



**Constitutional Court a key to balanced federation, transparent judiciary; Law Minister**



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## PM says implementation of economic governance policies inevitable; seeks proposals on investors' facilitation

**PEAK POINT**  
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday calling the implementation of the government's policies on economic governance inevitable, sought proposals from all relevant ministries suggesting practical measures and a comprehensive strategy involving minimal duration.

The prime minister, chairing a review meeting on economic reforms, increasing investment, and progress on proposed developmental projects, on the first day of the new year, also sought recommendations aimed at further facilitation of foreign and domestic investors. He viewed that coordination among all ministries and cooperation between federal and provincial governments had a crucial role in effective economic reforms and overall economic growth.

Calling the institutional and administrative facilitation of investors part of the government's priorities, the prime minister directed all the ministries to promptly prepare recommendations related to external and internal investment and development projects in their respective sectors.

He said that in order to increase investment, special attention should be given to promoting exports and executing the relevant projects.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also instructed the relevant ministries to extend cooperation through Pakistani embassies worldwide for facilitating foreign investors.

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presiding over a meeting of the Federal Ministries on implementation of Economic Governance reforms.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presiding over a meeting of the Federal Ministries on implementation of Economic Governance reforms.

## Zohran Mamdani sworn in as first Muslim mayor of New York City

**PEAK POINT**  
NEW YORK: Zohran Mamdani was sworn in as New York City mayor early Thursday, becoming the first Muslim and South Asian to lead the US largest city after taking the oath of office on the holy Quran. Just after the last seconds of 2025 ticked away, the ceremony took place at an abandoned Old City Hall subway station, one of the city's original stations built in 1904 and decommissioned in 1945. New York City Attorney General Letitia James administered the oath alongside Mamdani's family ahead of a public ceremony Thursday afternoon to be led by Senator Bernie Sanders. Zohran is the son of Mahmood Mamdani, a professor at Columbia University, and Mira Nair, an Oscar-nominated filmmaker whose credits include "Mississippi Masala" and "Monsoon Wedding." He speaks Urdu fluently. According to several US media reports, the holy Qurans used during the ceremony included a copy belonging to Mamdani's grandfather and another once owned by Black writer and historian Arturo Schomburg lent by the New York Public Library.



## Pakistan, India exchange lists of nuclear installations, prisoners

**PEAK POINT**  
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India have exchanged lists of their nuclear installations and facilities, as well as details of prisoners held in each other's custody, in line with long-standing bilateral agreements.

During a press briefing, Foreign Office Spokesperson Tahir Hussain Andarabi confirmed that the exchange took place at the start of the New Year. Pakistan handed over a list of its nuclear installations to a representative of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad, while India provided its corresponding list to officials at the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi.

According to diplomatic sources, the exchange of nuclear facility lists is carried out annually on January 1 under an agreement signed between Pakistan and India on December 31, 1988.

The agreement commits both countries to refrain from attacking each other's nuclear installations and to ensure transparency by exchanging updated lists every year.



Commission in New Delhi. The spokesperson further stated that Pakistan shared a list of 257 Indian prisoners currently held in Pakistani jails. In return, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs provided a list of Pakistani prisoners detained in India to Pakistani diplomatic officials in New Delhi.

## Swiss police believe around 40 died at Swiss bar explosion, Italy says

**PEAK POINT**  
ZURICH: Swiss police believe around 40 people died and 100 were injured in a fire during a New Year's Eve party in the resort town of Crans-Montana, the Italian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Thursday. It added that the blaze was not thought to have been caused by arson. The victims could not be immediately identified because of the severity of their burns, the ministry added. "There has been an explosion of unknown origin," Gaetan Lathion.

## China looks forward to working with Pakistan thru DPM Dar's visit: Lin Jian

**PEAK POINT**  
BEIJING: China looks forward to working with Pakistan through Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar's visit to further follow up on the important common understandings reached between leaders of the two countries. The visit will step up strategic communication and coordination, deepen exchanges and cooperation in various areas, carry out a series of commemorative events and accelerate the building of an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era.

## New Year: CJP reaffirms judiciary's commitment to accessible, timely justice

**PEAK POINT**  
ISLAMABAD: The Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi has said that the judiciary remains firmly committed to safeguarding fundamental rights, upholding the rule of law, and ensuring that justice is delivered fairly, impartially, and without delay.

