said on Friday.

According to a CTD spokesperson, the operation was conducted in the Shamshatoo Camp area of the provincial capital.

Among those killed was alleged terrorist commander Imran, who was wanted in 20 terrorism cases.

The CTD said he was involved in the killings of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) leader Maulana Khan Zeb, Senator Hidayatullah and Rehan Zeb.

The CTD said Imran was also the alleged mastermind of the suicide attack on the Tarlai Imambargah.

A bounty of Rs120 million had been placed on his head, according to the department.

The operation also resulted in the recovery of a submachine gun (SMG), four pistols, two hand grenades and an improvised explosive device (IED), the spokesperson said.

Another militant killed in the operation, identified as Shahidullah, had allegedly carried out reconnaissance for the Tarlai Imambargah suicide attack, the CTD said.

PM Shehbaz directs authorities to cap load-shedding to two hours

Takes notice of prolonged outage, orders authorities to utilise resources to provide relief to consumers



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday took notice of persistent electricity load-shedding in the country and directed authorities to ensure no area faces more than two hours of load-shedding.

According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office, the premier chaired a review meeting on electricity

load management in Islamabad.

He expressed displeasure at the worsening load-shedding situation in several cities and took notice of prolonged power outages across the country.

"No area should experience load shedding for more than two hours," he said, directing authorities to utilise all available resources effectively to provide relief to the public.

The meeting was informed that the

recent situation in the region, tensions in the Strait of Hormuz and transmission difficulties had affected the supply of RLNG, resulting in a reduction in electricity generation and necessitating load management to maintain a balance between demand and supply.

"Keeping in view the situation in the region and future requirements, immediate measures be taken to address disruptions in RLNG transmission," the prime minister directed.

He also ordered the establishment of Consumer Grievance Redressal Committees at the Discos level to address public complaints related to electricity transmission and other issues across the country.

The prime minister directed that public representatives should also be included in the grievance redressal committees and that the committees should be made functional within a week.

The meeting was told that electricity consumers could register their complaints through helpline 118. Upon registration, a consumer is provided with a token number and a timeframe for resolution of the complaint.

Maryam Nawaz's Statement Sparks Uproar in KP Assembly

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR : The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly session began two hours late and was chaired by Speaker Babar Saleem Swati. The proceedings turned stormy after Law Minister Aftab Alam strongly condemned Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's statement regarding other provinces and called it "shameful." He demanded that the agenda be suspended to allow a debate on the issue. The Speaker put the matter to a vote, following which the agenda was suspended.

Dr Amjad also criticized Maryam Nawaz, saying her statement was biased and had damaged the narrative surrounding terrorism and India. Members raised slogans

against her, including "India ka yaar hai, ghaddar hai."

Opposition member Shafi Jan also strongly criticized Maryam Nawaz and made allegations regarding the PML-N's alleged links with banned organizations and the alleged links of Rana Sanaullah. He said that PTI would go to Islamabad regardless of the circumstances. His remarks triggered a heated exchange with opposition women members, who taunted him by referring to Reham Khan's book.

Shafi Jan later used controversial language while speaking about PML-N leader Uzma Bukhari, saying, "If she likes wild people, we will send them." His remarks drew strong condemnation from PML-N

women members, who chanted "shame, shame" in protest.

Provincial Minister Meena Khan Afridi said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provides Punjab with electricity, gas and water and strongly criticized Maryam Nawaz's statement. He said the statement effectively gave India a "clean chit" and ignored the sacrifices made by the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He claimed that tens of thousands of people in the province had lost their lives and demanded action against Maryam Nawaz, including her removal from the office of chief minister. Special Assistant Adil said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had suffered 521 terrorist attacks and claimed that 95 percent of terrorism-related incidents had affected the



province. He said terrorists had benefited from Maryam Nawaz's statement and called on the National Action Committee to address the issue.

ANP member Nisar Baz said Maryam Nawaz's statement was an insult to millions of people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

and to the province's martyrs. He criticized what he described as a policy of centralization and "one-unit" thinking and alleged that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan were being subjected to discriminatory treatment.

PML-N member Amina Sardar defended Maryam Nawaz, saying the Punjab chief minister had not referred to Pashtuns but had only spoken about terrorism. She condemned personal attacks against a woman and appealed to members to respect Pashtun traditions and norms.

Opposition member Sobia Shahid repeatedly raised the issue of quorum and protested at the Speaker's dais. The Speaker told her that she had recently undergone surgery and would be given

an opportunity to speak.

Despite the opposition's objection over quorum, a government member moved a resolution against Maryam Nawaz and Federal Information Minister Atta Tarar. The resolution condemned statements allegedly linking Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other provinces with a terrorism threat in Punjab and said such remarks were an insult to the sacrifices of the people, police and security forces.

The resolution emphasized that terrorism was a national challenge requiring collective efforts and unity. It said divisive statements could damage the federation and demanded legal action by the federal government under Article 146 of the Constitution.

Police safety, welfare among top priorities: RPO

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Ghulam Mubashir Mekan has said the safety and welfare of police personnel were among his top priorities, urging them to remain brave and united against anti-social elements.

He was addressing a police darbar held here at Ijaz Shaheed Police Lines. RPO was given a guard of honour and later visited the police martyrs' memorial, where he offered Fateha.

District Police Officer (DPO) Ziauddin Ahmed, senior police officers and personnel attended the gathering.

The RPO said constables were the "real heroes" of the police force and directed senior officers to treat their subordinates with respect and care.

He said weekly orderly rooms were being held at the RPO and DPO offices to address personnel's problems. Several personnel presented their issues at the darbar, and the RPO issued on-the-spot orders for their resolution.

Four selected for Pride of KP Awards

PESHAWAR: Four individuals from different fields have been selected for the Pride of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Awards, which will be presented on September 15 at COMSATS University Islamabad, Abbottabad Campus, during the 9th edition of the Metrix Pakistan Youth Summit. The summit is being powered by the Directorate of Youth Affairs, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the organisers, a total of 368 applications were received through the official registration process at prideofkp.pk/register. Following the scrutiny and assessment of applications, four individuals were selected for the awards. The organisers said the selection was made on merit. The selected awardees include Ashfaq Ahmad of Swabi, who has been associated with healthcare services. According to his application, Ahmad developed and promoted an emergency orthopaedic, sports and spine centre in Topi, Swabi, and has independently performed more than 4,000 surgeries in a peripheral healthcare setting.

Seerat-un-Nabi ceremony held at Women University Mardan

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Women University Mardan organized a special Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH) ceremony in connection with the blessed month of Rabi-ul-Awwal. The event was attended by Syeda Nazia Shah, former President of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mardan and Provincial Vice President of Pakistan Muslim League (N), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as the Chief Guest.

On the occasion, Dr. Khadija Aziz, Head of the Department of Islamic Studies, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar, delivered a special lecture on the blessed life, exemplary character, and teachings of the Holy



Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). She emphasized the importance of adopting the noble values and teachings of the Seerah in practical life.

Syeda Nazia Shah also addressed the students and encouraged them to seek guidance from the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), develop good moral character, and use their abilities for positive and constructive purposes.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Syeda Nazia Shah distributed certificates among the participating students and appreciated their efforts and performance.

The ceremony provided an inspiring opportunity for students to strengthen their understanding of the Seerah and reflect upon the noble teachings and character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

TMA Peharpur launches plantation, cleanliness drive to improve urban environment

DERA ISMAIL KHAN : Tehsil Municipal Administration (TMA) Peharpur has launched a plantation and cleanliness drive to enhance the beauty of the town and provide citizens with a clean, green, and healthy environment.

The plantation activity was organised at Family Park Peharpur under the special supervision of Tehsil Municipal Officer (TMO) Peharpur, Attaullah. He participated in the activity and planted saplings at the park, while students also took part enthusiastically in the plantation campaign.

4th International Medical Research conference inaugurated at Khyber Girls Medical College



PESHAWAR: The 4th International Medical Research Conference was inaugurated at Khyber Girls Medical College, where the chief guest, Chairman Board of Governors Professor Dr. Noorul Iman, highlighted the importance of research, innovation, and human resource development in strengthening

the healthcare system. Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Professor Dr. Noorul Iman said that research should be the foundation of medical education institutions, followed by human resource development and quality healthcare services. He stressed that countries making progress in science and technology are investing heavily in research and innovation. He urged medical professionals and students to focus on quality research, collaboration, and innovation to improve Pakistan's position in the global research landscape. He said that research provides institutions and countries with global recognition, opportunities for patents, and development of skilled human resources. He appreciated the efforts of the organisers and termed the conference a significant step towards promoting a culture of research in medical institutions. Earlier, Dean Khyber Girls Medical College, Professor Dr. Shehzad Akbar, welcomed the participants and highlighted the journey of the medical research conference. He said that the conference has evolved over the years from a national undergraduate research platform into an international event involving undergraduate students, postgraduate researchers, and

PESHAWAR: In a major step to strengthen community awareness and youth engagement in public health, Provincial Emergency Operations Centre Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (EOC) in collaboration with UNICEF launched a youth-centered strategy called 'Students and Adolescents for Health and Immunization' (SAHI) Initiative which is aimed at empowering students and adolescents as immunization ambassadors for polio eradication.

Under the initiative, students from selected schools, colleges and universities will be engaged and equipped with the right tools to enable them to serve as immunization ambassadors who will promote awareness, dispel myths, and support vaccination advocacy within their communities.

The first event under this initiative was organized here on Wednesday at City University of Science and Information Technology Peshawar.

The event was attended by Shafiullah Khan, Additional Secretary Health/Coordinator EOC KP, Melissa Corkum, National Team Lead UNICEF, Sabiha Jamil, Assistant Commissioner Fagirabad, Emad Hassan, Gates Foundation, Dr. Ali Haidar Technical Focal Person PEI EOC KP, Dr.



Muhammad Imran Khan, Provincial Team Lead NSTOP, Prof. Dr. Arif Shah, Dean City University, and other officials of UNICEF, WHO and EOC KP as well as a large number of students.

In his keynote address to the session, Additional Secretary Health/EOC Coordinator Shafiullah Khan thanked the university administration, faculty and students for their time and support for the national cause of polio eradication, saying that students are powerful messengers and can help us in spreading awareness and addressing community misconceptions.

