



Jannat Mirza appointed as Peshawar Zalmi's social media ambassador for PSL 10

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Pakistan to benefit from agricultural expertise of Belarus: PM

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

LONDON: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan would benefit from the expertise of Belarus in the agriculture sector by undertaking joint ventures in the country for the agriculture machinery presently being manufactured in Belarus.

Talking to journalists here Sunday, he said his visit to Belarus was beneficial and successful.

He said Allah Almighty had blessed Pakistan with minerals wealth, adding in Belarus, he visited a factory making machinery related to mines and minerals and with the grace of Allah cooperation would also be furthered in this field.

An understanding was reached with Belarus for sending 150,000 skilled Pakistani youth to Belarus and they would be sent purely on merit, he added.

He said Punjab Speed was Pakistan Speed, which had now become Super Pakistan Speed.

"We are serving the nation under the leadership of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. God willing, we will achieve this destination with collective efforts, hard work of day and night and with the prayers of the whole nation," he remarked.



The prime minister said he always called Afghanistan a brotherly neighbouring country.

"We always have to live like neighbours. It depends on us whether we live as good neighbours or cause conflicts," he continued.

Two cops among three martyred in gunmen attack on excise mobile squad in Nowshera

PEAK POINT

NEWSHERA: Three people including two policemen were martyred in an attack by gunmen on an excise intelligence mobile squad in Nowshera district's Pabbi area on Sunday. The incident took place when armed drug smugglers opened fire on the Excise Intelligence Bureau (EIB) mobile squad in a road in the Taru Pabbi area of Nowshera in the early hours of the day, according to Rescue-1122 officials. Constables Mujahid Khan and Iftikhar Ahmed embraced martyrdom

whereas Sub-Inspector Farooq Bacha was left seriously injured — with five bullet wounds — but managed to reach the Lady Reading Hospital (LRH). SI Bacha's personal driver was also killed in the attack. A case has been registered and further investigation is underway. Later, funeral prayers for the martyred personnel were offered in both the hours at Police Lines Peshawar on Sunday morning. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said the deceased excise personnel have attained a "high rank of martyrdom".

Uzbek Ambassador sees huge potential between Uzbekistan -Pak in tourism sector

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtaev has said that there is a huge potential in the tourism market between Uzbekistan and Pakistan, which is based on the historical, religious, cultural and trade ties between the two countries.

This roadshow is a good chance to bring our nations even closer through tourism and people-to-people contacts, the Ambassador said.

Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtaev said this while addressing the "Uzbekistan Tourism

Roadshow- 2025" organized embassy of Uzbekistan here in a local hotel.

The Ambassador said that Islamabad and the ancient cities of Uzbekistan share common history and culture, while Islamabad is a modern city, it still shows the influence of Islamic civilization, just like our historic cities Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva.

He said that these cities were centers of learning and spirituality, especially in the Sufi tradition and our Pakistani brothers and sisters can feel this connection once they visit beautiful



mosques and madrasas in Uzbekistan.

The envoy said the bond between Uzbekistan and Pakistan goes back to the times of Amir Timur and Zahiriddin Babur and

"We have shared values, religion, and traditions. Now it is our important duty to turn this strong connection into real opportunities for tourism and business."

Alisher said that both governments are working hard to make travel easier. Now, both sides have simpler visa regimes, direct flights, and growing partnerships between touristic companies and this reminds us of the strong and old friendship between our two countries, he said. For many centuries, Uzbekistan and Pakistan were connected by culture, trade, and history and now "We invite travel agencies, business-people, and investors to take part and help grow this sector." He said tourism is more than just travel and it helps people understand each other,

build friendships, and learn from one another. Imagine, thousands of Pakistanis visiting the beautiful cities of Uzbekistan and Uzbeks visiting Lahore, Karachi, and other touristic destinations in Pakistan.

The Ambassador said that this will bring our people closer to each other and Uzbekistan is full of amazing history, culture, and nature.

"Our country lies in the heart of Central Asia and was part of the old Silk Road and cities like Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva are full of beautiful mosques, palaces, and madrasas," he said.

Network involved in attacks on Haqqania, Bannu Cantt traced: ICP Hameed

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Inspector-General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Zulfiqar Hameed said on Sunday that the network involved in the attacks on Darul Uloom Haqqania in Akora Khattak and Bannu Cantt has been traced.

The IC told the media that investigators have found concrete evidence in both cases.

He did not reveal any details of the network involved in the attacks saying the gang members would be alerted and go

into hiding. However, several people have been taken into custody for investigation in both the incidents, he added.

IC Hameed stated that details would be shared after completion of investigations. He said that through proactive policing, the number of terrorist incidents has decreased in the past 15 days. Police teams have been conducting house-to-house mapping, and illegal residents are being sent to Torkham, the IC continued.

High time to acknowledge invaluable contributions of Pakistani expats: Atta Tarar

HUMA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar Sunday said that it is high time to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Pakistani expatriates who have not only enhanced the country's prestige at international level, but also played substantial role in bolstering Pakistan's economic development.

Speaking to the media regarding the ongoing three-day Overseas Pakistanis' Convention in Islamabad, the minister

praised them as true ambassadors of Pakistan, instrumental in boosting the country's economic growth.

He extended a warm welcome to the overseas Pakistanis participating in the convention. "The purpose of this convention is to pay homage to the remarkable services of overseas Pakistanis, who are indeed the pride of our nation," the Minister said eulogizing their pivotal role in fortifying Pakistan's economy through billions of dollars in remittances.

Divulging the convention's agenda, Tarar said it would continue



for two additional days, featuring high-profile activities and crucial discussions aimed at exploring avenues for enhanced government support and broader

recognition of expatriate achievements across diverse sectors.