In his New Year message, the Chief Justice extended warm greetings and best wishes to the people of Pakistan, members of the judiciary, the legal fraternity, and all those who look to the courts for justice and reassurance.

He said the Constitution entrusts the judiciary with a solemn responsibility to ensure that justice is not only done but is also seen to be done, adding that this duty gains deeper meaning when viewed through the experiences of ordinary citizens who approach the courts with hope, trust, and vulnerability. Emphasizing a citizen-centric justice system, the Chief Justice said the year ahead calls for reflection, reform, and renewal of commitment to placing citizens at the centre of judicial processes. He stressed that justice must be accessible in practice rather than merely



in principle, dignified in procedure, and responsive to the needs of women, children, marginalized segments of society, and people living in remote and underserved regions. Outlining priorities for the coming year, he said the judiciary would pursue meaningful reforms aimed at improving access to justice, reducing delays, strengthening transparency, and responsibly leveraging technology to improve judicial efficiency. He added that these efforts would focus on outcomes that matter most to the public, including timely decisions, understandable procedures, and courts that are approachable and humane.

Expressing confidence in the institution, the Chief Justice said that through collective resolve, professionalism, and integrity, the judiciary would continue to strengthen public trust and uphold the ideals enshrined in the Constitution.

He reaffirmed the judiciary's unwavering commitment to serving every citizen with fairness, independence, and compassion, and expressed hope that the New Year would bring renewed confidence in the rule of law and a justice system that reaches every doorstep.

## Transformed US-Pakistan ties to make 'further strides' in 2026, Ambassador Sheikh

**PEAK POINT**  
WASHINGTON: In a New Year message, Pakistani Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh highlighted the "transformative" change in Pakistan-US relations in 2025, hoping that the ties between the two countries would be further strengthened in 2026.

"I wish the Pakistani-Americans, the entire American nation, a happy new year 2026," Ambassador Sheikh said, adding that bilateral relations will make "further strides".

"2025 was a year that carried transformative tenor for Pak-US relations; We saw, witnessed and lived with a positive momentum in our bilateral relationship spanning over almost eight decades," he said.

"Not only that we continued with our cooperation in the existing domains of counter terrorism, health, education, etc., but we identified new areas of transforming our longstanding relationship into a strategic, long-term partnership entrenched in economic ties," Ambassador Sheikh noted.





# SPORTS



## Mohsin Naqvi seeks final design for Islamabad cricket stadium



**PEAK POINT**  
ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has sought the final design for a state-of-the-art cricket stadium in Islamabad.

The decision was taken during a meeting chaired by Mohsin Naqvi at the Capital Development Authority (CDA) headquarters, where progress on several public welfare projects was reviewed. During the briefing, officials

informed the meeting that a modern cricket stadium would be constructed in Islamabad, upon which the interior minister directed authorities to present the final design within 10 days.

The meeting also decided to allocate a designated area for a national park, expand the scope of the Safe City Project in Islamabad on modern lines, and construct a "smart underpass" at Kashmir Chowk to improve traffic flow.

It was further decided to hire the services of renowned companies for the construction of a five-star hotel in the federal capital, form a special team for solid waste management services, and allocate land for the headquarters of law enforcement agencies.

Mohsin Naqvi also sought the final design of the smart underpass within 10 days and details of long-vacant commercial plots in Islamabad. Speaking on the occasion, the

interior minister said that the anti-encroachment operation in Islamabad would continue with full force and that retrieved land would be put to the best use in the public interest.

Meanwhile, various proposals are under consideration for the construction of a new convention centre in the federal capital, along with plans to allocate land for the headquarters of the Federal Constabulary, Rangers, and Islamabad Traffic Police.

## Babar, Rizwan celebrate new year's night together before facing off for first time in BBL



**PEAK POINT**

DUBAI: Several Pakistani players have been part of Australia's Big Bash League for many years. This season as well, players including Babar Azam, Muhammad Rizwan, Hasan Ali, and Haris Rauf are featuring in the tournament.

The highlight of today's match between Melbourne Renegades and Sydney Sixers was that Babar and Rizwan faced each other for the first time in the ongoing Big Bash League season.

Before the match, Rizwan was speaking with presenter Mark Howard, where he shared that he and Babar spent New Year's night together.