Shafiullah Khan said that youth engagement, particularly through the SAHI initiative, presents a powerful opportunity to strengthen awareness and build long-term community trust adding that students not only absorb critical health messages but also serve as influential ad-

vocates within their families and neighbourhoods. Engaging students in polio advocacy will help reinforce accurate information about vaccination and foster ownership of the polio eradication effort within the communities, he said.

Detailed presentations were delivered by technical experts of UNICEF, WHO and NSTOP to orient the students about polio eradication and other vaccine preventable diseases as well as their role in creating awareness at the community level.

In their technical presentation, Dr. Muhammad Imran, Team Lead NSTOP and Dr. Ehtisham, Area Coordinator, WHO, focussed on vaccine preventable diseases including polio, significance of vaccination, historical perspective of polio eradication efforts, global level, country level and province level polio updates as well as the progress and challenges in polio eradication efforts. They highlighted the

critical role of vaccination, sustained community engagement and collective action in protecting children from polio and advancing the goal of a Polio-Free Pakistan and Polio-Free Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In his presentation on SAHI initiative, Jahanuddin, Social & Behaviour Change (SBC) Specialist UNICEF, explained that EOC is regularly engaging and establishing partnerships with key stakeholders such as religious scholars, pediatricians, civil society organizations, media and educational institutions, however, now they have come up with a new strategy called Students & Adolescents for Health and Immunization (SAHI) initiative, a structured and youth centered initiative, that mobilizes students and adolescents as Immunization Ambassadors. He said that the main goal of this initiative is to increase community demand for and acceptance of polio and routine immunization at community level. Referring to the role of students under SAHI initiative, he explained that as immunization ambassadors, their role will include spreading correct information about vaccination in their communities and neighbourhoods, encouraging families to open their doors for vaccinators and ensure vaccination of their children as well as countering myths and misconceptions about vaccines.

Usmania Madrassa Mariyali holds prize distribution ceremony



MUHAMMAD REHAN

DERA ISMAIL KHAN : A prize distribution ceremony was held at Jamia Usmania Mariyali following the annual examinations of its various departments, with awards presented to students who secured outstanding positions.

Examinations in Nazra, Hifz, Tajweed and Dars-e-Nizami were conducted last week. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Dera City Amir Kafaeel Ahmad Nizami was the chief guest, while the institution's administration and teachers distributed prizes among the successful students.

Muhammad Adnan of Khana Sharif secured first position, Rehmanullah of Waziristan stood second, and Nasimullah

of Kari Malang secured third position. A special award for discipline, service and good conduct was presented to Muhammad Zeeshan Usmani.

Kafeel Ahmad Nizami congratulated the successful students, teachers and parents, and appreciated the religious and educational services of the institution. He said religious seminaries were playing an important role in the religious and moral training of the younger generation despite limited resources.

The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks by the administration, while Mufti Muhammad Sharif offered a special prayer for the security and prosperity of the country, the progress of the institution and the success of its teachers and students.

Pakistani surgeon Dr Faseeh Shahab earns APAS honour

MUHAMMAD REHAN



DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Renowned Pakistani orthopaedic surgeon Dr Faseeh Shahab

has won the Young Arthroplasty Forum Award of the Asia Pacific Arthroplasty Society (APAS) at its annual meeting held in Malaysia last week. The award was presented on the basis of points earned through interactive medical and academic discussions on complex hip and knee arthroplasty cases. The achievement recognises Dr Faseeh Shahab's clinical knowledge, decision-making skills and active academic contribution to the field of arthroplasty. In another landmark achievement for Pakistan, Professor Shahid Noor of Karachi has been elected as the next President of APAS. He is the first Pakistani to hold the prestigious position, marking an important milestone for Pakistani orthopaedics and reflecting the growing international recognition of Pakistani orthopaedic surgeons.

Surprise inspections

Commissioner Kohat orders action against absentee staff

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Moatasim Billah Shah has ordered action against persistently absent government employees during surprise inspections of public offices, health facilities and educational institutions in Kohat, Orakzai and Hangu districts under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's Good Governance Programme.

Shah inspected a Civil Dispensary and Government Primary School in Mir Ahmad Khel, Public Health Offices in Kohat and Livestock and Irrigation Offices in Orakzai, reviewing staff attendance, public services and routine operations. He checked medicines, cleanliness and staff attendance at the health facility and reviewed teachers' attendance and teaching activities at the school. Several employees were found absent, prompting action against those repeatedly failing to attend duty in accordance with official rules.

The Commissioner directed the officials to ensure timely and quality public services, saying negligence in the discharge



of official duties would not be tolerated.

Shah later inspected the under-construction Judicial Complex in Hangu, where the Executive Engineer briefed him on construction progress, materials and quality standards. He directed the authorities to maintain construction quality and complete the project within the stipulated timeframe.

The Judicial Complex, costing more than 500 million rupees, is targeted for completion by the end of October this year, officials said.

Shah said the Good Governance Programme was aimed at improving the performance, transparency and accountability of government institutions and ensuring better public service delivery.

Galiyat steps up sustainable tourism drive to protect natural beauty and forests

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: The Galiyat Development Authority (GDA) has intensified efforts to protect the region's natural beauty, forests and ecological balance while promoting environmentally friendly and sustainable tourism, with a focus on providing modern and safe facilities to visitors and improving the quality of life of local communities.

GDA Director General Muhammad Fawad made these remarks while speaking to journalists from Peshawar during their visit to Galiyat, organised by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority.

He said the GDA was actively implementing a number of initiatives aimed at promoting ecotourism in the region, including the introduction of electric sightseeing carts. The environmentally friendly vehicles are intended to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution at popular tourist destinations while providing visitors with a convenient mode of transportation.

The DG said the GDA had also imposed a complete ban on the construction of



concrete structures over the past year and was instead encouraging the use of prefabricated and wooden, environment-friendly structures. The policy is aimed at protecting Galiyat's natural environment, forests and distinctive mountainous landscape from the adverse impact of unnecessary construction.

According to Mr Fawad, the authority would continue promoting construction practices that remain compatible with the region's fragile natural environment.

To discourage unplanned and excessively tall construction, the GDA has amended the 2020 Building Control Rules and introduced new Building Control Regulations (BCR-2026). The new regulations seek to control high-rise and excessively tall buildings in Galiyat's sensitive environmental and tourism zones, preventing structures from obstructing or damaging the area's natural scenic landscape.

Under the new regulations, particular emphasis has been placed on restricting the height and overall volume of buildings. The move is expected to help preserve Galiyat's natural landscape, forests and scenic tourist destinations.

The GDA maintains that striking a balance between development activities and environmental protection is essential to ensure that Galiyat retains its natural beauty for future generations.

Rs23bn Tourism Investment Planned for Thandiani

Meanwhile, a major step has also been taken for the integrated development of Thandiani, one of Galiyat's prominent tourist destinations.

The GDA has signed a concession agreement with a private investor for the development of approximately 400 kanals of land under the Integrated Tourism Zone (ITZ) initiative. The project is expected to attract around Rs23 billion in private investment, while the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is projected to generate approximately Rs2.5 billion in revenue.

The Thandiani project is being viewed as a significant initiative for modern, organised and sustainable tourism development in Galiyat. It is designed to provide visitors with improved facilities, recreational opportunities and modern tourism infrastructure while taking local resources and environmental considerations into account.

The project is also expected to create new employment and economic opportunities for the local population.

Building Heights Reduced to Protect Landscape

GDA officials said construction in Galiyat was being regulated in accordance with the authority's building bylaws. In the past, buildings of up to seven floors had been permitted in certain cases; however, keeping the region's natural beauty, envi-

ronmental protection and tourism landscape in view, the permissible height has now been reduced to five floors.

The measure is intended to minimise the visual and environmental impact of tall buildings and preserve Galiyat's distinctive mountainous character.

Water Treatment Facility Underway Mr Fawad further said that natural springs and water resources were of fundamental importance to Galiyat's fragile ecosystem. Work was therefore under way on the installation of a water treatment plant in Nathia Gali.

The project aims to prevent sewage and contaminated water from entering natural water sources and to protect the region's springs, environment and public health.

The GDA is also implementing various development projects aimed at improving the quality of life of local communities. These initiatives include upgrading basic facilities, developing tourism infrastructure, providing environment-friendly services and creating new economic opportunities for local residents.

The authority's initiatives reflect a shift towards a model of tourism that goes

beyond simply increasing construction and visitor numbers. Instead, the focus is increasingly being placed on responsible, environmentally friendly and sustainable tourism.

A Sustainable Future for Galiyat

The GDA's broader vision is to transform Galiyat into a modern, internationally competitive tourist destination while safeguarding its forests, natural water resources, scenic landscapes and unique ecological identity.

Officials believe that sustainable development, rather than unchecked construction, can ensure that tourism continues to benefit local communities without compromising the natural assets that make Galiyat one of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's most valuable tourist regions.

With initiatives ranging from electric sightseeing transport and eco-friendly construction to stricter building regulations, integrated tourism development and improved water management, the authority is seeking to establish a development model in which economic growth and environmental conservation move forward together.



RAWALPINDI: Students and people wait for opening gate of green line electric busy going for their destiny at Liaquat Bagh stop, in the city. — PHOTO: ONLINE

Fourth polio case reported in KP

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The National Emergency Operations Centre for Polio Eradication (NEOC) on Friday confirmed a fourth polio case in Pakistan during the ongoing year, with the latest case reported from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Bannu district.

The government-led Polio Eradication Initiative urged all parents and caregivers to ensure that their children are vaccinated during the upcoming door-to-door campaign from Sept 21 to 27, and in every subsequent campaign, to protect them from lifelong disability.

Three of the four cases have been

reported from southern KP, where security-related access constraints have resulted in children missing critical vaccination, allowing wild poliovirus to continue circulating. “Thanks to the safe and effective polio vaccine, Pakistan has reduced polio cases by 99.8 per cent, from an estimated 20,000 cases in the early 1990s to 31 in 2025.

So far in 2026, four cases have been reported, mostly concentrated in southern KP,” a statement issued by the polio programme said. “While overall poliovirus transmission in the country has declined since 2025, transmission remains persistent in southern KP,” it added.

