



**Fraud Case; Nadia Hussain admits getting funds from husband**



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# Govt prioritizing international-standard skills training for workforce: PM

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that the government was prioritizing efforts to equip the country's workforce with skills and training aligned with international standards. He was talking to a seven-member delegation of Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) led by its Chief Executive Helen Brand OBE which called on him here at the PM House. Welcoming the delegation, the prime minister said the country was blessed with talented

youth and capable manpower. He noted that the third party validation to improve transparency and governance was the basic part of the every government project. He said that bringing improvements in the government's performance and governance was top priority of the government. "Improvement in Pakistan's investment rating by Fitch is a welcoming sign but we have to make further efforts," the prime minister said adding that the association could play an important role in imparting new professional skills to



Improve the competition of Pakistan's manpower at international level. The government will encourage the ACCA's efforts to enhance the capacity of

the government institutions. The prime minister directed the relevant authorities to increase cooperation with the association and hold discussions for future course of action. During the meeting, the delegation highlighted important role, the ACCA played for the development of Pakistan's economy. The delegation informed the prime minister that the ACCA's 13000 Pakistani members were serving across the world in various sectors, whereas around 40,000 students were in process of receiving the membership of ACCA.

# Pakistan ready to deepen anti-narcotics cooperation with Gulf states: Naqvi

HUMA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday said that Pakistan in collaboration with Gulf countries will take effective measures to save future of our youth and protect society from the menace of drugs. Mohsin Naqvi expressed these views while addressing Pak-Gulf Anti-Narcotics Conference in Islamabad. Interior Minister said that participation of Gulf countries in this conference showed Pakistan's commitment to completely eradicate use of nar-

cotics from our country. He welcomed all the foreign delegates in the conference and said that they were not here only to represent their states instead they were gathered here as frontline soldiers in the fight against drugs. Mohsin Naqvi said that they will streamline their coordination and strengthen their intelligence as well and will adopt a joint and effective strategy to deal with this menace with full determination. Interior Minister said that a comprehensive strategy will be adopted to curb smuggling of narcotics and its usage.

# Pakistan and Afghanistan set to hold talks amidst growing tensions

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Afghanistan are holding key talks on security and border issues in the 7th session of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Coordination Committee (JCC), set to take place in Kabul, officials said on Wednesday. The meeting comes in the light of rising tensions between the two countries, with Afghan refugee deportations, skirmishes along the border, and the increased activity of armed groups within Pakistan state the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in 2021. Pakistan maintains

that these armed groups operate from within Afghan soil, a claim that Afghan officials have denied, maintaining that no one can use Afghan soil against any country. Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Mohammad Sadiq is leading Pakistan's delegation, which includes both military and intelligence officials. Ambassador Sadiq's office in Islamabad said that he had reached Kabul this morning. While on the other side, Afghan Deputy Defence Minister Mullah Abdul Qayyum Zakri is set to lead the meeting,



according to Afghan government spokesperson, Zabullah Mujahid. Mullah Abdul Qayyum Zakri is a senior Taliban leader, who once led the Taliban military commission during the 20-year war against the US-Nato forces. "SAPM/Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan arrived at Kabul at the head of a del-

egation to attend the JCC meeting. JCC meeting is being held after a long gap," according to Sadiq's X. The last JCC meeting was held in Islamabad in early January 2024. Afghan spokesperson Mujahid said both sides will discuss resolving potential disputes along the Durand Line and creating facilities for the people of both sides. Last month, Pakistan and Afghan Taliban forces exchanged fire following the closure of Torkham border crossing over construction of posts. Following this development, a Pakistan and

Afghan Jirga brokered a deal that led to the reopening of Torkham on March 16 after 23 days. Head of the Pakistani jirga, Syed Jawad Hussain Kazmi told Dawn.com last month that the JCC would discuss whatever the Jirga had decided including a ceasefire till April 15. Both sides have agreed to stop construction of the controversial check posts, he added. Pakistani Officials cite the issue of the banned T e h e k - e - T a l i b a n Pakistan (TTP) and other armed groups as a major hurdle in Pak-Afghan relationship.