Tarar highlighted the commitment of both Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army

Staff General Asim Munir to the welfare and well-being of the overseas Pakistanis.

"Living and succeeding in a foreign land is no easy feat," Tarar said, commending the diaspora's sacrifices and unwavering dedication to their homeland.

He described the convention as a landmark event, celebrating the diverse professional accomplishments of Pakistanis residing across the globe. Highlighting Pakistan as a highly attractive investment destination, the minister invited

explore on the burgeoning economic stability and promising opportunities in the country.

He noted the existence of miscreants who are hell bent on propaganda and spreading negativity, particularly during periods of positive national development.

The national economy is all set to take off under the "Uraan Pakistan" initiative, he said while giving credit to the prime minister for taking strategic measures to reinvigorate the economy.

Iran condemns 'cowardly' killings of Pakistanis on its soil

AVESHA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: The Iranian embassy in Pakistan on Sunday condemned the killing of eight Pakistani workers in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province, describing the attack as "inhumane and cowardly."

A spokesman for the banned Balochistan National Army (BNA) claimed responsibility for Saturday's assault, in which gunmen stormed a car repair workshop in Mehrizstan city and opened fire after tying up the workers.

"All eight victims were residents of Bahawalpur in Pakistan's Punjab province," Iranian officials confirmed. Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam, denounced the killings, calling terrorism a shared threat to regional security.

"Combating this ominous phenomenon requires collective and joint efforts by all countries," Moghadam said in a statement.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also expressed deep sorrow, calling the attack a brutal act of terrorism. He urged Tehran to arrest the perpetrators, ensure their swift punishment, and disclose the motive.

Minerals, IT going to be game changers for Pakistan's economy: FinMinister

SEHRISH NAZ

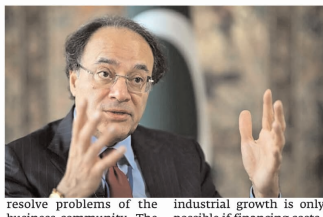
LAHORE: Federal Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said that Information Technology and mineral sectors are going to be game changers for Pakistan's economy and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is leading the economy and the nation would see best results soon. Pakistani travel guides

He was addressing the business community here at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI). LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, SAARC Chamber's Vice President Mian Anjum Nisar and Executive Committee Members also shared their problems and

suggestion with the Finance Minister. Representatives of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and other chambers were also present.

The Finance Minister said that only nickel became a major export driver for Singapore with USD22 billion of share in exports, citing that copper has the potential to yield similar dividends for Pakistan. He said that the global interest in Pakistan's mineral sector and IT potential is growing and the government is focused on removing all barriers to attract and facilitate both local and foreign investment in these key sectors. Pakistani travel guides

M u h a m m a d Aurangzeb said, "We are here to serve the people. I am visiting chambers to listen, understand and



resolve problems of the business community. The legitimate demands of the chambers will be accepted. We talk about economic stability. It is very important that if we cannot return the money of our country's investors on time, how can we move forward? Lowering inflation is essential for economic stability. The interest rate was at 22 percent, today it is at 12 percent. He was of the view that

industrial growth is only possible if financing costs, power tariffs are reduced and improve taxation policies are put in place. Under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's leadership, he mentioned, the economic direction of the country has clear goals and positive results would soon be evident. Finance Minister said that hurdles to profit repatriation for foreign investors have been addressed

which boosted their confidence in the Pakistani market. "We are ensuring that the benefits of reduced inflation directly reach the common man. Middlemen will not be allowed to exploit the system," he vowed.

While talking about taxation, he admitted that the salaried class is bearing the tax burden, as income tax is deducted at source, and "we intend to offer relief to the salaried segment." He disclosed that 24 national entities have been earmarked for privatization, stressing the need for reduced human interaction to resolve systemic issues.

"If we can increase the tax-to-GDP ratio to 13 percent, we can offer broader relief to various sectors," he observed. If our policies are not having an impact on the common man, then there is no point, he said,

appreciate the reduction in the policy rate from 22 percent in June 2023 to 12 percent now. This will ease access to capital for businesses. With inflation dropping sharply from 20.7 percent in March 2024 to just 0.7 percent in March 2025, we are hopeful of continued improvement."

He also paid tributes to the launch of the "Uraan Pakistan" programme, led by the Prime Minister, which aims to raise economic growth, increase exports to USD 60 billion, attract USD 10 billion in private investment annually, create one million jobs per year, raise the renewable energy share to 10 percent, eradicate poverty and mitigate climate challenges. He also highlighted the role of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) in enhancing investor

trust. He stressed the need for tariff structure reforms to promote industrial growth and recommended adopting a cascading tariff model to ensure raw materials are taxed minimally, encouraging local production and value addition.

LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman stressed the need to revise the turnover threshold for withholding agents, proposing an increase from Rs. 100 million to Rs. 250 million in light of the sharp depreciation of the currency and prevailing economic conditions. He expressed concern over the FBR notices and freezing of bank accounts despite the pending court case regarding one percent Capital Value Tax (CVT) on declared foreign assets under the amnesty scheme.



PSL X: Lahore Qalandars thump Quetta Gladiators by 79 runs

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

RAWALPINDI: Lahore Qalandars clinched victory over Quetta Gladiators by 79 runs in the fourth match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) Season 10 played at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Sunday.

Chasing a daunting target of 220, Quetta crumbled under pressure and were bowled out for just 140 runs, thanks to a clinical bowling display by the Qalandars.

Lahore captain Shaheen Afridi set the tone early, dismissing Saud Shakeel for just one run in the opening over.