According to the statement, the affected child hailed from the Nurur union council in Miryan tehsil, where vaccination teams were unable to reach children consistently since 2025 due to insecurity. “This new case underscores the urgent need to maintain strong surveillance and vaccination efforts nationwide, because no child is safe from polio until every child is protected,” the statement said.

Polio is a highly contagious and incurable disease that can cause lifelong paralysis and, in some cases, death. It can, however, be prevented through safe and effective polio vaccines, which have been used safely in 195 countries, including all Muslim-majority

countries. The first case of the year was reported from Sindh in a four-year-old child from Bello Union Council in Sujawal district. The other two were reported in Bannu and North Waziristan.

So far this year, Pakistan has already conducted three large-scale polio campaigns. The next national campaign is scheduled for Sept 21 to 27 and aims to protect nearly 31 million children, including those in southern KP.



Regional Head, Wafaqi Mohtasib holds meeting with CEO PESCO

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: A meeting was held between Muhammad Qasim Jan, Regional Head, Office of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, and Akhtar Hameed Khan, Chief Executive Officer, Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO), to review the status of pending complaints and implementation cases before the Office of the Wafaqi Mohtasib. The meeting was also attended by Mr. Shakeel, Chief Law Officer, PESCO and Muhammad Alamzaib, Deputy Advisor (Implementation), Office of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, Peshawar.

During the meeting, it was decided that all Sub-Divisional Officers (SDOs) and concerned focal persons shall personally appear before the Wafaqi Mohtasib for hearing proceedings related to complaints filed against the Agency. It was further decided that all pending implementable cases would be implemented in letter and spirit, strictly in accordance with the applicable rules and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the Agency, through a committee to be headed by an officer not below the rank of Superintending Engineer.



It was also agreed that a compliance report on the implementation of such cases would be regularly submitted to the Regional Head of the Wafaqi Mohtasib of Pakistan Regional Office, Peshawar for record and monitoring purposes.

Speaking on the occasion, the CEO PESCO assured that necessary instructions in this regard would be issued to

all concerned formations with immediate effect, to ensure timely redressal of public complaints and strict compliance with the directions of the Wafaqi Mohtasib.

The meeting reflected the mutual commitment of both institutions towards ensuring good governance, accountability, and prompt relief to the general public.

ISAK Presents Lifetime Achievement Awards to Bushra Farukh and Rokhan Yousafzai

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR : The Literary Sikandari Literary Caravan (ISAK) organized a prestigious literary event at which renowned poet and writer Bushra Farukh and prominent poet, writer and journalist Rokhan Yousafzai were presented Lifetime Achievement Awards in recognition of their literary services. The event comprised two sessions and was attended by writers, poets, literary figures and people with a keen interest in literature.

The first session was presided over by ISAK President Professor Dr. Sher Zaman Simab. Dr. Ahmad Gul Momand had the honor of reciting verses from the Holy Quran, while Tabinda Farukh presented a Naat in praise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), adding a spiritual atmosphere to the gathering. Renowned Urdu short-story writer and critic Professor Dr. Zubair Shah was the chief guest of the first session.

On the occasion, Dr. Zubair Shah and Dr. Shaukat Mahmood spoke about Bushra Farukh’s literary work and personality, paying tribute to her contributions to literature. Later, ISAK founder Bilal Sikandari and President Professor Dr.

Sher Zaman Simab presented Bushra Farukh with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

During the ceremony, chief guest Professor Dr. Zubair Shah also presented a gold medal to Tabinda Farukh, author of the travelogue “Hisar-e-Ishq.” Speaking on the occasion, Bushra Farukh said that



the literary activities initiated by ISAK were highly commendable and that the real award for her was the love and affection shown by the members of ISAK. ISAK founder Bilal Sikandari expressed his gratitude to Bushra Farukh for her participation and encouragement.

The second session was also presided over by ISAK President Dr. Sher Zaman Simab. Renowned writer Javed Iqbal

Gilani was the chief guest, while noted poet Namroze Qais was the guest of honor. Fazal Momand presented a written sketch highlighting the literary work and personality of Rokhan Yousafzai.

Javed Iqbal Gilani, Namroze Qais and Rokhan Yousafzai, in their remarks, appreciated the literary efforts of ISAK

founder Bilal Sikandari and assured him of their fullest moral and financial support for the literary platform. Subsequently, Bilal Sikandari and Dr. Sher Zaman Simab presented Rokhan Yousafzai with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

During the second session, chief guest Javed Iqbal Gilani presented a gold medal to Roshan Shah Qalamyar, while Namroze

PRCS and German Red Cross strengthen climate journalism through national training workshop

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), through its Climate Change Adaptation and Media & Communication Departments, in collaboration with the German Red Cross (GRC), successfully concluded a two-day National Climate Journalism Training Workshop in Islamabad. The workshop brought together more than 30 journalists and field reporters from climate-prone regions, including Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The training commenced with an overview of its objectives and purpose by Mr. Sajjad Ali Kandhir and Mr. Ghulam Murtaza from the PRCS Climate Change Adaptation Program. Mr. Asif Aman,

Transition Delegate from German Red Cross in Pakistan, and Mr. Ghulam Rasool Farooqui, Program Coordinator, German Red Cross welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of strengthening climate reporting. Mr. Sher Zaman, Head of Media & Communication, PRCS National Headquarters, delivered a detailed presentation on the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, PRCS history, mandate and scope of work, facilitated by Mr. Rehan Ali, Assistant Director Media & Communication, PRCS. Ms. Uneeba Waqar, Climate and Environmental Journalist, led sessions on climate science, climate reporting approaches, story development, climate policy and practical news story exercises.

On the second day, Mr. Abdul Razak Khattai, Broadcast Journalist and Mobile

Journalism (MoJo) Trainer, conducted a dedicated session on mobile journalism, focusing on the effective use of smartphones and digital tools for climate reporting. The remaining sessions, covered climate data journalism, identifying climate perspectives in everyday stories, developing impactful human-centred narratives and connecting with reliable sources. Participants also engaged in practical story development, presentations and editorial feedback.

In her message, Honourable Chairperson PRCS Mrs. Farzana Naek said, “Climate action must begin with solutions that respond to the realities of local communities. Journalists have an important role in bringing these solutions to the forefront, highlighting practical actions and giving greater visibility to communities that are already responding to climate challenges. I appreciate the PRCS and German Red Cross for providing journalists with the skills to report climate issues in a way that can contribute to meaningful action at the local level.”



Secretary General PRCS Mr. Muhammad Abaidullah Khan said, “Climate change is affecting communities, livelihoods and lives across Pakistan, making accurate and responsible climate reporting increasingly important. Strengthening the capacity of

journalists to understand climate issues and translate them into clear, relevant and compelling stories can help connect communities, decision-makers and stakeholders with the actions and solutions needed on the ground.”

The Enduring Lesson of 9/11

JUNAID QAISER



Twenty-five years have passed since the morning that changed the course of modern history. On September 11, 2001, the world watched in horror as hijacked airliners struck the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a quiet field in Pennsylvania. Nearly 3,000 innocent people lost their lives. Firefighters climbed burning stairwells knowing they might never return. Office workers called loved ones to say goodbye. Passengers aboard Flight 93 chose resistance over surrender and paid with their lives.

A quarter century later, America continues to mourn. The names are still read aloud. Families still gather at memorials. Twin beams of light still rise above Lower Manhattan. Yet the significance of 9/11 extends far beyond remembrance. The anniversary is not only about honoring the dead; it is about confronting a question that remains as relevant today as it was in 2001: Have we truly learned the lesson of terrorism? The answer is mixed.

The attacks of September 11 were not simply acts of violence. They were the product of an ideology that glorified hatred, rejected coexistence, and viewed the murder of civilians as a legitimate political tool. The men who carried out the attacks did not emerge from nowhere. They were shaped by a worldview that portrayed entire societies as enemies and celebrated destruction as a path to victory.

Too often, acts of terrorism are condemned in principle but immediately surrounded by qualifications and explanations that blur moral responsibility. The language changes, but the pattern remains familiar. Mass murder is denounced, yet attention quickly shifts to grievances, political disputes, or historical complaints. Context is important in understanding conflicts, but context must never become justification. That principle should not be controversial. Yet in international debates, social media discussions, and even some academic circles, there remains a reluctance to draw a clear moral line. Extremist violence is sometimes described in language that minimizes its brutality or portrays perpetrators primarily as victims of circumstance.

Every generation of terrorists has attempted to present itself as reacting to injustice. Every generation has sought moral cover for violence. When societies accept those arguments, even partially, extremists gain legitimacy they do not deserve. The result is not peace or reconciliation. The result is often further radicalization and additional bloodshed. The challenge is particularly urgent today. Nearly one in four Americans was born after September 11, 2001. Across the world, millions of young people know the attacks only through documentaries, textbooks, and memorial ceremonies. For them, 9/11 risks becoming a distant historical event rather than a living warning. That makes education essential. Young people should understand not only what happened on that day but also why it happened. They should learn how extremist ideologies recruit followers, exploit grievances, spread conspiracy theories, and transform hatred into violence. They should understand the value of pluralism, democratic institutions, religious freedom, and peaceful political participation.

The lesson is especially relevant for countries like Pakistan, which have paid a heavy price for terrorism. Thousands of Pakistani civilians, soldiers, police officers, religious leaders, and community members have been killed in attacks over the past two decades. Pakistan's experience demonstrates that terrorism recognizes no nationality, ethnicity, or faith. Its victims come from every background.

For that reason, combating extremism cannot be viewed as an American challenge, a European challenge, or a Middle Eastern challenge. It is a global responsibility.

At the same time, the anniversary of 9/11 should also encourage reflection on the broader consequences of the response that followed. The wars launched after the attacks reshaped international politics, cost enormous sums of money, and claimed countless lives. Debates continue over surveillance powers, civil liberties, military interventions, and the effectiveness of various counterterrorism strategies.