# SCO Secretary General to visit Pakistan on April 17-18

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: At the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, the Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Nurgul Yerbekbayeva will visit Pakistan on April 17-18, 2025. He will be heading a delegation comprising of officials from the SCO Secretariat in Beijing, a press release issued by the foreign office spokesperson said on

Wednesday. During his stay, the secretary general will have meetings with the deputy PM, Minister of Commerce and Foreign Secretary. He will visit National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI). He will also speak at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) and engage with business leaders, entrepreneurs and media persons.

# Government bringing investment for people's prosperity: Muqam

PEAK POINT

MALAKAND: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Gilgit Baltistan and Kashmir Affairs, Engr Amir Muqam here Wednesday said that Government's policies was aimed to bring direct foreign investment to the country imperative for creation of jobs opportunities, foster industrial & agriculture development and prosperity of people. Addressing a big public gathering at Palai Dargai here after inauguration of the NADRA Office, Engr Amir Muqam said that Prime Minister

Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has announced a historic relief package for overseas Pakistan that would greatly help bringing direct foreign investment in Pakistan. He said that Pakistan especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was blessed with abundance of mines, gemstones, marble, granite and mineral resources and its exploration on scientific level would be used on the country's fast track development. Engr Amir Muqam who is also the provincial President of PMLN KP said that mines and mineral besides gemstones



reservoirs have made Pakistan an ideal investment destination and urged the investors to take advantage of the Govt pro-mineral policies. Through investment, he said that mines and mineral rich areas would be largely benefited besides ensuring employment opportunities for the area's people. He said that the Prime Minister has provided a significant relief to domestic and industrial consumers after

reducing the per unit electricity price, benefiting millions. Engr Amir Muqam said that Pakistan's exports achieved significant growth and foreign remittances by overseas Pakistanis increased manifolds. Amir Muqam said that price hike and policy rate have been significantly reduced and top monetary institutions are praising Shehbaz Sharif Govt's economic and fiscal policies. He said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Govt has saved the country from an imminent economic default and

bankruptcy and put the country's economy back on track after his tireless efforts. On the other hand, he said the agitation of our political opponent was aimed to obtain relief for the PTI founder. He claimed that politics of protest and agitations would serve no purpose rather increase problems of people. He said PTI has failed to deliver in KP despite its third consecutive term and unnecessary experiences in education and health sectors have marred service delivery in KP where problems of masses increased manifolds.

# Pakistan, China agree to deepen maritime cooperation

MOHSIN MALIK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have agreed to maintain ongoing communication and strengthen coordination on maritime policies, besides continuing to deepen both bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the sector. Pakistani travel guides

co-chaired by Additional Secretary (Asia Pacific) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, and Director General of the Department of Boundary and Ocean Affairs of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hong Liang. The two sides positively reviewed the progress of their cooperation since the fourth round of the dialogue. They engaged in in-depth discussions on maritime security, marine economy, marine science and technology, and the marine environment, reaching broad consensus on various issues.

# Inauguration of SWABI Smart Village: A collaborative step towards digital transformation

AYESHA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: MOITT, Huawei, ITU inaugurate third 'Smart Village in Swabi' After the successful implementation of Smart Villages in Gokina and Sambrial, the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT), in collaboration with Huawei Technologies and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), on Wednesday inaugurated the third Smart Village in Swabi. The Smart Village Pakistan initiative is designed to digitally transform rural and remote communities across Pakistan. Through a strong partnership of MOITT, ITU and Huawei, Smart Village Pakistan is a unique ini-

tiative to address the rural-urban digital divide in Pakistan. The Smart Village Swabi aims to serve as a model for the digital transformation of rural communities, particularly of women and farmers through comprehensive digital skills training programs covering a range of areas from basic digital skills to online marketing, e-commerce, digital financial inclusion, and digital agriculture etc. On the occasion Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja expressed her enthusiasm for the project, stating, "The Swabi Smart Village Project represents a major milestone in our journey towards achieving a digitally empowered Pakistan. This initiative underscores our commit-