During the conversation, Babar Azam happened to walk by, and at Mark Howard's request, Mohammad Rizwan called him over. Responding to a question about New Year's night, Babar said that the two of them were together, while Rizwan's family stayed at the hotel. He added that they discussed the playing conditions at length.

Mark Howard then asked Babar whether it would feel strange celebrating New Year's night together and then batting against Rizwan the very next day, with Rizwan trying to distract him from behind the stumps.

## Pakistan men's cricket closes productive 2025 across formats and pathways



**PEAK POINT**

LAHORE: Pakistan men's cricket signed off 2025 with sustained activity across international, development and age-group pathways, underlining progress on the field and the country's return as a major host nation. The year was highlighted by Pakistan hosting the leading international ICC Champions

Trophy — the country's first major ICC men's event in 29 years. Pakistan played 56 international matches across formats, winning 30. The T20I side enjoyed a record-breaking year, featuring in 34 matches and winning 21 wins. Under the leadership of Salman Ali Agha, Pakistan won bilateral T20I series against Bangladesh, West

Indies and South Africa, while also lifting two tri-series titles involving Afghanistan and the UAE and later Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka.

Selector and Director High Performance Aqib Javed said, "Progress in cricket is never sudden. It is a slow and demanding process, but in 2025 we played more T20Is than in recent years, which helped us build depth and options. As a selector, I am satisfied with the bench strength that has emerged." Individually, Sahibzada Farhan enjoyed a standout 2021 year, scoring 771 runs, while left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz bagged 36 wickets.

## Babar Azam's fifty leads Sydney Sixers to victory over Melbourne Renegades



## Set to boost running culture, Karachi Marathon returns with growing participation

**PEAK POINT**

KARACHI: As the sun dipped into the waters off Karachi's Seaview on a chilly Thursday evening, a festive air settled over AK Khan Park along the promenade.

Men and women of all ages, with children alongside, gradually filled the park. Patiently queuing at counters marked in vibrant black and turquoise branding, they collected what would soon become keepsakes: running bibs for the 2026 Karachi Marathon. On Sunday, with these bibs — fitted with time-tracking chips — pinned to their running gear, participants will line up at the promenade near Nishan-i-Pakistan Park. Runners competing in the full and half marathon categories will begin before sunrise at 6:30am, while those taking part in the five-kilometre race (commonly referred to as the 5K) will start at 9:00am.

More than 2,000 runners have registered for the events. Registrations for the 5K, meanwhile, remain open, with over 3,000 participants already signed up. This will be the third edi-

tion of the Karachi Marathon, which is recognised by World Athletics and has its distance professionally certified by the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS).

Shaheer, an 18-year-old student at NED University, first experienced competitive running when he participated in the 5K last



year's event. This year, he is stepping up to the half marathon. "I love playing sports — I play basketball quite regularly — but running has a different feeling to it, a feeling that is hard to describe in

words," he told Dawn, smiling broadly. "It is about pushing yourself to the limit, to test how far you can go. It is a unique experience." Long-distance running is a passion shared by many in the sprawling metropolis. Some train alone in neighbourhood parks and streets, while others prefer the motivation of running in groups.

## Qalandars' follower Hamza bids for PSL franchise, pledges to promote Pak cricket





# RDA shares detailed roadmap for ring road, Nullah Lai, and Murree road as major urban projects advance

**NADEEM TANOLI**  
RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Development Authority has provided detailed figures and policy clarity on three major infrastructure projects, including the Ring Road, Nullah Lai, and Murree Road, with Director General Kinza Murtaza outlining progress, challenges, and future planning aimed at easing traffic congestion, managing floods, and improving urban mobility for residents of Rawalpindi and surrounding areas. Speaking at the press briefing, Kinza Murtaza, Director General of the Rawalpindi Development Authority, confirmed that the Rawalpindi Ring Road project has reached approximately 78 percent completion. She described the project as a "lifeline" for the twin cities, explaining that the road will link GT Road at Baanah with the M2 Motorway near Thalian, while also connecting with the CPEC route via M2 Hakla and Margalla Avenue through AWT. According to the DG, the Ring Road is expected to significantly reduce inner city traffic by diverting long haul and inter-city movement away from Rawalpindi's congested roads. The DG explained that a comprehensive traffic management plan has been finalized for the Ring Road.