The enduring legacy of September 11 is therefore not only a story of tragedy. It is also a story of resilience. Lower Manhattan was rebuilt. Communities recovered. First responders became symbols of courage. Families carried unimaginable burdens with dignity. A nation wounded by terror refused to surrender to fear. Yet remembrance alone is not enough. The true tribute to the victims of 9/11 is a continued commitment to reject extremism in all its forms, regardless of who promotes it or where it appears. It is a willingness to confront ideologies of hatred before they become acts of violence. It is the courage to defend human dignity without qualification and to stand with victims rather than rationalize their attackers. Twenty-five years after that terrible morning, the names are still read, the bells still ring, and the lights still illuminate the New York sky. Their message remains as clear today as it was in 2001. Terrorism must never be excused. Hatred must never be normalized. And the lessons of September 11 must never be forgotten.

Groundwater Crisis

Pakistan's fresh water aquifers are collapsing at an alarming rate

FIZZA QAISAR



The physical consequences in Balochistan extend beyond water scarcity to structural land collapse

While public debates on climate change in Pakistan heavily center on melting glaciers, severe heatwaves, and seasonal monsoon floods, a far more destructive ecological emergency is unfolding silently right beneath the surface. Deep underground, Pakistan's fresh water aquifers—the invisible subterranean banks that supply nearly 90% of the nation's drinking water and over 60% of its agricultural irrigation—are collapsing at an alarming rate. Driven by erratic rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, and decades of unregulated extraction, this invisible crisis poses an existential threat to Pakistan's food security and human survival, with the provinces of Punjab and Balochistan standing directly at the epicenter.

In Punjab, widely regarded as the country's agricultural heartland and breadbasket, the aquifer crisis is a direct consequence of intensive farming and shifting weather dynamics. The province relies heavily on a network of tube wells—numbering well over one million—to irrigate water-intensive cash crops like sugarcane, rice, and wheat. Historically, these underground reservoirs were replenished annually by seasonal river flows and predictable monsoon rain cycles. However, as climate change destabilizes precipitation patterns, natural aquifer recharge rates have plummeted. Farmers, facing drier canal beds and longer dry spells, respond by sinking deeper electrical and diesel tube wells, extracting water far faster than nature can replenish it.

The structural impact on Punjab's water table is severe. In major urban and agricultural centers like Lahore, Faisalabad, and Multan, the water table has dropped by several meters every decade, forcing residents and farmers to drill down hundreds of feet to reach usable fresh water. This over-extraction alters the chemical composition of the remaining water. As deeper, older layers of the aquifer are tapped, hazardous heavy metals like arsenic, along with high concentrations of fluoride and salts, seep into the supply. Vast swathes of agricultural soil in southern Punjab are suffering from secondary salinization, rendering once-fertile fields sterile, while urban populations face widespread health hazards from arsenic-contaminated drinking water.

If Punjab's groundwater crisis is defined by over-exploitation, Balochistan's predicament is a full-blown ecological catastrophe driven by total resource exhaustion. Covering nearly 44% of Pakistan's landmass, Balochistan is an arid, mountainous region where surface water rivers are scarce. For generations, local communities survived in harmony with the environment through the Karez system—a brilliant, ancient network of underground aqueducts that used gravity to channel fresh water from mountain foothill aquifers to valley farms without over-extracting the source.

The delicate balance in Balochistan disintegrated with the introduction of subsidized tube wells and modern drilling technology in the late 20th century. As climate change worsened drought cycles across the province, the unchecked drilling of deep tube wells dried up the natural mountain springs, permanently killing the centuries-old Karez network. Today, in valleys like Quetta, Mastung, and Pishin, the water table is dropping by up to three to five meters annually. In Quetta, the provincial capital, drilling operations must now go down more than 1,000 to 1,200 feet into the earth to hit water, with many boreholes returning completely dry.

The physical consequences in Balochistan extend beyond water scarcity to structural land collapse. As massive underground cavities are emptied of water, the earth above collapses under its own weight—a geological phenomenon known as land subsidence. Deep fissures, massive cracks, and sinkholes have appeared across the Quetta valley, fracturing roads, destroying residential homes, and severing utility lines. Entire orchards of apple, almond, and peach trees—the economic backbone of rural Balochistan—have dried up and been cut down for firewood as the subterranean water reserves disappear entirely.

The climate crisis severely compounds this situation. Higher temperatures increase evaporation rates, while extreme precipitation events—such as sudden cloud-bursts—cause rapid surface runoff that rushes straight to the ocean rather than soaking into the dry, compacted soil to recharge depleted aquifers. Without immediate water management reforms, including rainwater harvesting, artificial aquifer recharge, strict regulation on tube well drilling, and a transition away from water-intensive crops, Pakistan's subterranean drought risks turning its most vital provinces into uninhabitable dust bowls.

The Indus Odyssey

SAJJAD AHMED RUSTAMANI

In Homer's Odyssey, one of Odysseus's most terrifying passages comes when his ship must sail through a narrow strait between two seemingly unavoidable dangers. On one side waits Scylla, the many-headed monster ready to seize sailors from the deck; on the other churns Charybdis, a monstrous whirlpool capable of swallowing the ship itself. There is no safe route and no possibility of remaining still. Odysseus has to navigate between the two.

More than two millennia later, the image offers a striking metaphor for India and Pakistan. Today, however, the most dangerous whirlpool in their relationship may not be found on a battlefield. It is flowing through the rivers of the Indus basin.

The latest turn came on August 31, 2026, when the Court of Arbitration constituted under the Indus Waters Treaty delivered a major decision in proceedings brought by Pakistan. The court held that the 1960 treaty remains in force despite India's decision to place it in abeyance and that India remains bound by its obligations. It also issued interim measures concerning India's Ratle Hydroelectric Plant on the Chenab River. India rejected the decision, maintaining that the tribunal has no jurisdiction. Pakistan welcomed the ruling as vindication of its position that a binding water treaty cannot simply be set aside by one party.

This is what makes the present confrontation far more consequential than an ordinary diplomatic disagreement. For Pakistan, the Indus Waters Treaty governs rivers upon which much of its agricultural economy and food security depend. Around 80 per cent of Pakistan's irrigated agriculture relies on the Indus system. For a downstream country whose farms, villages and livelihoods are tied to these waters, uncertainty over their management reaches directly into food production, rural employment and national economic security. Signed in 1960 after negotiations facilitated by the World Bank, the treaty allocated the eastern rivers, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej, principally to India, while Pakistan received rights over the western rivers, Indus, Jhelum and Chenab, subject to specified Indian uses. Its extraordinary achieve-

ment was its durability. The treaty survived wars, military confrontations and decades of political hostility because both countries understood that water was too fundamental to be left at the mercy of their wider disagreements. India's decision in April 2025 to hold the treaty in abeyance challenged that understanding. For Pakistan, the implications were profound. Islamabad suddenly faced the prospect that an agreement governing its most important river system could become conditional upon the political relationship between the two countries. Pakistan's objection therefore extends beyond a single dam or quantity of water. It concerns whether one party can unilaterally suspend a treaty designed precisely to survive periods of political hostility.

The August 31 ruling significantly strengthened Pakistan's legal argument. The Court of Arbitration concluded that India's declaration of abeyance did not suspend or terminate the treaty and that its obligations remained in force. India has refused to accept that conclusion, arguing that the court lacks jurisdiction. The resulting situation is troubling: Pakistan invokes the treaty and its dispute settlement machinery, while India challenges the authority of the institution hearing Pakistan's case. This is precisely where Pakistan's position gains strength. Islamabad has pursued its concerns through the framework created by the treaty rather than attempting to rewrite the rules unilaterally. A lower riparian state cannot alter geography. Its protection lies in treaties, agreed procedures, information sharing and international law. The Ratle Hydroelectric Plant illustrates why these protections matter. The project is being built on the Chenab, one of the western rivers allocated primarily to Pakistan, although India retains specified hydroelectric rights. Pakistan's objections concern whether design and operational features of Indian projects comply with treaty limitations. This distinction is crucial. Pakistan is not demanding rights beyond the treaty, nor is it arguing that India can undertake no hydropower development. It is demanding that development remain within the rules both countries accepted.

Geography makes the issue especially sensitive. India is upstream and Pakistan downstream. Decisions over the storage, regulation and release of shared waters



The treaty survived wars, military confrontations and decades of political hostility because both countries understood that water was too fundamental to be left at the mercy of their wider disagreements

can have consequences downstream. Geography gives India a physical advantage, but it cannot provide unlimited legal discretion. Indeed, greater upstream capacity should carry greater responsibility. Turning shared water into political leverage would create a dangerous precedent far beyond South Asia. If an upstream country could make compliance with a water treaty dependent upon the state of political relations with its downstream neighbour, transboundary river agreements around the world would become vulnerable. Pakistan's concern therefore represents a broader principle: water must not become an instrument of coercion. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif brought precisely this message to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Bishkek on September 1. He described water as the region's "life-blood" and said that it "must never be weaponised or used as an instrument of coercion." Coming immediately after the arbitration ruling, his intervention carried particular significance. Pakistan was taking its concern beyond the bilateral arena and presenting it as a question of regional stability and respect for international agreements.

Islamabad's strongest response is therefore legal and diplomatic consistency. Pakistan should insist on full implementation of the Indus Waters Treaty, regular exchange of hydrological information, effective communication between the Indus commissioners, careful scrutiny of projects on the western rivers and full use of the treaty's dispute resolution mechanisms. This approach gives Pakistan something more enduring than political rhetoric: international legitimacy.

There is also a powerful historical argument in Pakistan's favour. The treaty has survived for more than six decades because earlier generations understood that water cooperation could not wait for perfect political relations. If India and Pakistan maintained the agreement through wars and repeated crises, weakening it today would represent a retreat from one of the few enduring successes in their bilateral relationship.

Climate pressures make such a retreat even more dangerous. South Asia faces growing water demand, population pressure, changing rainfall patterns and mounting stress on agriculture. In Pakistan, where the Indus basin forms the backbone of irrigated farming, un-

predictability carries particularly severe consequences. The rational response should therefore be stronger cooperation, greater transparency and more reliable data sharing, not greater uncertainty.