The Gladiators soon found themselves in deeper trouble as Asif Afridi removed Hassan Nawaz for one, and Shaheen struck again to send Finn Allen back for

a duck, leaving Quetta reeling at 9-3 in 3.2 overs.

Rilee Rossouw and Kusal Mendis provided a brief resistance with a 45-run partnership.

Mendis looked threatening with a quickfire 28 off 14 balls before Haris Rauf broke the stand, reducing Quetta to 54-4 in the sixth over.

Rossouw, in fine touch, smashed 44 off 19 balls, featuring four boundaries and as many sixes. However, his counterattack was cut short by Rishad Hossain, who claimed his maiden PSL wicket.

The collapse continued as Sikandar Raza dismissed Shoaib Malik for 14 and then removed Akeal Hosen in the same over.

Rishad returned to dismiss Mohammad



Amir, and later Abrar Ahmed, sealing his third wicket of the match. Asif Afridi then cleaned up the tail, securing a massive 110-run win for the defending champions.

Batting first, Lahore suffered an early blow as Mohammad Naem was bowled for 10 by Abrar. Fakhar Zaman and Abdullah Shafique stabilised the innings with a 56-run partnership.

Shafique scored a brisk 37 before falling to Akeal. Fakhar continued to dominate with the bat, reaching his 20th PSL fifty. He was well-

supported by Daryl Mitchell, who added a composed unbeaten 37 in an 80-run stand.

Abrar struck again to remove Mitchell, followed shortly by Fakhar's dismissal after a brilliant 67 off 39 deliveries.

Sam Billings then provided a blistering finish, hammering an unbeaten 50 off just 19 balls, propelling Lahore past the 200-run mark. Despite losing Raza and Shaheen cheaply, Billings' explosive knock helped the Qalandars post a commanding total of 220.

For Quetta, Akeal and Abrar claimed two wickets each, while Faheem Ashraf and Usman Tariq chipped in with one apiece.

I'm a cricketer, not an English speaker, says Rizwan

RIZWAN HAIDER

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's white-ball and Multan Sultans captain Mohammad Rizwan has shrugged off concerns about his English fluency, saying that his primary role is to perform as a cricketer, not as a linguist.

Speaking at a press conference in Karachi, Rizwan addressed criticism over his lack of English proficiency, stating, "I regret not completing my education, which is why I don't know English, but I am not ashamed that as Pakistan's captain, I cannot speak English." The demand from me is to play cricket, not to speak English," he said. "If Pakistan wanted English, I would become a professor, learn it, and return. But Pakistan asks me for cricket, not English."

Rizwan, known for his candidness, added that he believes he can communicate well enough to make himself understood even to



a native English speaker.

"Sometimes I feel I can explain things to an Englishman in my own way — he'll understand me just fine. The problem lies with those who just want to stay upset with me," he remarked. The wicketkeeper-bat-

ter urged critics to provide constructive feedback rather than just pointing out flaws. "It's fine to criticise the team, but also guide us on how to improve," he said. "Recently, during the Champions Trophy, Wasim Akram gave us advice, I wanted

to talk more with him, but there wasn't enough time."

He expressed disappointment over critics who offer no solutions, warning that if senior players only focus on fault-finding, younger cricketers would have every right to resent them in the future.

Rizwan acknowledged that fans have the right to be upset when the team fails to perform. "Fans are justified in their anger and they've all the right to be upset at us because they also love us," he said. "But the Pakistan Super League (PSL) has given so much to Pakistan, now it's time to enjoy the league."

Reflecting on criticism in general, he added, "The most successful people in the world were first called mad before others followed them. Those who can't handle criticism achieve nothing."

Olympic gold journey: Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem wins praise from India

SAMARA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: It seems that Pakistan javelin Olympic gold-medallist Arshad Nadeem continues to remain a beacon of inspiration and resilience as the athlete's sporting journey has now won praise, recognition from neighbouring India.

Nadeem, who beat India's Neeraj Chopra in the javelin event last year at the Olympics, has now been hailed for his resilience and perseverance by none other than India's own Olympic Instagram account.

"Why do we fall? So that we can learn to pick ourselves up," reads the caption of a post on India's official Olympic account on Instagram, which shared a motivational video showcasing Nadeem's journey from the Tokyo Olympics 2020



last year's glory.

The video shows the Pakistani athlete's performance in the javelin throw event at the Tokyo Olympics, which took place in 2021, where he managed to qualify for the final but missed out on

winning any medal for the country.

India's Chopra, back then, came in first with a score of 87.58m to win a gold, in a first for the country in the athletics category. In the said Instagram post, Nadeem is seen gut-

ted after his Tokyo Olympic heartbreak, but then it switches to the unforgettable scenes from the Paris 2024 Olympics showing the jubilant and evidently emotional Pakistani athlete raising his arms and accepting the

gold medal courtesy of his 92.97-metre massive throw — which also created a new Olympic record. The post acknowledges and hails Nadeem for not giving up on his dreams and showing exceptional resilience and perseverance to stay true to his objective until he finally managed to achieve it last year. The video is to be taken against the background that the Pakistani athlete lacked essential support and infrastructure, and didn't even have a ground to practice back when he was preparing for the Tokyo Olympics.

Nevertheless, despite having offers from various countries to move abroad and represent them instead, Nadeem chose to wear the Pakistani flag and went on to not only represent Pakistan at the Paris Olympics 2024 but also win gold for the nation.