ment to bridging the digital divide and ensuring that no community is left behind." She also mentioned the importance of implementing the 5G and technology parks to drive innovation and growth within the country. She said that technology is now being utilized

the digital age. She further explained that the Swabi Smart Village will serve as a model for progress by offering for education, healthcare, and technical training. She dedicated the launch to Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed, a native of Swabi and recipient of the Nishan-e-Haider for his valor in the Kargil War. "His sacrifice symbolizes the resilience of this community, and it is only fitting that this digital initiative be launched in his name," she said. Emphasizing the need for digital transformation, she underscored the importance of every Pakistani having a digital identity. Hence, reiterating that digital inclusion is vital for national progress, ensuring that every citizen can benefit

from technological advancements. Dr. Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau said, "The launch of the Swabi Smart Village is a shining example of how digital innovation can transform lives and communities, and we are proud to support this initiative, which aligns with our mission to connect the disconnected and ensure that everyone, everywhere, has access to the opportunities that digital technologies provide. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with Pakistan and Huawei to drive sustainable development and digital inclusion". Ahmed Bilal Masood, Deputy CEO of Huawei Pakistan, shared his opinion on the occasion,

stating, "Huawei is proud to be a part of this transformative initiative. Our mission has always been to leverage technology to create opportunities and improve lives. The Swabi Smart Village Project is a testament to our commitment to bridging the digital divide and empowering communities, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration with MOITT, ITU and other Partners to drive innovation and inclusion across Pakistan." The implementation partners, including TeleTaleem, Sehat Kahani, and Baidarie, have played a vital role in ensuring the project's success. TeleTaleem contributed to digital education solutions, enhancing learning opportunities for rural populations. Sehat Kahani has been

instrumental in delivering telehealth services, providing accessible healthcare to underserved communities. Baidarie has supported community engagement and empowerment by managing the smart village center, ensuring that the project aligns with local needs and aspirations. Their collective efforts have strengthened the impact of this initiative, making it more holistic and sustainable. The Smart Village Pakistan initiative sets a precedent for transformative efforts across the country by integrating innovative solutions, fostering collaboration, and promoting digital skills, the project aims to create lasting impacts and transform the lives of rural communities.



# PSL X: Islamabad United post 203-run target against Multan Sultans

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

RAWALPINDI: Islamabad United set a 203-run target against Multan Sultans with help of Sahibzada Farhan's half-century in the seventh match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) Season 10 being played at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Wednesday.

A quickfire 33-run cameo by Haider Ali powered Islamabad to amass a commendable total against Multan.

The United's star-studded batting lineup recovered and managed to accumulate 202/6 in 20 overs despite regular blows in the middle phase of their innings.

The opening pair of Farhan and Andries Gous (nine) gave United a solid platform to amass a massive total by putting



together 45 runs in 4.4 overs until the latter fell victim to David Willey on the penultimate delivery of the fifth over.

Farhan then shared a brief 35-run partnership

for the second wicket with Colin Munro and walked back in the ninth over after top-scoring for the United with a 36-ball 53, laced with seven fours and two sixes.

Munro then took the reins of United's batting expedition and was involved in brief partnerships with skipper Shadab Khan and wicketkeeper batter Azam Khan before

finally perishing in the 16th over.

The top-order batter scored 48 off 25 deliveries with the help of four fours and three sixes.

Following his dis-



missal, returning Haider Ali and bowling all-rounder Jason Holder added valuable runs at the backend by adding a quickfire 49 runs for the sixth wicket.

The crucial stand culminated with Haider's dismissal on the final delivery of the penultimate over. The right-handed batter smashed three fours and two sixes

on his way to a 16-ball 33.

For Sultans, Chris Jordan picked up two wickets for 41 runs in his four overs, while Ubaid Shah, Usama Mir and Willey made one scalp apiece.

PLAYING Xis

Islamabad United: Andries Gous, Sahibzada Farhan, Colin Munro, Haider Ali, Azam Khan (wk), Shadab Khan (cap), Jason Holder, Muhammad Shahzad, Imad Wasim, Naseem Shah and Riley Meredith.