The present dispute is consequently about more than Pakistan winning an argument against India. It concerns whether international commitments continue to mean something when relations between states deteriorate. Treaties would serve little purpose if governments were obliged to respect them only when relations were friendly. Pakistan has an arbitral ruling supporting its position that the treaty remains operative. India's rejection of that position has created one of the most consequential tests the Indus Waters Treaty has faced since 1960. Pakistan should meet that test firmly through international law. Its case is strongest when it insists that the western rivers are not political bargaining chips, that India's permitted uses must remain within treaty limits and that disputes must be settled through mechanisms already agreed by both countries. The SCO summit provided Islamabad with an important platform to articulate precisely this principle. Rivers connect states regardless of the political relationship between their governments. The Indus existed before the modern borders of South Asia and will continue crossing them long after today's disputes have passed.

Scylla and Charybdis were terrifying because neither could simply be wished away. Odysseus had to navigate the passage without losing his ship. Pakistan now faces its own difficult passage on the Indus. On one side lies the vulnerability inherent in being a downstream state. On the other lies the danger that a treaty protecting its water rights for more than six decades could be weakened through unilateral action.

Pakistan's position should remain clear. The Indus Waters Treaty must remain in force, its dispute settlement mechanisms must be respected, Pakistan's rights over the western rivers must be protected, and shared water must never become an instrument of political coercion. India and Pakistan cannot rewrite their geography. India will remain upstream and Pakistan downstream. That permanent reality makes agreed rules more necessary, not less.

ICCI to act as one window platform between business community, govt departments

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), led by its President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, on Friday met with Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry.

They discussed the sealing of commercial plazas and other issues confronting Islamabad's business community, said a press release issued by ICCI.

The ICCI delegation also highlighted concerns arising from the sealing of commercial plazas following the unfortunate fire incident at the PIMS Nursery.

Emphasizing that while public safety and strict adherence to fire-safety standards are of paramount importance, enforcement measures should be implemented through a transparent, consultative and facilitative mechanism so that businesses are not subjected to unnecessary disruption.

The delegation urged the need for a balanced approach under which fire and safety deficiencies are identified, communicated clearly to property owners and businesses, and reasonable opportunities are provided for corrective measures, wherever legally permissible. It was emphasized that the business community fully supports measures aimed at protecting lives and property but seeks clarity, consistency and due process in regulatory enforcement.

During the meeting, it was agreed that these and other issues would be pursued through structured consultation with ICCI, which would serve as a single-window platform for coordination between the business community and the relevant authorities. The arrangement is expected to facilitate direct engagement, timely identification of problems and practical solutions acceptable to all stakeholders. Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry reaffirmed that restoring and strengthening the confidence of the business community remains a key priority of the government.

SCCI EC concerned over imposition of taxes on ex-FATA and PATA, prolonged closure of Torkham border

TP REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Executive Committee of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) expressed concerns over imposition of the taxes on erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA), calling for immediate withdrawal of the decision while keeping in view the prevailing circumstances in these regions.

The EC also voiced over the prolonged closure of the Torkham border and demanded for revisiting the decision in the best interest of bilateral trade, business, industry and economy.

The executive committee met under chairmanship of the SCCI president Junaid Altaf to discuss the routine matters, statutory business, as well as cross border trade hurdles/issues and imposition of taxes on erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Provincial Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) and others.

The Secretary General of the chamber Muqtasid Ahsan proceeded the meeting smoothly by carrying forward all points in the agenda and took approval of each and every one from the house as per rules.

Participants of the meeting praised the unmatched services of executive member Mujeebur Rehman (Late) for business community.

The meeting was attended by Senior vice president Muhammad Nadeem, vice president Sabir Ahmad Bangash, members of the executive committee Fazal Moqeem Khan, Abdul Jalil Jan, Adnan Nasir, Aftab Iqbal, Gul Zaman, Hassan Zahiddin, Ashfaq Ahmad, Sajjad Zaheer, Saifullah Khan, Shams-ul-Rahim, Ziaul Haq Sarhadi.

Former vice president Javed Akhtar, Sikandar Iqbal, Naem ur Rehman, Ihsanullah Yousafzai, Sabz Ali, Abidullah, Mudassir Ali, Fazl e Wahid, Ishtiaq Muhammad and Saddar Gul and others were presence in the meeting being observer.

FPCCI hosts 1st Pak-Africa roundtable conference

Practical steps are needed to further strengthen economic ties between Pakistan and Africa: Atif Ikram Sheikh



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) hosted the first Pak-Africa Roundtable Conference, chaired by FPCCI President Atif Ikram Sheikh. The conference featured detailed discussions on promoting trade, investment, economic cooperation, and business ties between Pakistan and African nations. Ambassadors, High Commissioners, and Consuls General from various African countries—including Morocco, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Kenya, and Ethiopia—attended the event.

Addressing the conference, Atif Ikram Sheikh President FPCCI President highlighted that the FPCCI is actively working to boost economic activities with African nations and will continue to play its role in solidifying trade relations. He stated that the African region holds immense importance for Pakistan, as reflected in current government policies, and that the FPCCI will serve as a bridge between the

business communities of both sides.

Sheikh stressed the need to enhance business-to-business (B2B) and chamber-to-chamber connections to link Pakistan with the African market. He identified vast opportunities for investment and job creation, adding that Africa's emerging economies will play a crucial role in the future global economy. He highlighted key Pakistani sectors—including agriculture, pharmaceuticals, minerals and mining, technology, food, and infrastructure—that offer significant trade and investment potential in Africa, emphasizing that both regions should leverage their large populations, resources, and expansive markets.

The FPCCI President noted that over fifty countries in the African region hold strategic value for Pakistan. Practical measures are needed to solidify economic ties, and the FPCCI remains committed to expanding trade relations and exploring new business avenues.

Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hamid Asghar Khan

stated that Pakistan assigns special importance to promoting trade and economic cooperation with African nations, noting that strengthening economic links with Africa is a top priority of Pakistan's foreign policy.

He emphasized that Pakistan wants to further expand mutually beneficial economic partnerships with African countries, where the private sector and business community play a pivotal role. He encouraged the Pakistani business community to fully capitalize on the opportunities available in African markets, adding that the Government of Pakistan will provide all possible facilitation to foster trade and investment. Khan noted that coordinated diplomatic and commercial efforts are required to enhance Pak-Africa ties, praising the FPCCI Roundtable Conference as a significant step forward.

The Ambassador of Zimbabwe stated that Zimbabwe seeks to promote trade and investment with Pakistan, noting vast potential to increase bilateral trade volume through direct business community linkages.

Ethiopian Ambassador Omer Hussein Oba remarked that strong B2B connections and chamber-to-chamber cooperation could significantly boost mutual trade. He highlighted opportunities for collaboration in agriculture, industry, minerals, and technology, adding that Ethiopia can serve as a gateway for Pakistani businesses into African markets.

The Ambassador of Sudan commended FPCCI's initiatives, noting the critical role of the private sector in driving bilateral trade. He highlighted potential cooperation in textiles and other sectors, assuring that Sudan welcomes Pakistani investors.

The Ambassador of Kenya highlighted wide-ranging avenues for collaboration and suggested establishing a facilitation desk to streamline trade and assist business communities on both sides.

Employees union demands immediate implementation of Rs45,000 minimum wage

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Sahibzada Naseem Khan, President of the Employees Union of the Small Industries Development Board (SIDB), has drawn the attention of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sohail Afridi, towards the pressing issue of the minimum monthly wage for employees of autonomous bodies and daily-wage workers.

He pointed out that the provincial government, in its Budget 2026, announced an increase in the minimum monthly wage from the existing level to Rs. 45,000 with effect from July 2026. However, despite the announcement, no practical and effective measures have so far been taken to ensure its implementation in auto-

nous and attached bodies.

Sahibzada Naseem Khan stressed that the employees of autonomous bodies should not be deprived of an increase that has been announced as a government policy. He said that these employees are already facing severe financial difficulties due to rising inflation and the continuously increasing cost of essential commodities, including food, electricity, education, healthcare and transportation.

He said that the prolonged delay in implementation has created a sense of uncertainty and frustration among low-paid employees. For workers already struggling to meet their basic household expenses, the existing wages have become increasingly inadequate. Their financial difficulties, he added, are intensifying day

by day, leaving many employees feeling as though a noose is gradually tightening around their necks.

The Employees Union President urged the Chief Minister to take immediate notice of the matter and issue clear directions to all concerned departments and autonomous bodies to ensure that the announced minimum wage of Rs. 45,000 per month is implemented from July 2026, without unnecessary delay or bureaucratic hurdles.

He further appealed to all labour unions, employees' organizations and representatives of daily-wage workers across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to raise their collective voice for the rights of low-paid and daily-wage employees. He emphasized that government announcements

PSX remains under pressure amid rising oil prices

STAFF REPORTER

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) remained under pressure on Friday as rising international oil prices amid the US-Iran conflict raised concerns over higher domestic fuel prices, fuelling inflationary pressures and fears of a possible interest rate hike. The benchmark index touched an intra-day low of 166,141.17, down 2,723.87 points, or 1.61%, from the previous close of 168,865.04.

During the session, the KSE-100 index hit an intra-day high of 168,240.89, still 624.15 points below the previous close of 168,865.04. Ismail Iqbal Securities Chief Executive Officer Ahfaz Mustafa said the market was facing pressure from rising international oil prices amid the US-Iran conflict and the resulting increase in petroleum prices locally. "The rise in energy costs will push inflation up, and participants are pricing in a slight chance of a rate hike in the next monetary policy," he said.

Independent investment and economic analyst AAH Soomro attributed the negative market sentiment to fears over rising oil prices and a potential further escalation between the Saudi govt and the Houthis around the Red Sea. "Fears over rising oil prices, coupled with potential further escalation between the Saudi govt and the Houthis around the Red Sea, are keeping investors nervous," Soomro said.

Oil prices rose on Friday, and both major benchmarks are on track to end the week above \$100 a barrel for the first time since mid-May. Brent crude climbed to a four-month high of \$109.97 a barrel on Friday after a 6% overnight jump, capping a weekly gain of nearly 13%. Houthis seized control of Yemen's port of Mocha on Thursday, posing a further threat to Red Sea traffic.