Traffic has been divided into three main categories, including vehicles heading toward CPEC routes, Islamabad, and the airport. Under this plan, heavy vehicles and buses will not be allowed to enter Rawalpindi beyond Rawat T Chowk. Large buses carrying 60 to 65 passengers will drop commuters at designated terminals located on the Ring Road, while smaller vehicles, taxis, and shuttle services will transport passengers into the city. This model is intended to reduce congestion, improve safety, and shorten travel times. On the issue of tolling, Kinza Murtaza stated that a proposal is under consideration to hand over toll operations to More, operated by the Frontier Works Organization, under a unified One Card system to be used nationwide. She added that toll revenue collected after the initial ten year period would be utilized exclusively for the maintenance of the Ring Road. Alongside traffic reforms, a Northern Zone has been planned along the corridor, where major facilities will be relocated, including the Pir Wadhai bus adda, fruit, vegetable, and grain markets currently operating in Ganjmandi, and the truck adda. An Expo Center is also planned near the Thalian Interchange, with land acquisition to be handled by



Islamabad authorities. Addressing land compensation disputes, the DG explained that the original 64 kilometre Ring Road project was cancelled, and land acquisition was reversed for many owners. The revised project now spans 38 kilometres, overlapping with portions of the earlier alignment. The administration, led by the Commissioner, maintains that the land was already acquired by the RDA and should not be re-acquired at current market rates to protect the public exchequer. However, landowners are demanding compensation at prevailing rates. The matter has been referred to the Senior Member Board of Revenue, which will decide whether revised compensation or an ex gratia package

will be offered. Looking ahead, Kinza Murtaza confirmed that the National Engineering Services Pakistan has been tasked with conducting a feasibility study for Ring Road Phase Two to determine the most suitable route for future expansion. Turning to Nullah Lai, the DG acknowledged that it remains one of the most complex environmental and safety challenges facing Rawalpindi. She revealed that a previous feasibility study costing Rs. 40 million was rejected due to its limited scope. The RDA has now requested Rs. 250 million from the Punjab government to conduct a fresh, comprehensive study addressing flood management and sewage separation. Officials clarified that Nullah Lai is

fundamentally a stormwater channel, yet it currently carries 100 percent of Rawalpindi's sewage and approximately 67 percent of Islamabad's sewage, turning it into a major health hazard. The absence of a trunk sewer system has forced untreated waste into the channel. The proposed solution involves constructing a dedicated trunk sewer to divert sewage to a treatment plant at the Sawan area, ensuring that only rainwater flows through Nullah Lai. Kinza Murtaza emphasized that flood passage and the protection of lives and property remain the top priorities, while road construction and beautification will only be considered once safety concerns are addressed. To enforce discipline, the DG confirmed that

Section 144 has been imposed against dumping construction material or garbage into Nullah Lai. She warned that strict action will be taken against violators, including contractors and individuals, with compliance monitored in coordination with the Rawalpindi Waste Management Company. On Murree Road, the RDA revealed that a proposal is under active consideration to widen the road by 15 feet on each side, resulting in a total widening of 30 feet, particularly along the congested stretch from Liaquat Bagh to Benazir Bhutto Hospital. The DG explained that this expansion will be part of the main carriageway rather than a service road, allowing uninterrupted traffic flow and faster access for ambulances and emergency vehicles. Acknowledging concerns from the business community, Kinza Murtaza said consultations have already been held with the Anjumane-Tajiran, assuring traders that no business will suffer losses. Affected shops, ranging from small workshops to major commercial outlets, will be offered alternative locations and compensation. She clarified that the project is currently at the planning stage, with no immediate demolition planned, and that early disclosure is intended to prevent further encroachments.

# Opinion & Editorial

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## New Year 2026 and Pakistan's Challenges

In the social, economic and medical session, the question is often asked that how will 2026 be in economic, political and medically terms? Economists consider economic and political stability to be indispensable for each other and also give their opinions on it. In our opinion, the stability of both fronts is secondary. The real issue is the health of the nation. We will present our point and argument later. First, let us mention the small unusual dialogue attributed to Mount Tur, which doubles the importance and status of health. Hazrat Moses (peace be upon him) asks, O Lord of the earth and sky, if you were to ask a question in my place, which question would be the first? Allah raised his voice from the sky, "Moses will ask about health." This conversation of love and devotion between Moses and his Lord reveals the things and blessings related to health. May Allah bless everyone with the wealth and health of health. Amen... The nation is busy celebrating the New Year, but a silent storm is knocking at the door of Pakistan, which is not only hollowing out our economy but also the entire health system. This storm is not of bombs and earthquakes, but of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart diseases, diabetes, blood pressure; cancer and chronic respiratory diseases that are slowly but surely