Gujjar Khan won the table tennis championship



PEAK POINT

GUJJAR KHAN: Government of Punjab, organized by the Third Higher Education Sports Department, from April 8 to April 12, in various competitions in Lahore, in which the children

who won the nine division participated in which the three students from Gujjar Khan were honored by the Government Girls Graduate College, and the three students from the Graduate College. The honor was decorated on the chest of his land. Three

girls belonging to Gujjar Khan won the table tennis championship and made the name of Government Girls Graduate College Gujjar Khan, provincial minister Higher Education Rana Sikandar Hayat distributed one lakh prizes to the successful players.

ers, Rawalpindi Division. Team Captain Provincial Sultana Chaudhry and Rawalpindi Assistant Director Sports Miss Muawiyah also provided opportunities to look at the girls' titles. He won the tennis championship and defended his title, in which the student Halima team, while Ali Shah Mahmud members, who belongs to Dharti Gujjar Khan, has ironed out his abilities and performed his outstanding performance in table tennis, which is a great prize for a great Girls Girls Girls. Announcing while Additional Secretary Azam Khan also distributed prizes to the winning players.

Karachi Kings' Litton Das ruled out of PSL X due to injury

JAVED KHAN

RAWALPINDI: Karachi Kings suffered a major blow ahead of their first Pakistan Super League (PSL) 10 match as their wicketkeeper-batter Litton Das has been ruled out of the tournament due to injury.

Litton sustained an injury to his right hand during an intra-squad match before the event's official kickoff. Medical reports confirmed a hairline fracture in his thumb.

According to sources, doctors have advised the Bangladeshi cricketer to rest for two weeks. As a result, he departed for his home country, Bangladesh, yesterday (Saturday).

He wrote, "I was truly excited to play in the PSL for Karachi Kings, but the Almighty had other



plans.

During a practice session, I picked up a finger injury. Scans revealed a hairline fracture, and recovery will take at least 2 weeks." "So sadly, my PSL mission is over before it even began. I'm flying back to Bangladesh and seeking your prayers & love for a quick recovery. Wishing the very best of luck to my team Karachi Kings," he added. Karachi Kings defeated Multan Sultans

by four wickets by four wickets in a high-scoring thrilling encounter of the Pakistan Super League season 10.

Kings' James Vince scored a fast-paced century off just 43 balls which helped his side to register their first victory. He was supported by Khushdi Shah who also scored invigorating 60 runs. Tim Siefert scored a quickfire 32 of 16.

Ali sisters set to represent Pakistan in Australian Junior Squash Championship

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Pakistan's rising squash sensations—Mahnoor Ali, Sehriish Ali, and Mahvish Ali—are set to represent the country in the Australian Junior Squash Championship 2025.

Known as the 'Alisisters', the talented trio will exhibit their prowess in Australia, aiming to make their mark on the international stage and bring pride to Pakistan through their performances. Prior to their departure, Mahnoor and Sehriish participated in an intensive training session in Karachi under the supervision of national coach Muhammad Naveed Alam.

Mahnoor, who will compete in the girls U-15 category, expressed her excitement after training. "We are really happy with practice session. I



still remember winning the gold medal in Australia last year — it was all possible because of coach Naveed Alam's constant guidance and support. He was there for us every step of the way." Coach Naveed praised the dedication and work ethic of the sisters and expressed confidence in their chances this year as

well. Mahnoor's growing list of accolades has also earned her a prestigious wildcard entry to the Gold JTC Squash Championship in the United States this June. However, she is currently in search of sponsorship and has appealed to organizations and philanthropists to help her achieve this dream.

Mashood Shirazi: A dedicated club cricket organiser

MUHAMMAD USMAN

ISLAMABAD: Syed Mashood Hussain Shirazi is a key figure in Lahore's club cricket, having served as the Joint Secretary of the East Zone Cricket Association and Assistant Secretary of Lahore City Cricket Association. As President of Imperial Club, he has helped produce notable cricketers like Aamir Najeeb and former Test bowler Shabbir Ahmed.



Shirazi also provides scholarships for underprivileged children at the

club. With over 45 years of experience in club cricket, Shirazi has played a crucial role in managing teams and supporting players. He is also a close advisor to LRCA President Kh Nadeem Ahmed, and has been instrumental in reviving the sport in the region. Shirazi was also awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding contributions to club cricket.

Opinion & Editorial

Geostrategic Importance of Gilgit Baltistan vs. Local Neglect

Author: Faiza Sattar

The fact that Gilgit-Baltistan is strategically located at the junction of Pakistan, India, and China — along with its rich natural resources, glaciers, and access to the crucial China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) — makes it a focal point in international politics. However, while the world powers (China, India, and Pakistan) focus on the geopolitical advantages of the region, the people of Gilgit-Baltistan often find themselves marginalized in terms of basic public services and political rights. Gilgit-Baltistan is considered a disputed territory, which has prevented it from achieving full political integration with Pakistan. The region is not officially recognized



as a province, and its governance structure remains complex. It is administered by Pakistan as a self-governing region, but its residents do not have the full rights and privileges of citizens in the provinces of Pakistan, particularly in terms of political representation, provincial rights, and direct access to federal resources. The region's status is tied to the broader Kashmir dispute. Pakistan has not granted it provincial status because doing so could complicate the country's

position in the ongoing conflict with India over Jammu and Kashmir. India also claims the region as part of its territory, and giving Gilgit-Baltistan the status of a full province could be seen as further legitimizing Pakistan's control over the area. As a result, the region's political future remains uncertain and unresolved. While Gilgit-Baltistan holds substantial natural wealth and has been incorporated into major projects like CPEC, the region's economic benefits have not been sufficiently directed toward the development of its infrastructure or the well-being of its peoples. The lack of focus on strategic and economic projects often overlooks the welfare of the local population. The poor condition of roads, lack of