Pakistan, Tajikistan agree to enhance trade and agricultural cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday emphasized the need to further enhance bilateral trade and economic cooperation with Tajikistan. He said that the existing trade volume between the two countries needed to be improved through greater engagement and by exploring new and alternative avenues of trade. The minister held a meeting with Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan, Yusuf Sharifzoda and discussed bilateral trade, agricultural cooperation, economic relations and ways to further strengthen ties between the two brotherly countries. During the meeting, the Tajik Ambassador conveyed an invitation to the Federal Minister to attend the upcoming Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) meeting scheduled to be held in September. The Federal Minister said that Pakistan and Tajikistan enjoyed historic, brotherly and cordial relations, rooted in shared religious, cultural and civilizational bonds. He said Tajikistan held a special position among Pakistan's partners in Central Asia. Rana Tanveer Hussain highlighted the significant potential for cooperation between Pakistan and Tajikistan in agriculture, food processing, livestock, agricultural technology and value addition.

A System Reset For Khyberpakhunkhwa: 1 Into 7

KOUSAR KHAN

What happens when the distance between a citizen and the government keeps increasing? The social contract begins to fray. A trust deficit takes root. The state gradually becomes a distant abstraction, issuing policies, allocating resources and making decisions from afar, while the citizen remains at the receiving end, struggling to identify who is responsible when those decisions fail to translate into roads, schools, hospitals and other basic services.

Now reverse the equation.

What happens when that distance is reduced? When the government is administratively closer to the people it governs, when decision-makers understand the geography and problems of their own region, and when a citizen can identify the authority responsible for a broken road, a dysfunctional hospital, an under-resourced school or a security failure?

Accountability becomes more tangible, public pressure more consequential and administrative priorities more attuned to local realities. Most importantly, the state ceases to appear as a distant and faceless authority; it becomes an institution within reach; one that citizens can approach, question and, when necessary, hold to account.

This is why the question of administrative restructuring deserves serious consideration in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

On July 30, 2026, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi called for a "system reset," arguing that Pakistan could no longer continue with a system that had repeatedly failed to deliver. At core of his remarks lies a more fundamental question: are Pakistan's existing administrative structures still equipped to govern a country whose population, geography, economic needs and governance challenges have evolved so dramatically?

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provides perhaps one of the clearest cases for asking that question.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has immense human, geographic, mineral, agricultural, tourism and hydropower potential. Its people deserve an administrative system capable of converting that potential into security, opportunity and public welfare. They deserve to know who is responsible for their schools, hospitals, roads, resources and development and they deserve the institutional ability to demand their rights.

For more than a decade, the province has largely remained under the political dominance of the same political force. Yet continuity in political control has not automatically translated into continuity in governance outcomes. The province continues to grapple with a formidable array of challenges: persistent terrorism and insecurity, recurring protests by students and other segments of society, allegations of extrajudicial killings, administrative inertia, and a public-service delivery system

that too often falls short of citizens' most basic expectations.

The problems are visible far beyond political debates.

Schools in some parts of the province resemble abandoned structures rather than functioning centres of learning. Government hospitals have repeatedly faced shortages of beds, medicines and basic facilities. Images and reports of patients sharing beds, attendants occupying corridors and even families having to arrange beds for their own patients are difficult to reconcile with the idea of a functional welfare state.

At the same time, the province continues to witness allegations and scandals involving corruption and misuse of public resources, while illegal extraction and smuggling of minerals raise questions about who actually benefits from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's considerable natural wealth.

These problems are not being cited to suggest that every failure of governance has one cause or that administrative restructuring can solve every challenge overnight. Security, corruption, institutional capacity, political instability and economic constraints all require separate responses.

But they do raise an important question:

Is the existing provincial structure itself helping the government respond effectively to the needs of a geographically diverse and administratively challenging province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa therefore needs to seriously consider reorganising itself into smaller, administratively viable provinces. Fortunately, the province already possesses a natural administrative framework on which such a restructuring could be built: its existing divisional structure.

Rather than drawing entirely new boundaries, the seven existing divisions can provide the administrative foundation for seven provinces, each centred around a major city with an established economic, administrative and geographic significance.

Under this model, Peshawar Province, headquartered in Peshawar, would comprise Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Khyber and Mohmand.

Mardan Province, headquartered in Mardan, would comprise Mardan and Swabi.

Malakand Province, headquartered at Swat, would comprise Swat, Buner, Shangla, Malakand, Upper Dir, Lower Dir, Upper Chitral, Lower Chitral and Bajaur.

Hazara Province, headquartered in Abbottabad, would comprise Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansehra, Battagram, Torghar, Upper Kohistan, Lower Kohistan and Kolai-Palas.

Kohat Province, headquartered in Kohat, would comprise Kohat, Hangu, Karak, Orakzai and Kurram.

Bannu Province, headquartered in Bannu, would comprise Bannu, Lakki Marwat and North Waziristan.

And Dera Ismail Khan Province, headquartered in Dera Ismail Khan, would comprise Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, Upper South Waziristan and Lower South Waziristan.

This arrangement would not be about creating additional

political positions or multiplying bureaucratic offices. Its justification would be administrative: making the government smaller in geographical scope so that it can become larger in its capacity to respond to the citizen.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is not a uniform administrative space. Its mountain districts, settled districts, newly merged districts, southern belt and urban centres face markedly different challenges.

The development priorities of Swat are not identical to those of Bannu. The infrastructure requirements of Upper Chitral cannot be planned in exactly the same manner as those of Peshawar. The security environment of North Waziristan requires a different administrative focus from the economic and urban pressures of Mardan.

One provincial government attempting to address all these realities from a single centre inevitably faces limitations of distance, capacity and attention.

Smaller provinces can bring decision-making closer to these realities.

Consider what this means for an ordinary citizen. Take an ordinary road project.

If a road connecting two districts remains incomplete for years, people should know which government is responsible. If a bridge is washed away and reconstruction is delayed, citizens should not have to navigate an enormous administrative system just to find out who is answerable.

The same applies to hospitals.

If a government hospital has ten beds for a population that requires fifty, the administration responsible should be identifiable. If patients are lying in corridors or sharing beds, people should be able to demand an explanation from someone who has both responsibility and authority.

The same applies to education.

A child sitting in a broken classroom in Swat should not have to compromise on his education because the provincial government is too distant or preoccupied with matters elsewhere. Parents should be able to ask why their school lacks classrooms, furniture, teachers or basic facilities, and the relevant government should be close enough to answer.

This is the real argument for smaller provinces. They make accountability more visible.

However, drawing seven boundaries on a map would be the easiest part of the exercise. Making seven provinces work would require considerably more.

Any alteration to provincial boundaries would have to follow the constitutional procedure prescribed under Article 239, requiring political consensus and the necessary parliamentary and provincial approvals. The financial architecture would require equally careful planning. Article 160 provides the constitutional framework for the National Finance Commission and the distribution of federal revenues. The division of existing provincial assets, liabilities, development allocations, institu-

tions and revenues would therefore have to be addressed before implementation.

The question of royalties and natural resources would be particularly important for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The province's hydropower, minerals and other natural resources represent enormous economic potential. A new administrative arrangement should ensure that these resources are transparently documented, legally extracted and fairly utilised for public welfare rather than becoming a source of illegal enrichment or capture by powerful interests.

A comprehensive transition plan would therefore have to establish the financial viability of each proposed province, define its revenue sources and expenditure responsibilities, distribute personnel and assets, protect ongoing development projects and establish mechanisms for transparent resource management.

The principle should be simple: first design the system, then execute it with discipline.

There is another condition without which smaller provinces would simply reproduce the weaknesses of the larger one: strong local governments.

If the Chief Minister is sitting in Peshawar, the citizens should not have to travel to the provincial capital for every local problem. A functional local government should have the authority and resources to deal with municipal services, local roads, sanitation, water supply and community-level development.

The ideal structure is therefore not merely smaller provinces. It is smaller provinces with empowered local governments.

Such a system can also strengthen the social contract. When citizens know which institution is responsible, they can demand performance. When governments know that their responsibilities are clearly visible, failure becomes harder to conceal. When resources are allocated closer to the communities that generate or require them, monitoring becomes more practical.

The objective is ultimately much bigger than administrative convenience. It is about rebuilding the relationship between the citizen and the state.

A province should not be so large that a citizen becomes invisible to its government.

If Pakistan is genuinely considering a "system reset," Khyber Pakhtunkhwa offers an opportunity to begin the conversation where it matters most: with the distance between the state and the citizen.

Seven smaller, administratively viable provinces will not by themselves create a welfare state. But if they are accompanied by sound financial planning, constitutional compliance, empowered local governments, institutional reform, transparent resource management and above all political commitment, they can bring the government closer to the people and make those who govern considerably easier to hold accountable.

That is the kind of system reset Khyber Pakhtunkhwa needs.

Razaullah heroics leave England facing 130 chase

Debutant blasts 81 with Abbas making career-best 42 before stumps

EDGBASTON: Pakistan set a 130-run target for England after Razaullah's blistering 81, and a 42-run knock from Mohammad Abbas helped the visitors reach 449 all out in the third Test at Edgbaston on Friday.

The Green Shirts, who were blown away for just 133 in the first innings and needed 320 runs to avoid an innings defeat, piled up 449 all out in their second innings, which lasted 96.4 overs.

In the eventful final session of the day, the visitors added 152 more to their second innings' total, courtesy of a sensational century-plus partnership for the ninth wicket between Razaullah and Abbas.

Pakistan resumed after tea at 297-5 but suffered three quick setbacks, losing Saud Shakeel (35), Ghazi Ghauri (16) and Mohammad Imran (4) to slip to 318-8.

With Pakistan in trouble, Razaullah and Mohammad Abbas launched a counterattack, adding 121 runs for the ninth wicket. Razaullah smashed the England bowlers all over the park, striking nine sixes and four fours in a breathtaking 81 off just 63 balls.

Abbas also played a crucial hand, scoring 42 off 67 deliveries, before he was dismissed with Pakistan on 439-9.

Razaullah was the final wicket to fall



soon after, stumped off Dan Lawrence, but his explosive innings had already ensured Pakistan secured a valuable 129-run lead over England.

Earlier, the second session of the pulsating day remained evenly poised as Pakistan added 113 runs to their total, while England made two scalps.

Masood and skipper Babar resumed the proceedings from the touring side and stretched their fourth-wicket partnership to 89 runs before the former fell victim to Gus Atkinson, agonisingly short of a well-deserved century.

The experienced southpaw walked back after scoring 95 off 148 deliveries with the help of 12 boundaries.