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taking lives and national resources. According to the World Health Organization, about 58 percent of the total deaths in Pakistan are due to these diseases. Every day, about 2,400 Pakistanis die of NCDs, every minute a heart attack occurs, 1,100 people die of diabetes-related complications, while more than 450 deaths from tobacco-related diseases have become a daily occurrence. All these diseases are preventable if timely decisions are taken. The most worrying aspect is that these diseases are rapidly affecting our young population. The youth, who are the backbone of any nation and the future workforce, are today paying the price of unhealthy lifestyles and poor nutrition with their health. The result is that the disease is no longer just an individual problem, but also a burden on the economy, reduced productivity and social instability. The situation of diabetes has become a national emergency. According to the International Diabetes Federation, more than 35

million people in Pakistan are diabetic and we have come first in the world in terms of population. Experts say that diabetes alone is costing Pakistan's economy trillions of rupees annually. The tragedy is that the annual expenditure on diabetes medicine has exceeded US\$2.6 billion, which is more than an IMF tranche, while our overall health budget is only around 2 percent of GDP. Pakistan has pledged to reduce non-communicable diseases by one-third by 2030 under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but this target cannot be achieved by mere prayers. A major reason for this problem is our daily diet, which has become rich in sugar, salt and trans fats. Junk food, cheap sugary drinks, salty snacks and ultra-processed products have become common on our tables and children and youth are becoming their easiest victims. Many countries have taken this crisis seriously and implemented simple but effective policies and the results are in sight. These included: Taxes on unhealthy ultra-processed foods, front-of-pack warning labels. II. Bans on junk food advertising to children. III. Bans on the sale of these products in educational institutions. Tax policy not only reduces consumption but also generates additional revenue for the government, that too at no additional cost, which can be spent on health and aware-

ness programs -Similarly, front-of-pack warning labels such as high sugar or high salt give the consumer the opportunity to make an informed decision in a few seconds and research shows that they bring about immediate changes in public attitudes. Healthy food guidelines for children in schools, nutrition education, and the prevention of junk food marketing on digital platforms are also indispensable. All these are tested measures that have significantly reduced the rate of diseases. We also need to become a nation in which all segments of society including policymakers, parliamentarians; Scholars, youth, health experts and economists will have to face this challenge together, just as we fought Corona together. The truth is simple and bitter: no economy can be strong without health, and a sick nation cannot progress. If Pakistan really wants to achieve economic stability, social progress and the goals of the SDGs, urgent and bold measures against non-communicable diseases are indispensable. Control over harmful food, strong laws, strict regulation and effective awareness are the only way that can lead us towards a healthy, strong and safe future. Let the new year 2026 not be just a change of calendar, but a turning point where Pakistan decides to stand against the silent killer. Because the right decisions today are the guarantee of a safe future tomorrow.

## Climate resilience

THE Asian Development Bank's latest climate resilience financing for Pakistan should reinforce the country's efforts towards building longer-term resilience to protect its people and economy from the adverse impacts of climate change. The \$180.5m funding for Sindh addresses one of the country's most neglected climate frontiers along its coastal belt where recurrent flooding and sea intrusion have steadily eroded livelihoods, undermined food security and impacted biodiversity, forcing residents to migrate. By focusing on integrated water resource management, flood risk reduction and restoration of nature-based coastal defences, the project will embrace ecosystem-based solutions, benefiting over 3.8m people. The project will simultaneously focus on institutional strengthening and community-level strategic planning for durable impact and continuity. The \$124m assistance for Punjab seeks to tackle a different structural problem. It will give small farmers access to climate-smart machinery, introduce circular agriculture practices to reduce residue burning, establish testing and training facilities and empower thousands of women to enhance farm productivity and climate resilience in 30 districts.