Multan Sultans: Mohammad Rizwan (cap & wk), Shah Hope, Usman Khan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Kamran Ghulam, Michael Bracewell, David Willey, Chris Jordan, Usama Mir, Ubaid Shah and Mohammad Hasnain.

## Women's World Cup Qualifier: Sultana helps Bangladesh top table

MUHAMMAD USMAN

ISLAMABAD: Bangladesh returned to the top of the Women's ODI World Cup Qualifier points table with a 34-run win over Scotland, who remain in third place. Scotland have only one match left in the competition and must beat Ireland on Friday and hope one of Pakistan or Bangladesh loses both their remaining matches to give themselves a chance of making it to the World Cup. Bangladesh, with a game in hand, only need another victory to confirm their spot for the main event in India later this year and look set to make a second successive World Cup appearance.

Their victory was built on their captain Nigar Sultana's third fifty-plus score in as many matches, which has also put her on top of the qualifiers run-scorers table. Bangladesh boast two of the top three batters so far. Sharmin Akhter, who scored her



second fifty in three matches is the other. Sharmin and Fargana Hoque's second-wicket stand of 103 runs put Bangladesh on track for a big score after the early loss of Ishma Tanjim, who got into double figures for the first time in her career after debuting against Thailand last week.

She was caught at mid-off in the ninth over, off Priyanaz Chatterji, which left the experienced Hoque and Sharmin to help Bangladesh recover. They each scored 57 and took their partnership deep to set a platform for joy. She was in to bat in the 30th over and wasted little

time as she struck her first boundary off the 13th ball she faced and quickly got her strike rate over a run a ball. Her fifty came off 39 balls and she was unbeaten on 83 at the end of the innings.

All of Scotland's frontline bowlers, apart from legspinner Abtaha Maqsood, were among the wickets but none were able to keep Joty quiet and she was the major contributor in each of the four partnerships she was part of. Her 64-run sixth-wicket stand with Fahima Khanur took Bangladesh over 270 and ensured they set Scotland a challenging target.

In 21 previous ODIs, Scotland had only chased seven times before to date and won chasing once. They successfully reached a target of 134 against Netherlands in Amstelveen last year. Today's task was to score more than double that number of runs and it was always going to be tough.

## Hassan Ali puts weight behind out-of-form Babar Azam

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Right-arm fast bowler Hassan Ali has backed the under-fire former Pakistan captain, Babar Azam amid the latter's poor form saying that the star-batter will bounce back.

Speaking at a press conference after his Pakistan Super League (PSL) match on Tuesday, the fast bowler described Babar as Pakistan's "best player" and dismissed criticism of his form, though he acknowledged that the star batter was going through a tough time.

Hassan's remarks came when a journalist referred to one of his past comments about Babar in which he termed the former captain a "King" by



saying "King kar lega" which means, the "King will deliver".

"We made Babar the king, and we are also bringing him down," he said, adding, "If my words 'the king will deliver' hurt anyone, I apologise."

But my stance remains [that] Babar is our best player, and he will bounce back." Reflecting on the

Karachi Kings' performance, the right-arm pacer admitted their batting collapse cost them the match. Karachi Kings were beaten by Lahore Qalandars in yesterday's match. "We lost early wickets, couldn't build partnerships, and the pressure mounted," he said, adding that the team would review their inconsistencies.

## Exiled Afghan women welcome funding pledge with hope and tears

PEAK POINT

MELBOURNE: A funding pledge from the International Cricket Council (ICC) has given Afghanistan's exiled women cricketers hope of recognition and the chance to play on the international stage in defiance of the Taliban. The game's global governing body said on Sunday it would set up a dedicated fund to support the Afghan women, most of whom have resettled in Australia after fleeing Afghanistan when the Taliban swept to power in 2021. The ICC declined to provide financial details but a timeline for the disbursement of funds but the players are hopeful the pledge will prove a watershed for the women's game.