Babar was then involved in another crucial partnership for Pakistan when he put together 64 runs for the fifth-wicket partnership with Saud, during which he also brought up his 34th Test half-century.

The Pakistan captain looked on course to end his century drought in the longest format until Josh Tongue got him caught behind. He made 76 off just 103 deliveries, comprising 11 fours and a six.

Following the departure of both set batters, Saud and Ghazi batted cautiously and had raised 19 runs for the sixth wicket before the on-field umpires knocked the bails off to call for Tea.

Resuming the day on 52-2 after recovering from 0-2 late on the second day, Awaish and Shan continued their resistance, batting fluently to bring up their respective fifties and add 125 runs for the third wicket.

Dan Lawrence eventually ended the stand by dismissing Awaish for 59.

IBF Tenpin Bowling World Cup to start in Germany on October 12

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The IBF Tenpin Bowling World Cup will commence on October 12 in Munich, Germany, with bowlers from 47 countries participating in the men's and women's events.

This was stated by President Pakistan Tenpin Bowling Federation Ijaz ur Rehman in a statement.

He said teams and players from across the world would participate in the prestigious event, including Australia, Austria, Bermuda, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Guam, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Macau, Malaysia, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Uzbekistan and Wales.

Ijaz ur Rehman said the participation of Pakistan in the World Cup was an important opportunity for the country's bowlers to compete against leading players from around the world and showcase their talent at the international level.

The tournament, being organised under the auspices of the International Bowling Federation (IBF), will continue until October 21 in Munich.

M Shamlan Gul set for National Senior Training Camp

PROVINCE REPORT



KARACHI/ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's emerging squash player Muhammad Shamlan Gul has produced an impressive run on the PSA Satellite and Challenger circuits, reaching three finals and

winning one tournament title in four consecutive events.

Shamlan finished runner-up at the inaugural Qayyum Gul PSA Satellite Tournament in Rawalpindi and followed it with another Silver Medal at the inaugural Shams-ul-Qamar PSA Satellite Tournament in Peshawar.

His biggest success came in Karachi, where he won the Aproxera PSA Satellite Tournament to claim the Gold Medal and title. He also registered a major upset in a PSA Challenger event by defeating the top-seeded player.

Shamlan is now set to join the National Senior Training Camp at the National Squash Academy, Islamabad, where he will train alongside leading senior and internationally ranked players.

He thanked the Pakistan Squash Federation, its officials, and his father and coach Rehman Gul for their support and guidance. Shamlan said he remained focused on further improving his game and representing Pakistan at the international level.

Sri Lanka knock Pakistan out of Women's Asia Cup

Defending champion set up final against India on September 14

DUBAI: Sri Lanka produced a remarkable comeback to defeat Pakistan by four wickets in the second semi-final of the ACC Women's T20 Asia Cup 2026 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Friday, securing their place in Sunday's final against India. Chasing 131, Sri Lanka reached the target for six wickets with eight balls to spare. They endured a shaky start, losing four wickets for just 33 runs inside seven overs.

Harshitha Samarawickrama and Kavisha Dilhari then staged a superb recovery, adding 67 runs for the fifth wicket to take Sri Lanka past 100 in the 16th over. Samarawickrama top-scored with 36 off 31 balls, while Dilhari made

33 off 33.

Both fell to Pakistan captain Fatima Sana in the 17th over, leaving Sri Lanka at 109/6. However, Nilakshika Silva and Kaushini Nuthyangana finished the chase in style, sharing an unbeaten 34-run stand off just 10 balls. Silva smashed an unbeaten 18 off 10 balls, while Nuthyangana scored 10 not out off four deliveries.

Fatima was Pakistan's standout bowler, taking 4-38, while Sadia Iqbal and Umm-e-Hani claimed one wicket apiece.

Earlier put into bat, the Pakistani skipper produced a late attacking cameo to help the Green Shirts post 130/5.

Pakistan lost opener Muneeba Ali for two early before Shawaal Zulfiqar hit a



quick 24 off 16 balls, including two sixes. After Zulfiqar's dismissal, Gull Feroza steadied the innings with 21 off 32, sharing brief partnerships with Ayesha Zafar

(7) and Sadaf Shamas (8).

Feroza then added 40 runs with Fatima for the fifth wicket before departing in the 16th over.



Fatima remained unbeaten on 47 off 36 balls, smashing four fours and two sixes, while Tuba Hassan contributed an unbeaten 12 off 10 deliveries.

For Sri Lanka, Chamudi Praboda and Chamari Athapaththu took two wickets each, while Sugandika Kumari claimed one.

Bahr Karam's promotion to grade-21 a proud moment for sports fraternity: Ali

PROVINCE REPORT

PESHAWAR: Director Sports, Islamia College Peshawar, Ali Hoti, has extended heartfelt congratulations to Director Sports, University of Peshawar, Bahr Karam, on his promotion to Grade-21, describing it as a significant and proud achievement for the sports fraternity across Pakistan.

In a statement, Ali Hoti said Bahr Karam's promotion was not only recognition of his hard work, professional competence, extensive experience and outstanding performance, but also a source of happiness, pride and encouragement for sports directors, sports administrators and the wider sports community across the country.

He said Bahr Karam had always performed his professional responsibilities with dedication, discipline and strong administrative skills. His contributions to the promotion of sports, support for athletes, strengthening of sports culture in educational institutions and effective organisation of sporting activities were highly commendable.

Ali Hoti appreciated the Selection Committee, Syndicate and Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Johar of the University of Peshawar for recognising Bahr Karam's services, capabilities and performance. He termed the decision a welcome and commendable step that highlights the importance of sports within the administrative structure of universities.

He said Bahr Karam's elevation to Grade-21 demonstrated that professional services, administrative capabilities and years of dedicated work in the sports sector could be recognised at the highest level. He added that the decision would serve as a positive example for other universities and institutions to provide qualified sports professionals with opportunities for career advancement according to their merit and performance.

Ali Hoti said the achievement was also an honour for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as it conveyed a strong message that sports professionals from the province could demonstrate their capa-



bilities and earn recognition at the national level. He said Bahr Karam's promotion would serve as an inspiration for young athletes, sports officers and others associated with sports.

He expressed the hope that Bahr Karam would continue to discharge his new responsibilities with the same commitment, professionalism and dedication, contributing further to the promotion of sports, welfare of athletes and improvement of sporting activities at the University of Peshawar and across the country.

Ali Hoti said the promotion would encourage sports directors and officers nationwide to work with greater dedication, better planning and professionalism. He also hoped that other deserving and talented sports professionals would receive similar opportunities for career advancement in recognition of their services.

Ali Hoti once again congratulated Bahr Karam, the University of Peshawar administration, the Selection Committee, Syndicate, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Johar and the entire sports community on the achievement and expressed his best wishes for Bahr Karam's continued success.

Wasim Akram urges club cricket revival after England losses

LAHORE: Former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram on Friday called for the revival of club cricket and greater consistency in team selection, saying talent must be developed through the domestic structure after the Green Shirts' losses to England in the ongoing Test series.

Speaking to the media in Lahore, Akram said the PCB should allow its newly introduced domestic system to continue for three to four years. "PSL has completed 10 years, but not a single batter has emerged from it," the former skipper said. He, however, acknowledged that the league had produced bowlers.

He said Pakistan suffered defeats against Bangladesh in both home and away series, warning that the "alarm bells were already ringing" but no action had been taken. "Whatever the coach, even if you bring the best coach, I or [Gary] Kirsten, the talent you have is the same," Akram said. He said the team needed consistency but criticised the repeated selection of the same players. "The team should have consistency, but the same boys keep coming and going," he added.

Stressing the need for revival of club cricket, Akram said: "Talent has to come from club cricket."

He urged the PCB to invest Rs100 million each in Karachi and Lahore for cricket and stressed the importance of a strong grassroots structure.

The former captain said Pakistan's white-ball team was in good shape but the red-ball side remained a concern.

"White-ball is fine, but red-ball is not. We face difficulties in that," he said.

Discussing the pace attack, Akram said bowlers needed to be allowed to develop before firm judgments were made.

"Bowling one delivery at 150 kilometres per hour is not a major achievement, while maintaining 140kph throughout the day is exceptional," the "Sultan of Swing" added. Akram also questioned Shaheen Afridi's reduced pace, calling him an experienced bowler and saying England needed players of his experience.

"If I were there, I would say I need Aaqib Javed. He has bowled well in England recently," Akram said. He also stressed the need for variety in the pace attack, saying Pakistan had previously played in similar conditions with different types of fast bowlers rather than relying on bowlers of the same pace.

Mid-series overhaul 'embarrassing'

Former Pakistan captain, a day earlier, had questioned the lack of communication within the national team, saying it is "embarrassing" when players and coaches leave a tour midway.

During a recent interview with cricket YouTuber Furqan Bhatti, Akram had discussed Pakistan's ongoing struggles and called for greater consistency and com-

munication within the team setup, Geo Super reported.

"Consistency is the key, of course, but for how long? When seven players and two coaches return in the middle of a tour, it is embarrassing for the team and the captain, and it also shows there is a lack of communication," Akram had said.

Following the back-to-back defeats at the hands of England, the PCB last month forced an overhaul, replacing seven members of the squad, including the senior trio of Mohammad Rizwan, Imam-ul-Haq and Salman Ali Agha, while also bringing in white-ball head coach Mike Hesson and assistant coach Ashley Noffke for the ousted duo of Sarfaraz and Umar Gul, respectively.

The left-arm pace legend had said Pakistan have enough talent to succeed, pointing out that he has closely observed the country's players through his involvement with the Pakistan Super League (PSL) teams over the past several years. "I have been involved in the PSL with these teams for the past four to five years, so I have seen the situation closely. In my view, the talent is there. Coaches may change, but the core players remain largely the same," he added.

Akram had also called for continuity in Pakistan's domestic cricket structure, urging the authorities to give the system several years to produce results rather than making frequent changes.

Danish Atlas sets sights on Los Angeles Olympic glory

Squash will feature on the Olympic programme for the first time at Los Angeles 2028, and Atlas sees it as a historic opportunity for Pakistan to reclaim its legacy in the sport

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Squash star Danish Atlas Khan has set his eyes on the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, determined to win a medal for Pakistan when the sport makes its historic Olympic debut.