## Constitutional Court a key to balanced federation, transparent judiciary; Law Minister



**PEAK POINT**  
**RAWALPINDI:** Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday said that the judicial reforms, the establishment of the Federal Constitutional Court and the 26th and 27th Constitutional Amendments would deliver its fruits in the days to come. He also announced financial support for lawyers affected by the Kachehri

remodeling project. Addressing the Bar Association, Rawalpindi on Thursday, the minister said that the Kachehri remodeling project in Rawalpindi had affected lawyers' chambers and created a complex situation, but the issue was resolved effectively through joint efforts. He reaffirmed his commitment to keeping Bar Associations and Bar Councils free from political influence.

"Votes should be cast on the basis of services rather than political party affiliations", he said. On recently passed the 26th and 27th Constitutional Amendments, the minister highlighted the creation of the Federal Constitutional Court as a step that strengthens the federation by ensuring balanced representation from all provinces.

He questioned the basis of criticisms against the amendments, arguing that a 13-member court with equitable representation from the four provinces plus one judge from Islamabad promotes greater unity, transparency and fairness in the judicial system.

He added that the positive outcomes of these reforms, including the Supreme Court's increased focus on civil and criminal matters, are already visible.

He announced a major financial grant for Rawalpindi Bar lawyers impacted by the remodeling project.

## CM Maryam inaugurates expanded arena at Wagah Border

**PEAK POINT**

**LAHORE:** Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Thursday inaugurated the newly constructed arena at the Wagah Border in Lahore. The chief minister attended the inauguration ceremony as the chief guest. Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Lahore's Corps Commander, provincial ministers and senior bureaucrats were also present on the occasion. The inauguration ceremony of the arena was held by the Pakistan Rangers (Punjab). The seating capacity of the new arena has been increased from 7,500 to 25,000 spectators. In addition to the expansion of the arena, new construction work has also been carried out at the Wagah Border. The new developments include a theme park featuring models of a railway station, military equipment and a martyrs' memorial to depict the events of the partition of the subcontinent.



A museum highlighting the country's history and culture from the freedom movement to the present day has also been established at the arena. Additional offices, barracks for Punjab Rangers personnel, prayer area and food courts have also been added. Meanwhile, the national flag installed at the Wagah Check Post, which previously stood at a height of 115 metres, has now been raised to 139 metres, making it the seventh tallest flag in Asia and the tallest in South Asia.

## First-ever digital HIES shows literacy at 63%, household internet access rises to 70%

**PEAK POINT**

**ISLAMABAD:** The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Thursday launched the country's first-ever fully digital Household Integrated Economic Survey (HIES) 2024-25, a landmark initiative aimed at strengthening data-driven governance and evidence-based policymaking, with results indicating notable improvements in education, health, digital access and household living standards. Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal formally launched the survey at a ceremony, terming the digital HIES a major milestone in Pakistan's national data ecosystem. Addressing the event, Ahsan Iqbal said credible, timely and technology-driven data was the backbone of effective public policy, adding that the transition to a fully digital survey reflected the government's commitment to modernizing statistical systems and aligning development planning with ground realities. He said HIES data would play a pivotal role in informed decision-making, resource allocation and monitoring progress

towards national priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The event was attended by Chief Statistician Dr. Naeem uz Zafar (SI), Muhammad Sarwar Gondal (SI), Member (SS/RM), Deputy Director General Ms. Rabia Awan (PSLM/PCS), members of the Technical Committee, key stakeholders and senior officers from the Ministry of Planning and PBS. PBS officials informed that the HIES 2024-25 has been successfully completed and its results formally released after endorsement by the Technical Committee.

The survey provides comprehensive insights into the social and economic conditions of households at national and provincial levels and serves as a critical tool for policy formulation, evaluation and long-term development planning.

HIES has been monitoring Pakistan's socio-economic indicators since 1963. The last round was conducted in 2018-19, focusing on income and consumption patterns. The survey also supports SDG monitoring, covering 31 out of 62 indicators reported by PBS.

## Shaza Fatima highlights milestones in Pakistan's digital transformation

**PEAK POINT**

**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja has reflected on a year marked by steady progress and meaningful achievements in advancing Pakistan's digital transformation agenda. In a year-end message, the Minister noted that 2025 witnessed significant momentum in strengthening digital infrastructure, expanding connectivity, and fostering an enabling environment for innovation and entrepreneurship, said a statement issued here. "The Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunication extends sincere appreciation to our local and international development partners, industry, DFIs, civil society, friendly countries and all stakeholders for their continued collaboration and support," she said. "We are especially grateful to the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the whole of government team for their leadership and commitment," it further said.