"We feel inspired and valued," Nahida Sapan,



one of the refugee cricketers based in Melbourne, told Reuters. "This news gave us a lot of confidence for the future." "We messaged each other and called each other about it. Some of the girls were crying

because we worked really hard for it." Sapan was among 25 women contracted by the Afghanistan cricket board in 2020 who hoped to follow the men's team by playing on the game's global stage. Most

have started new lives in Australia, with some moving to Britain and Canada. Captained by Sapan, the Australia-based cricketers played an exhibition match in January against a team arranged by

Crick Without Borders, a non-profit organisation supporting the women's game. It was their first match since fleeing Afghanistan, and while it lacked international recognition it was facilitated by Cricket Australia and supported by local government officials. Afghanistan has an established men's team which enjoys ICC funding despite human rights groups calling on the governing body to suspend the nation's membership and ban them from playing in international cricket. Australia and other countries refuse to play the Afghanistan men's team in bilateral series citing deteriorating human rights for women in the country, where female sport has been crushed.

## Zimal Wazir -A Gymnast from South Waziristan making history

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: In the rugged terrain of South Waziristan tribal district, a remarkable story of talent and determination is unfolding after impressive performance of Zimal Wazir. Zimal Wazir is a young age is quickly emerging as a rising star in gymnastics, proving that age is no barrier when it comes to passion, discipline, and ambition to achieve a set goal. Despite her tender age, Zimal has already made her mark at the district level by winning several medals in gymnastics competitions



within a short span of just one year. Her achievements have not only astonished sports enthusiasts but have also highlighted the potential that lies in the tribal regions of Pakistan, especially

among young girls. Zimal is currently training under the supervision of Coach Muhammad Gul at the Gymnastics Academy of Hayatabad Sports Complex in Peshawar.

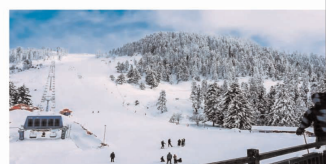
According to her coach, "Zimal possesses extraordinary flexibility, balance, and an admirable eagerness to learn. These qualities clearly set her apart from others her age." Zimal has impressed audiences and judges alike in both academy-level and district-level events in Peshawar, consistently securing top positions and bringing home multiple medals.

## Malam Jabba Ski Resort hosts grand dinner to promote skiing, winter tourism in Pakistan

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: Malam Jabba Ski Resort on Tuesday hosted a grand dinner in honour of members of the International Advisory Board (IAB) members here at a local hotel as part of its efforts to boost winter tourism and skiing in Pakistan.

The event brought together high-level dignitaries, tourism stakeholders and international advisors committed to shaping the future of ski sports in Pakistan. The IAB plays a vital role in offering strategic direction for enhancing visitor experiences, attracting international



tourism and investment and developing world-class ski infrastructure in the country. The dinner was attended by Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, members of the IAB Board, including Lord Sarraz of Kensington, Chair of the

International Advisory Board, Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton TD PC, former National Security Advisor, UK, Waqar Malik, Ambassador at Large, Ahmer Bilal Soofi, former Federal Minister and Youssaf Jamal Shah, senior lawyer and secretary to the Board.

## All qualification scenarios at ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier

RIZWAN HAIDER

ISLAMABAD: Only four teams remain in contention to reach the marquee tournament in India later this year. The Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier is well and truly underway with all the thrills and spills we love to see in the sport, on the road to the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in India later this year. As the teams enter the final stage of the Qualifier, only Bangladesh, Pakistan, Scotland and the West Indies remain in the race to progress. According to the ICC it is how each side stands at the Qualifier: Bangladesh: (3 wins, 6 points, NRR: +1.494). Bangladesh have three wins from as many out-



ings, with their impressive 34-run triumph over Scotland on Tuesday catapulting them to the top of the table and putting them in the box

seat to earn one of two spots at this year's Women's World Cup. Their remaining fixtures are tough, with match-ups against the West

Indies and Pakistan remaining as they seek to book their place at the so-over showcase. One win from those two matches will be enough for Nigar Sultana's side, who are chasing their second consecutive appearance at the Women's World Cup following their debut at the 2022 event in New Zealand.