The 32-year-old, who is currently training in the United States, said he is leav-

ing nothing to chance in his preparation. "I'm training eight hours per day," Danish said. "That includes high intensity squash training, physical conditioning, strength training, and also working on endurance. The focus is to be at peak fitness and match sharpness when Los Angeles comes around," he told APP from the US on phone.

The recipient of Pakistan's highest civil honour, the Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, Danish has recently been crowned champion of the Burlington Squash League 2026 in the United States. He delivered an impressive performance throughout the league, showcasing his experience, fitness and exceptional squash skills against strong local competition.

The victory adds another achievement to an already distinguished international career and has boosted his confidence as he balances tournament play with his Olympic focused training regimen.

Squash will feature on the Olympic programme for the first time at Los Angeles 2028, and Atlas sees it as a historic op-



portunity for Pakistan to reclaim its legacy in the sport. Pakistan dominated world squash for decades through legends like Jahangir Khan and Jansher Khan. Danish, who is also the nephew of former World Champion Jansher Khan, is determined to add a new chapter to that family legacy.

He also won the 2015 Chicago Open, one of the most prestigious titles on the North American circuit, and has represented Pakistan in multiple international events.

"I want to make Pakistan proud. We have a great history in squash and I believe we can compete for medals again. My job now is to work hard every single day so that when I step on court in Los Angeles, I'm ready to deliver for my country," he said.



Parineeti Chopra returns to screen with ‘Shaque’

ISLAMABAD: Bollywood actress Parineeti Chopra after giving birth to a baby boy. During an interview, Parineeti, in a launch trailer, said, “I don’t think I’ve had a single conversation with a maker, director, or writer who has mentioned motherhood to me. I don’t remember anybody saying, ‘Now that you’re a mom, this is what we’re offering you,’ and that lack of association is the win. I would hate to stop working just because I became a mom. It’s a two-way relationship; I have to be offered work, and I would be sad to lose work because I’ve done such a beautiful thing in producing a baby” Actor Parineeti Chopra is set to return to work full-time with her upcoming show Shaque, her first since the birth of her baby boy last October. At the film’s trailer launch event in Mumbai on Thursday, the actor credited the film industry and audiences for allowing actors to continue pursuing their careers after becoming parents. The actor credited the audience for being more accepting and is no longer ‘cancelling mothers’. She added, “The audience is not cancelling mothers, and hence writers, directors and actors can make content. This business is not solitary; it is supply and demand with the audience. I’m glad the industry is changing and that the audience has made all this possible. So, it is all lovely and positive.” Parineeti appreciated her fellow actors Alia Bhatt, Deepika Padukone and her cousin Priyanka Chopra for continuing to work after embracing motherhood.



PESHAWAR: Acting Zonal Head Migration and Passport Farhan Shahzad is meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at the Governor House Peshawar on Friday. — PHOTO: PID

Maximum public convenience top priority: Kundi

Expansion of NADRA, Passport services essential for public convenience: Governor

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday directed the authorities to expand National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and Passport services to major rural areas to ensure better access to essential public facilities. The Governor issued the directives during separate meetings with Director General (DG) NADRA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Khalid Inayatullah Khan and Acting Zonal Head Immigration and Passports, Farhan Shahzad at the Governor House. During the meeting, the Governor was briefed on the progress regarding the transfer of land for the construction of

Governor expresses grief over demise of former IGP Dil Jan, ex-MNA wife

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the demise of former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dil Jan Khan, and the wife of former Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Pir Haider Ali Shah. In separate condolence messages, the Governor paid tribute to the late Dil Jan Khan for his valuable services to the police department and the province, saying that his contributions would always be remembered. Governor Kundi prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and prayed to Allah Almighty to grant courage and patience to the bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss. The Governor also expressed heartfelt condolences over the death of the wife of former MNA Pir Haider Ali Shah of Hangu. He prayed that Allah Almighty may bless the deceased with the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous and grant patience and fortitude to the bereaved family. — APP

a NADRA building in Dera Ismail Khan. He was also informed that 26 Citizen Facilitation Centres would soon be inaugurated across the province. Governor Kundi said providing maximum convenience to the public remained among the government’s top priorities and warned that negligence in this regard would not be tolerated. The meeting also reviewed measures being taken to address public issues related to NADRA services in Kurram. In a separate briefing, the Acting Zonal Head of Immigration and Passports informed the governor that passport services had been launched in phases at NADRA offices, with initial facilities already available and their scope to be expanded gradually.

Four alleged rapists shot dead during ambush

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Four of the accused rapists were shot dead by their own gang members during an ambush on the police party on late Thursday night. Police said the four suspects were being taken to the area where the alleged crime took place for identification and investigation when unidentified attackers opened indiscriminate fire on the police party. According to the police, the four suspects, who were in custody, were caught in the firing and died at the scene. Police said no officers were injured in the incident. The dead suspects were identified by police as Amir, son of Ifitikhar; Jala, alias Raja, son of Mera; Chacha, son of Qadous; and Amdas. Police said the men had been arrested in connection with an alleged gang rape in Garhi Mosam Khan on Sunday night. According to police, the suspects allegedly climbed over the wall of a house,

entered the premises and sexually assaulted women at gunpoint. A case was registered at Rehman Baba police station on September 6 under several provisions of criminal law, including sections relating to robbery and sexual assault, as well as provisions of the Child Protection Act. Police said weapons allegedly used in the crime had also been recovered from the suspects following their arrests. Female police officers have been assigned to remain in contact with the victims, while counselling and psychological support are also being provided, investigators said. The identities of the victims and suspects have not been disclosed in accordance with legal requirements. Police said further action in the case would depend on forensic findings and other evidence. An investigation into the shooting and the original sexual assault case is continuing.

LHC bars Punjab medical colleges from expelling Afghan students

Afghan students could be sent back after completing medical education, remarks Justice Ishaq

STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday barred all medical colleges in Punjab from expelling Afghan medical students amid petitions challenging their removal. Justice Khalid Ishaq heard petitions filed by more than 30 Afghan students against their expulsion from medical colleges in the province. During the hearing, the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council’s (PM&DC) lawyer argued that the Afghan students did not have the required documents. “The principle across the world is that

you cannot stay without a valid visa,” the lawyer said. Justice Ishaq questioned how the students had been granted education visas when they were admitted to medical colleges. The judge also questioned the decision to send the students back after four years of education, observing that the students should have been heard before any decision was taken against them. The PM&DC lawyer argued that the matter concerned state security and cited visa requirements in the United States. “Even in America, you cannot stay without a valid visa,” the lawyer said.

Justice Khalid Ishaq remarked that the students could be sent back after completing their medical education. Rejecting the state security argument, the judge said there was no state security issue involved in the matter. The LHC judge directed that no medical college would expel the students or cancel their examination papers, and adjourned further proceedings until next Friday. The development comes a day after the PM&DC clarified that there was no nationality-based prohibition on medical education in Pakistan. In a statement, the PM&DC said that its ongoing review of Afghan medical students was a matter of regulatory compliance and documentation rather than discrimination against any particular nationality.



Pakistan continued to welcome foreign nationals seeking medical and dental education in the country in accordance

with its regulatory framework and applicable government policies, it said, adding that foreign students who fulfilled the

prescribed academic, registration, documentation and immigration requirements were facilitated through the established system. The council said a verification and regulatory review of Afghan medical students had established that more than 200 were studying medicine in Pakistan, whereas only 22 were presently registered with PM&DC. “Of these, 14 had completed their degree programmes while eight were expected to graduate next year,” it added. The council noted, however, that completion of a medical degree did not by itself confer a right to remain in Pakistan for employment or medical practice, and that those intending to practice in Pakistan must fulfil applicable licensing and registration requirements.

Spot ON

First Lady stresses collective responsibility to protect children from violence, abuse

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Bibi Asifa Bhutto Zardari on Friday said every child had an absolute right to grow up safe at home, school, in the community and increasingly, in the digital world. In a statement on child protection, she said violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect of a child could never be dismissed as a private matter, social custom or an unfortunate circumstance. “When a child is harmed, society has failed in its most basic duty of care,” she said. — APP

HEC, ACCA explore avenues of collaboration

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), a globally recognised professional accounting organisation, visited the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Secretariat and called on Chairman HEC Dr Niaz Ahmad Akhtar on Friday. The ACCA team comprising Executive Director, Relationships, ACCA Ms. Lucia Real Martin, Chief Executive Officer ACCA Pakistan Mr Assad Hameed Khan, and other notables apprised the Chairman HEC of the ACCA operations and achievements in Pakistan and appreciated HEC for its services in the higher education sector. — APP

Abbasi pays tribute to Quaid-i-Azam on 78th death anniversary

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways, Muhammad Hanif Abbasi has paid rich tribute to Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on the occasion of his 78th death anniversary, acknowledging his visionary leadership, principled politics and tireless struggle for the creation of Pakistan. In his message, the minister said Quaid-i-Azam’s far-sighted leadership, adherence to principles and relentless efforts transformed the dream of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent into reality.

Hamza Shahbaz visits PIMS

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President and former Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz on Friday visited the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and expressed condolences with families affected by the tragic fire incident at the hospital. Hamza Shahbaz said he had come to offer condolences to the families who lost their children in the incident. He said no words or sympathy could lessen the grief of parents who had lost their children. “The grief of the bereaved families cannot be alleviated. This is a deep wound that will take time to heal,” he said. — APP

BISP Chairperson meets KP additional Chief Secretary

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid met Khyber Pakhtunkhwa additional chief secretary Lieutenant (retd) Islam Zeb in Peshawar and discussed matters related to social protection and welfare initiatives. During the meeting, the participants discussed data sharing between BISP and other government departments, skills training for children of women beneficiaries under the Benazir Hunarmand Programme, and maternal and child

health and nutrition initiatives under the Benazir Nashonuma Programme. The meeting also focused on improving coordination between BISP and provincial departments, ensuring that programme benefits reach deserving individuals through data-driven mechanisms, and working jointly on social protection measures. The additional chief secretary assured BISP of the provincial government’s full cooperation in implementing its programmes and initiatives. BISP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Director General Alf Jan Afridi was also present on the occasion.