proper schools, universities, and healthcare facilities reflects a major disparity in the region's development. This contrasts sharply with the immense investments made in the region for strategic projects like CPEC. The Indus River and glaciers offer resources, but the local community is deprived of the necessary infrastructure to capitalize on these resources for their own benefit. The infrastructure in Gilgit-Baltistan remains underdeveloped. The Karakoram Highway, a key route linking Pakistan and China, is perilous, with frequent accidents due to poor maintenance. The lack of road safety, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions makes daily life difficult for residents, especially in remote

areas. Many children from Gilgit-Baltistan are forced to leave the region to pursue higher education in larger cities, reflecting the severe lack of higher education institutions locally. There is also a lack of hospitals and healthcare facilities, leading to difficulties for the population in accessing basic medical services. Gilgit-Baltistan's diverse ethnic and cultural makeup also contributes to the complexity of governance and development. The region is home to several ethnic groups, each with its own historical identity and demands. These groups have often felt sidelined in terms of political representation and access to resources. The lack of meaningful local autonomy has led to dissatisfaction and frustration among residents, further

complicating the region's governance. The people of Gilgit-Baltistan have long demanded greater political rights, including the status of an autonomous province. However, their calls have largely gone unanswered. Despite these issues, there is a sense of abandonment, as the region's needs are often overshadowed by the broader national and international political agenda. Pakistan's hesitation to grant Gilgit-Baltistan provincial status is tied to its delicate position in the Kashmir dispute. Granting full provincial status to Gilgit-Baltistan could be seen by India as a step in favor of Pakistan on its claim to the entire region of Jammu and Kashmir, which would escalate tensions between the two countries.

Additionally, while the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a major strategic priority for Pakistan, the political complexity of integrating Gilgit-Baltistan into Pakistan's federal structure remains an obstacle. There is fear that granting provincial status might complicate Pakistan's foreign policy with China and India, as well as the region's disputed status. The neglect of Gilgit-Baltistan's people, despite the region's critical geostrategic importance, is largely due to the complex political situation stemming from the Kashmir dispute, economic neglect, and Pakistan's official stance. Pakistan's reluctance to grant full provincial status. This has resulted in a situation where the region's people, though situated at

the crossroads of some of the world's most powerful nations, continue to face challenges in accessing basic services like education, healthcare, and infrastructure. For Pakistan to address the needs of its citizens in Gilgit-Baltistan, there needs to be a shift toward prioritizing local development and providing political stability. Greater political integration, improved infrastructure, and a more inclusive governance model could help balance Pakistan's strategic ambitions with the well-being of its people. However, the issue remains complex and sensitive involving both domestic and international dimensions that require careful consideration.

“The Call of Palestine and the Mysterious Silence of the Muslim Ummah”

By: Irum saeed

Where the prophets set foot, where the calls to prayer from Al-Aqsa echo, where the faces of innocent children are covered in the sand of the desert and where humanity dies, it is still the same Palestine today, but not bathed in blood. This struggle spanning years has now taken the form of a painful war. The brutal bombing of Gaza, Jenin, Nablus, and other Palestinian areas by Israel in 2023 and 2024 has written another black page in the darkest chapters of human history. But the question is, when Jerusalem is burning, when the bodies of innocent children lie in the sand of Al-Aqsa Mosque, when unarmed citizens are hiding in the sand dunes to save



their lives — where is the Muslim Ummah? Where are the Islamic countries that call themselves the protectors of the religion of Islam? Where is the unity that was mentioned in every Friday sermon? These are the questions that the whole world is asking for answers to today, especially the oppressed who are looking to the Muslim Ummah with hopeful eyes at every moment. The current situation in Palestine/Palestine is currently going through the

worst humanitarian crisis in history. Israel forces have completely besieged Gaza. All sources of electricity, water, food, and medical aid have been cut off. Children in their mothers' arms, patients in hospitals, and the elderly in places of worship are being targeted. The United Nations and human rights organizations have also become witnesses to this cruelty and barbarity, but are content with only condemnatory statements. In the face of the Israeli army equipped with modern technology, the unarmed Palestinians stand only with their faith and courage. They have neither weapons, nor resources, nor any powerful allies. The explosions that occurred at the end of 2024 and the beginning of 2025, which shook Gaza, Rafah,

and Khan Yunis, were intended not only to crush casualties but also to crush the spirit of the Palestinian people. Schools, hospitals, mosques, and even refugee camps set up by the United Nations were not spared in these attacks. Thousands of people were martyred and injured in these explosions, many of them children and women. According to media reports, some of the attacks were carried out with phosphorus bombs, which are prohibited under international law. This is not only a violation of human rights but also an open declaration of war — not only against Palestine but against the entire Muslim Ummah. There are more than 50 Muslim countries in the Islamic world, which have oil, military power, diplomatic influence, and

votes in the United Nations. But, despite all these resources, only statements of condemnation, expressions of concern, and words like “we are sorry” are used for Palestine. Is this the Ummah that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) described as one who? Have we forgotten the teaching that “If you see an injustice, stop it with your hand, if that is not possible, with your tongue, and if that is not possible, then with your heart — and this is the weakest of the three hearts.” But here it seems that hearts have also become numb, tongues are also mute, and hands are paralyzed. Many Muslim countries have economic and diplomatic relations with Western powers, which they do not want to jeopardize by speaking in favor of