Pakistan: (3 wins, 6 points, NRR: +0.86)

The hosts are in a relatively strong position with three wins from as many outings, boasting six points already. They had comprehensive wins against Scotland and Ireland by 38 runs and six wickets respectively and most recently sealed a 65-run victory over West Indies.

# Heavy rain, hailstorm bludgeon vehicles in Islamabad, Pindi and parts of KP

**ISLAMABAD:** Heavy rain and hailstorms battered several areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and twin cities Rawalpindi and Islamabad causing damage to vehicles and private properties.

According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, there is a possibility of heavy rain in Attock, Chakwal, Gujranwala, Azad Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Reports said a vehicle was swept away in a flood in Landi Kotal and many others were damaged. This all happened due to the torrential rain.

In several areas of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, the windows of vehicles were broken due to hailstorm, and the windows of houses also were broken.



In Rawalpindi, the heat wave spell was broken as 9mm of rain was recorded in Goira and 2mm in Bogra.

The District administration officers remained in the field on the instructions of the Islamabad DC

to ensure remedial measures amid torrential rain and hailstorm in the federal capital.

The assistant commissioners visited the low-lying areas, and CDA and MC teams worked to minimise inconvenience to the public.

PPP Senator Sherry Rehman termed the rainfall scenes caught as being "fitting", and that hail was "coming down like pellets".

"This is extreme weather volatility driven by climate change, where anomalies proliferate. Not a random natural event. And related entirely to human actions like emissions, which are growing because of addition to dirty energy," she said in a post on X (formerly Twitter).

Rawalpindi Cricket also affected. The Pakistan Super League match between Islamabad United and Multan Sultans scheduled in the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium for later today, was also affected by the stormy weather.

# PIC Serves Show Cause Notice to National Saving Centre Chief for Defying RTI Act

**ISLAMABAD:** The Pakistan Information Commission (PIC) has issued show cause notice to the Director General of the National Saving Centre over persistent non-compliance with the Commission's order, raising serious concerns about transparency and adherence to the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017.

The case originated from an information request filed by a citizen, Munir Ahmed, on July 4, 2024. He had requested a copy of the Special Audit Report for four branches of the National Saving Centre: Mirpur, Pindi, Cheb, Rawalakot, and

Jelum. Under the RTI Act, the public body was legally required to respond within 10 working days. However, after receiving no response within the mandated timeframe, Munir Ahmed filed an appeal with the Pakistan Information Commission. Following the appeal process, the Commission issued a binding order on October 8, 2025, directing the Director General of the National Saving Centre to share the requested audit reports. Despite the passage of over five months, the National Saving Centre has neither implemented the order nor challenged it before the Islamabad High Court, as allowed under the law

within a 30-day period. In light of this, the Commission has served a show cause notice to the Director General under Section 21(1)(f) of the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017, demanding an explanation for non-compliance. The notice also cites Section 20(1)(f) of the Act, which empowers the Commission to "impose on the official a fine equivalent to his salary for one day, for a maximum of a hundred days, who has acted wilfully to obstruct any activity which is required to be undertaken by this Act; including preventing or delaying the disclosure of information to an applicant."

# Pakistan and Syria Collaborate for Autism Awareness; Maroof Concludes Two-Day Free Autism & Dental Camps

**ISLAMABAD:** As part of World Autism Awareness Month, a significant step forward in regional collaboration and community care was marked as the Maroof Early Intervention Therapy Unit (EITU) successfully concluded its two-day free medical camps on April 15-16 at its facility in Silver Oaks Apartments, F-10, Islamabad. The event aimed to address the critical need for autism awareness, early diagnosis, and accessible care in Pakistan. The closing session was graced by the attendance of H.E. Dr.