## The performance report of Rescue 1122 Multan for the year 2025

**WAJIHA TAMSEEL MIRZA**

**MULTAN:** 156,855 people rescued during 2025 - Dr. Hussain Mian, District Emergency Officer Multan, Dr. Hussain Mian, has released the performance report of Rescue 1122 Multan for the year 2025. In this regard, a meeting of Rescue 1122 was held at the Central Rescue Station under the chairmanship of District Emergency Officer Multan Dr. Hussain Mian. Emergency Officer Operations Engineer Muhammad Bilal, Rescue & Safety Officer Muhammad Arshad Khan, Control Room In-charge Mudassar Zia, and Station Coordinators participated. During the meeting, a detailed review of annual performance was conducted. While briefing, Emergency



Officer Operations Engineer Muhammad Bilal stated that during 2025, Rescue 1122 Multan received a total of 691,169 phone calls, out of which 130,797 were emergency calls. These included 30,563 road traffic accidents, 82,114 medical emergencies, 1,324 fire incidents, 2,970 crime-related cases, 74 building collapse incidents, 28 drowning incidents, and 9,722 miscellaneous emergencies. Rescue 1122 Multan responded promptly and rescued a total of 156,855 people.



**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal officially launches the Household Integrated Economic Survey (HIES) 2024-25.

## ALP hosts dialogue on inclusive Governance and Youth Engagement at Rawalpindi Women University

**PEAK POINT**

**ISLAMABAD:** Accountability Lab Pakistan (ALP) organized a dialogue on Inclusive Governance and Youth Engagement at Rawalpindi Women University (RWU) on Tuesday. The dialogue was held under the Integrity Innovation Lab initiative, funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). It brought together students, youth leaders, and senior public sector professionals for an open and inclusive



discussion on governance and civic participation. The dialogue aimed to promote youth voices in governance and create direct engagement between young people and public decision makers. Through a panel discussion followed by an interactive question and answer session, participants explored how youth can play a more active role in shaping inclusive policies, promoting integrity in public institutions, and contributing to accountable governance processes.

## Burnout, lifestyle diseases and suicide killing doctors young as barely 10% stay physically active: experts

**PEAK POINT**

**ISLAMABAD:** Doctors and physicians in Pakistan are dying at a younger age due to lifestyle related diseases, extreme burnout and, in some cases, suicide, as they neglect their own health while caring for others, senior cardiologists and mental health experts warned on Thursday. Speakers shared data showing that nearly six out of ten physicians experience significant burnout, while suicide rates among doctors are almost double those of the general population. Despite this, only about one third ever seek pro-

fessional help. The warning came at Life in a Metro, a nationwide academic forum organised under Mediverse, an initiative of Hudson Pharma, where specialists described doctors as the most neglected patients in the healthcare system. Delivering the keynote address, Dr M Rehan Omer Siddiqi, an interventional cardiologist and internal medicine specialist, said physician burnout had quietly reached crisis levels in Pakistan. Drawing on international and regional evidence, he noted that long working hours, chronic sleep depriva-



tion, poor diet, physical inactivity and constant psychological pressure were pushing doctors towards early heart disease, diabetes, depression and substance misuse. "We talk endlessly about 'do no harm', yet many doctors are quietly harming themselves," he said, adding that self diagnosis, self prescribing and delaying proper medical care were common among physicians. Dr Siddiqi said a deeply embedded culture of endurance and guilt prevents doctors from prioritising their own wellbeing. Many believe

that taking time off is a sign of weakness or a betrayal of patients and colleagues. Using the airline oxygen mask analogy, he stressed that doctors must secure their own health before they can care effectively for others. "A healthy doctor delivers safer and better care. Staying healthy is not a luxury. It is a professional responsibility," he said, urging institutions to promote teamwork, delegation and realistic workloads. He warned that prolonged stress is not just an emotional issue but a direct cardiac risk. Data shared during the session

linked chronic stress and burnout with hypertension, metabolic disorders and a higher risk of sudden cardiac events among physicians, particularly those working in high pressure urban settings. Dr Kulsom Haider, consultant psychiatrist and psychotherapist, focused on the mind body connection and emotional resilience, explaining that depression and anxiety are among the most common mental health conditions globally and often present through physical symptoms when left undressed.