Palestine. Many Islamic countries have not taken any political and economic instability, due to which they are unable to play an effective role in global affairs. Lack of unity has been a constant problem in the Islamic world. Each country prioritizes its own interests, as a result of which collective action is not possible. Some Islamic countries are under so much pressure from international organizations and powerful nations that they hesitate to speak in favor of Palestine. Islamic countries are really serious, they can do a lot for Palestine. Joint Islamic diplomatic missions can mobilize at the United Nations and other international forums to pass resolutions against Israel. If Islamic countries boycott trade with countries that

support Israel, a strong message can be sent. Islamic media channels must be mobilized to bring the situation of Palestine to the world, so that global public opinion can be smoothed. Turkey, Qatar, Indonesia, Pakistan and other Islamic countries need to send large-scale humanitarian aid to Palestine. Every Islamic country should celebrate a special day in solidarity with Palestine, so that the world knows that Palestine is not alone. If the rulers are silent, the people must raise their voices. Through social media, protests, boycotts, fundraising, prayers, and awareness-raising, we can stand with the Palestinian people. It is the duty of every individual in the Muslim Ummah to at least raise their voice for Palestine. Silence has now become a

crime. Remember, history has always remembered those nations that stood by the oppressed. Leaders like Salahuddin Ayyubi, Omar ibn al-Khattab, and Muhammad bin Qasim took up the sword for the oppressed of their time. Today we are called their heirs, but in practice our status is that of mere spectators. Palestine is not just a piece of land, but it is a part of our pride, our faith, and our history. If we remain silent today, this silence will swallow us tomorrow. The need of the hour is for the Muslim Ummah to unite, raise its voice, and take practical steps. Because when oppression goes beyond the limit, even the throne shakes, and if we do not open our eyes even now, history may not forgive us.

A Fenceless Border & Need to Unite Under Pakistan For Kashmir Cause

Abdul Basit Alvi

While both India and Pakistan hold opposing views on the Kashmir conflict, their respective approaches have differed dramatically over time. India's handling of the issue has been marked by a series of actions and reactions that have not only contravened international norms and human rights conventions but have also intensified the suffering of the Kashmiri people. Driven largely by political and strategic interests, India's reluctance to address the legitimate grievances of Kashmiris has deepened the crisis and prolonged the conflict. IIOJK has become one of the most militarized regions in the world, with hundreds of thousands of troops deployed since 1947. This overwhelming military presence has led to numerous reports of human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture, and excessive use of force against civilians and peaceful demonstrators. A particularly controversial element of India's security policy is the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), which grants sweeping powers to the military, including the authority to arrest or kill with near-total impunity. Enacted in the early 1990s, AFSPA has enabled systemic abuses, often without accountability or redress. In contrast, Pakistan has maintained a principled and peaceful stance on the Kashmir issue, consistently advocating for diplomacy, dialogue, and a return to international law. Pakistan's position has centered on supporting the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination and calling for a peaceful negotiated resolution that aligns with



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his aspirations. Since the beginning of the conflict, Pakistan has actively raised the Kashmir issue at international platforms, including the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Through persistent diplomatic engagement, Pakistan has succeeded in internationalizing the Kashmir dispute, drawing attention to the human rights situation in IIOJK. The country has repeatedly called for a UN-backed plebiscite to allow the people of Jammu and Kashmir to decide their own future, in line with UN Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, Pakistan has appealed to major global powers—such as the United States, China, and European nations—to pressure India into upholding international human rights standards and respecting the will of the Kashmiri people. Pakistan has consistently extended moral support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The leadership in AJK, an autonomous region within Pakistan, has regularly expressed solidarity with those living in IIOJK. In times of crisis, such as natural disasters or periods of intensified military crackdowns—Pakistan has provided humanitarian assistance to the residents of IIOJK. In times of crisis, such as natural disasters or periods of intensified military crackdowns—Pakistan has provided humanitarian assistance to the residents of IIOJK. In times of crisis, such as natural disasters or periods of intensified military crackdowns—Pakistan has provided humanitarian assistance to the residents of IIOJK. In times of crisis, such as natural disasters or periods of intensified military crackdowns—Pakistan has provided humanitarian assistance to the residents of IIOJK.

the Kashmir issue, Pakistan has actively promoted public campaigning at both national and international levels, aiming to keep global attention focused on the plight and rights of the Kashmiri people. These awareness campaigns have played a vital role in generating both national and international support for the Kashmiri cause and in expressing solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan has consistently maintained that the Kashmir dispute must be resolved through peaceful means, in accordance with the will of the Kashmiri people. In contrast to India's militarized approach, Pakistan has advocated for a diplomatic solution through dialogue involving Pakistan, India, and the Kashmiri leadership. Pakistan has repeatedly extended invitations for negotiations with India and has welcomed the involvement of international media to help resolve the conflict. Even in the face of continued refusals from India, Pakistan's commitment to peaceful engagement remains firm. It has urged India to demilitarize the region, uphold the fundamental human rights of the Kashmiri people, and allow them the freedom to determine their own future. Pakistan has also stressed the importance of preserving the cultural and religious identity of Kashmir, especially in light of India's attempts to alter the demographic composition of IIOJK. The government of Pakistan strongly opposes the settlement of non-Kashmiris in the region, viewing such actions as efforts to dilute the Kashmiri Muslim identity—an identity central to the struggle for self-determination. Moreover, Pakistan has consistently advocated for international attention