Ramez Alraee, Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic to Pakistan, as Chief Guest. Also present was the Deputy Head of Mission from the Embassy of Iraq H.E. Ms. Raghda Raghda Nabeel Fauzi. The dignitaries appreciated Pakistan's growing efforts in inclusive education and healthcare, particularly for children with special needs. During his remarks, H.E. Dr. Ramez Alraee emphasized the importance of cooperation between Pakistan and Syria in the field of special education and health, expressing the Syrian



community's committing to assist Pakistan in promoting inclusive care models. He praised

Maroof's initiatives, calling them "deeply inspiring and essential for building an inclusive soci-

ety." Haroon Naseer the CEO of Maroof Int'l Hospital said that according to global estimates, 1

in 100 children is diagnosed with ASD in Pakistan, where awareness remains limited and diagnostic capacity critically low, the burden is growing. There are fewer than 100 trained consultants across the country capable of accurately diagnosing autism spectrum disorder (ASD). He noted that early intervention significantly improves outcomes, but severely delays early intervention, often critical before the age of 5. He reiterated the hospital's long-standing commitment to providing timely, accessible, and dignified care for every child, regardless of their

challenges. The free autism diagnostic consultations were led by Prof. Dr. S. Hashim Raza, Consultant at East Surrey NHS Trust, UK, and one of only two certified specialists in Pakistan qualified to diagnose autism spectrum disorder (ASD). He was assisted by Ms. Tehreem Khan, Head of Maroof EITU. Their team provided guidance to dozens of parents on identifying early signs and supporting developmental needs. Simultaneously, the Maroof Dental Department conducted free dental screenings led by Dr. Maira Nazim, offer-

ing valuable oral health consultations and discussions were led by Prof. Dr. S. Hashim Raza, Consultant at East Surrey NHS Trust, UK, and one of only two certified specialists in Pakistan qualified to diagnose autism spectrum disorder (ASD). He was assisted by Ms. Tehreem Khan, Head of Maroof EITU. Their team provided guidance to dozens of parents on identifying early signs and supporting developmental needs. Simultaneously, the Maroof Dental Department conducted free dental screenings led by Dr. Maira Nazim, offer-

# Opinion & Editorial

## Trump's Gratitude to Pakistan: Yet Another Setback for Imran

**Abdul Basit Alvi**  
The relationship between Pakistan and the United States stands as one of the most dynamic and complex partnerships in international politics. Over the years, this relationship has evolved through various transformations, influenced by shifting geopolitical interests, regional conflicts, and changing priorities in both nations. Despite the fluctuations, the bond between Pakistan and the United States remains vital for both countries, with significant implications for regional stability, global security, and economic interests. The roots of Pak-US relations trace back to the early years of Pakistan's independence. In the wake of World War II and at the start of the Cold War, the United States aimed to form alliances with countries that could counter Soviet influence in Asia. Pakistan, which had recently gained independence from British colonial rule in 1947, occupied a strategically important position in a volatile region and was seen by the United States as a key ally in the fight against communism. In 1954, Pakistan joined the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), a US-led military alliance designed to contain Soviet expansion in the Middle East and South Asia. Similarly, in 1955, Pakistan became a member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). These alliances marked a period of strong cooperation between the two nations, with the United States providing military and economic assistance to Pakistan. One of the most defining moments in Pak-US relations occurred in the late 1950s and 1960s, during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Concerned



Abdul Basit Alvi

about Soviet expansion into Central Asia, the US provided substantial military and financial assistance to Pakistan, which in turn used this support to supply aid to the Afghan fighters. The CIA worked closely with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency to coordinate the delivery of weapons, including Stinger missiles, to the mujahideen. This US-Pakistan alliance was seen as crucial in the Cold War, with the US recognizing Pakistan's pivotal role in the defeat of the Soviet Union. The events of September 11, 2001, dramatically reshaped Pak-US relations and brought the two countries closer. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan's support in the global war on terror. This marked the beginning of a new phase of cooperation against terrorism. After the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf made the critical decision to align with the US in efforts to dismantle al-Qaeda and topple the Taliban regime in