to the ongoing human rights violations in the region, including the illegal and arbitrary detention of Kashmiri citizens. IIOJK has urged organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and others to investigate and report on the human rights violations committed in the region. By keeping the spotlight on these violations, Pakistan seeks to ensure that the suffering of Kashmiris is neither ignored nor forgotten by the global community. The Line of Control (LoC), a key flashpoint in the Kashmir conflict, serves as the de facto boundary between Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). While it marks the military division between the two sides, it is not recognized as an international border. The LoC is a product of the unresolved status of Jammu and Kashmir and remains a symbol of the ongoing dispute. One notable aspect of the LoC is Pakistan's decision not to fortify it with fences or barriers, unlike India, which has heavily militarized and physically reinforced its side of the border. This decision reflects not an absence of security concerns, but rather a principled stance rooted in international law, the United Nations Agreement signed by India and Pakistan after the 1971 war that led to the creation of Bangladesh. The agreement designated the LoC as a temporary arrangement pending the final resolution of the Kashmir dispute. Both parties agreed not to alter the status of the region unilaterally or by force, a principle that the LoC must uphold. Pakistan's decision to leave the LoC unfenced reflects not an absence of security concerns, but rather a principled stance rooted in international law, the United Nations Agreement signed by India and Pakistan after the 1971 war that led to the creation of Bangladesh. 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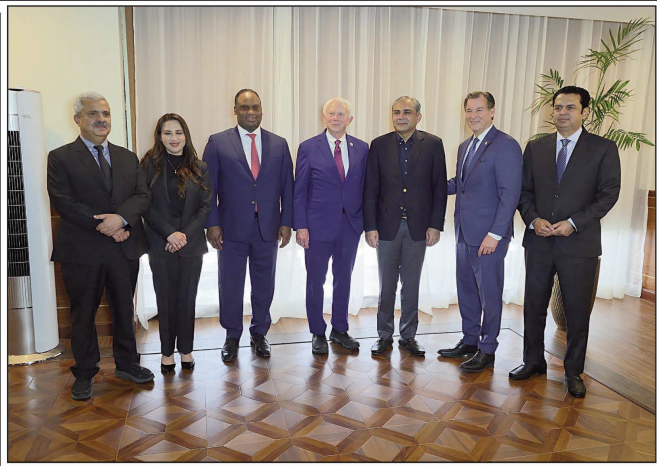
U.S Congressmen call on Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi

ARSHAD MALIK

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi held an important meeting with a delegation of U.S. Congressmen. The delegation included Congressmen Jack Bergman, Tom Suozzi, and Jonathan Jackson. Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, Acting U.S. Ambassador Natalie Baker, and Federal Interior Secretary Khuram Agha were also present. During the meeting, detailed discussion was held on bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest. Both sides also exchanged views on enhancing cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, and investment. Discussions were also held on security, counterterrorism, and border security.

Mohsin Naqvi said that strong and sustainable relations with the United States hold a key place in Pakistan's foreign policy. He said the holding of Pakistan Caucus in the U.S. on April 30 is a welcome development. He emphasized that Pakistan stands as a wall between terrorism and the rest of the world. He stressed that terrorism is a global challenge, and the international community must extend full cooperation to Pakistan. He emphasized that intelligence and technology sharing in the domain of counterterrorism is of utmost importance. He further said that Pakistan's immense sacrifices against terrorism are unmatched in the global context. He said that the visit of U.S. Congressmen will be crucial in highlighting Pakistan's unprecedented role in the fight

against terrorism.—APP
The Interior Minister welcomed the U.S. delegation's participation in the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025. He added that The government will ensure every possible facility and full protection to the investors.
Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry said that the Counter-Terrorism Dialogue, to be held in Islamabad in June, will play a key role in promoting mutual cooperation in the area of counterterrorism.
The U.S. Congressmen delegation said that there is a need to highlight Pakistan's role in the war against terrorism. They further said that the Pakistani community residing in the United States is very talented and hardworking.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi along with Minister for State Talal Chaudhry in a group photo with US Congressmen Jack Bergman, Tom Suozzi and Jonathan Jackson.

Pakistan strongly condemns killing of its nationals in Iran

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Sunday strongly condemned the inhumane and cowardly killing of its nationals in Iran. In a statement, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said, "We hope for Iranian side's full cooperation in investigating the matter and in timely repatriation of victims' remains."
"Eight Pakistani nationals were tragically killed yesterday in Mehrestan county, Sistan-Baluchistan province, located approximately 230 kilometers from the Pakistan-Iran border. Our Mission has already requested consular access to verify their identities," he added.
He said the leadership and people of Pakistan were deeply saddened and perturbed over the tragic incident. The Prime Minister had expressed his deep condolences to the bereaved families.
"On the instructions of the Deputy Prime

Minister/Foreign Minister, our Embassy in Tehran and our Consulate in Zahidan are in constant touch with the Iranian authorities for a comprehensive investigation to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice as well as for prompt repatriation of the victims' remains to Pakistan," he added.
Further updates will be provided as soon as additional details regarding the identification of dead bodies and the circumstances leading to their tragic deaths become available, he concluded. Meanwhile, Pakistan's ambassador to Iran Muhammad Mudassar Tipu in a post on X said that in a despicable act of violence eight Pakistani nationals were killed in Mehrestan. "We are in touch with authorities in Iran to carry out a swift investigation and bring the perpetrators to justice. Iran has assured of its utmost cooperation," he said.
He said, "Under Honorable PM & DPM's instructions, their mortal remains will be sent to Pakistan at soonest possible. My deepest condolences to the bereaved families! May departed souls rest in peace."

Grand Jirga held for peace, unity, counter-extremism in Southern KP

PEAK POINT

DIKHAN: A grand Jirga was held at Chehkan Fort under the leadership of Major General Naim Muhammad Baig, General Officer Commanding 40 Division (Al-Burg). The gathering was attended by a large number of prominent religious scholars, spiritual leaders, and tribal elders from Dera Ismail Khan, Lakki Marwat, and Tank. Addressing the Jirga, the GOC spoke in detail about the regional security situation, the sacrifices of law enforcement agencies in maintaining peace and stability, and the importance of promoting the national narrative. He emphasized that it is essential for the public, religious leadership, civil institutions, and armed forces to unite and work in harmony in order to overcome the challenges facing the country. He urged the religious leaders to guide the people in a positive direction

Govt committed to provide quality infrastructure for industrial workers: minister

MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain has said that providing affordable housing and quality infrastructure for industrial workers was the government's top priority. He said this while inaugurating electricity supply to the newly constructed labour complex in Islamabad, said a press release issued here Sunday. He also directed for early allotment of the constructed houses and apartments to the deserving and eligible labour and workers.

Chaudhry Salik Hussain further said that the work on the second phase of the labour complex would commence soon to benefit more industrial workers with residential facilities. On this occasion, Secretary Workers Welfare Fund Zulfiqar Ahmed briefed that the second phase of the residential project would include all international-standard facilities. Chaudhry Salik Hussain also visited over 1,500 constructed houses, flats, community centre and mosques. He appreciated the efforts of Secretary Workers Welfare Fund Zulfiqar Ahmed and his team.



PM has a vision to turn economy around: Haroon Akhtar

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: The Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Saturday said that the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif had a vision to turn the economy around. He said, "Digitalization is a key agenda point of the Prime Minister."
He stated these views during two separate meetings with the members of Pakistan Business Council (PBC) and

that the PM was determined to bring about change in the country. He said that the PM Shehbaz Sharif had been working day and night for the economic development of the country. He said that Artificial Intelligence (AI) had changed the way of working, which gave information in no time. The SAPM said that Pakistan could not go without industrialization and they had to bring it back. Replying to a question on Super Tax, he clarified that it be abolished.

The PBC members urged the SAPM for strong advocacy with USA on new tariffs and for the use of un-utilized industrial assets. Later, talking to media persons, he said that Karachi was the economic hub of the country. He said that the meeting with business community of Karachi was successful. He said that the business community of Karachi had raised some issues regarding land allocation, infrastructure, electricity, gas and taxes.

Poliovirus found in environmental samples from 20 districts

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Environmental surveillance has detected wild poliovirus in sewage samples from 20 districts across Pakistan, officials said. The findings suggest a decline in overall virus circulation. According to the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health (NIH), 60 samples were collected from 51 districts. Of these, 25 tested positive while 35 showed no presence of the virus. The samples that confirmed the presence of wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) came from districts including Dukka, Kech, Khuzdar, Lashbela, Loralai, Nasirabad, Pishin, Quetta, Usta Muhammad, Bannu, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Peshawar, South Waziristan, Lower Bhabwalpur, Bahawalnagar, Dera Ghazi Khan, Lahore, Multan, and Rahim Yar Khan. Meanwhile, samples from cities such as Islamabad, Gilgit, Rawalpindi, Swat, Sahiwal, Nowshera, and others tested negative, pointing to improved control measures in several areas. "The trend shows a decline in positive samples and a reduction in virus circulation in many areas," an NIH official said. Pakistan has reported only six polio cases so far in 2025, down from 74 in 2024. Officials credit improved immunisation drives since September last year.

Kundi for strengthening 3 key sectors to ensure economic development

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi here on Saturday called for empowering key sectors, including business, farming and industry, to drive national progress and lead the country towards economic development. The governor while speaking at the Gujranwala Expo 2025 highlighted the crucial role of business community, farmers, and industrialists in promoting the national economy. He praised the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) for successfully organizing the Expo being held from April 11-13, 2025, which had brought together industry leaders,

businesses, and innovators to showcase local production, craftsmanship, and innovation. The governor also commended the recent Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum held in Islamabad, which attracted significant participation from all provinces, including representation from the KP Chief Secretary. "The forum represented a positive image of Pakistan and presented valuable investment opportunities," he noted. While acknowledging the challenges faced by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly in passing legislation, Governor Kundi expressed optimism about overcoming these hurdles. He was of the view that there were some politics over the mining and minerals sector in KP, but assured that necessary legislation would be done. He also highlighted the success of the Chashma Lift Canal Project, made possible through the support of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and the Chairman of Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA).



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, Minister for Minorities Affairs Punjab Sardar Rameez Singh Arora, Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad, Maulana Tahir Ashrafi and others joined hands to showing solidarity a conference at a local hotel in the Provincial Capital.

Gaza's children facing systematic infanticide, say Pakistani minor activists in blood-written plea

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The harrowing consequences of the month-long siege on Gaza have plunged over one million children into a dire humanitarian emergency, with countless non-combatant civilians — especially children, women, and the elderly — trapped in what human rights advocates are describing as a "can't-live-can't-leave" crisis. In a renewed call for international intervention, Pakistani siblings — Chulam Bishar Hafif and Ubaidah al Fidhdha Hafif — have released a heart-wrenching supplication plea, written with their own blood, as part of their ongoing campaign "Voice for the Voiceless". The campaign, launched 10 months ago, seeks to awaken the world's con-



science to the suffering of Gazan children, whom they describe as being "detained, trapped, amputated, or buried alive in rubble". "Mind-numbing for the world is the fact that in this so-called global village era — in the 21st century — children are being starved, maimed, and left to die without basic aid", the plea reads. Citing UNICEF reports, the siblings highlight that more than one million children in Gaza are being systematically denied access to lifesaving aid. Evidence, they claim, shows these children are being treated with less humanity than "farm animals" — and at times, even worse than the standards set for kittens or puppies. "Picturing a region engulfed in decades of unresolved inter-communal tensions, the plea stresses the use of child starvation as a weapon of war, something described as unprecedented in recorded human history."