Afghanistan. In exchange for its support, Pakistan received substantial US military and economic aid, including billions in security assistance and access to advanced military technology. Pakistan also played a vital role in the logistical support of US forces in Afghanistan, allowing US troops to transit through its territory and providing crucial intelligence and assistance in operations targeting al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders. The United States has remained a major source of financial assistance to Pakistan. Beyond military aid, the US has supported economic development, especially in education, healthcare, and infrastructure. It has also been a key partner in efforts to combat extremism in Pakistan, funding programs aimed at promoting stability and good governance. Throughout these years, the relationship between the two countries has been notable for its consistency, despite changes in leadership. However, Pakistan has borne a significant cost in terms of terrorism due to its cooperation in the war against terror. The leadership of both the US and Pakistan has generally shown maturity and seriousness in managing the bilateral relationship, except for Imran Khan, who consistently prioritized his personal interests. Khan's criticism of the US, especially regarding its military presence in Afghanistan and its role in shaping Pakistan's policies, Khan's most significant confrontation with the US occurred toward the end of his tenure as Prime Minister. In early 2022, as his government faced mounting political opposition and challenges, Khan began accusing the United States of being involved in a conspiracy to remove him from power. In the months leading up to his ousting in April 2022, Khan repeatedly claimed that the US, in coordination with certain

factions in Pakistan, especially those who believed the country had been dominated by foreign powers, particularly the US. Prior to becoming Prime Minister in 2018, Khan consistently criticized the United States. He accused successive Pakistani governments of being overly reliant on American aid, arguing that this dependence undermined Pakistan's independence and sovereignty. He also criticized the US's "War on Terror," particularly the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent military operations in the region. Khan was vocal about the significant human cost of these interventions, highlighting the devastating impact on Pakistan, which suffered greatly from the violence and instability spilling over from Afghanistan. Throughout his political career, Khan framed his criticism of the US within the context of a broader push for geopolitical independence. He positioned himself as an advocate for a foreign policy that would enable Pakistan to make decisions based on its own interests, free from external influence. In his early years as an opposition leader, Khan's rhetoric was strongly critical of the US, especially regarding its military presence in Afghanistan and its role in shaping Pakistan's policies. Khan's most significant confrontation with the US occurred toward the end of his tenure as Prime Minister. In early 2022, as his government faced mounting political opposition and challenges, Khan began accusing the United States of being involved in a conspiracy to remove him from power. In the months leading up to his ousting in April 2022, Khan repeatedly claimed that the US, in coordination with certain

factions within Pakistan's political and military leadership, orchestrated a plot to destabilize his government. His central accusation was that the US had engineered a no-confidence motion against him in Pakistan's National Assembly, mainly due to his independent foreign policy stance, which clashed with Washington's interests. Khan argued that the US disapproved of his refusal to align with the West, particularly regarding his growing ties with China and Russia. He also criticized the US for its negative response to his outspoken opposition to the US-led war in Afghanistan and its broader foreign policy in the region. Khan further alleged that a letter from the US embassy in Islamabad conveyed the US's dissatisfaction with his government and suggested that his removal would be necessary to improve US-Pakistan relations. This "foreign conspiracy" narrative became a central part of his political messaging as he framed himself as a victim of a covert campaign aimed at undermining his government's sovereignty and legitimacy. The so-called conspiracy theory gained significant traction in Pakistani media, and Khan's supporters viewed his removal as the result of foreign manipulation. The United States denied the allegations, with both US officials and diplomats in Pakistan dismissing any involvement in Pakistan's domestic affairs, asserting that Washington had no interest in meddling in Pakistan's internal politics. For Khan, these allegations served to rally his base, presenting himself as a so-called nationalist leader fighting for Pakistan's independence from foreign control. This narrative fit

with his broader campaign centered on so-called "sovereignty" and rejecting foreign-imposed decisions. However, after his removal from office in April 2022, Imran Khan's political trajectory took a dramatic turn. Despite spending much of his tenure as Prime Minister criticizing the US and accusing it of interfering in Pakistan's affairs, his approach to Washington changed sharply after his ouster. Khan's rhetoric regarding the US became more measured, acknowledging the importance of maintaining a pragmatic relationship with Washington. While he continued to assert that the US was part of the plot to remove him, he also recognized the need for Pakistan to pursue a balanced foreign policy that would allow for improved relations with the United States. He emphasized his desire for Pakistan to maintain strong relationships with all major powers, including the United States, while firmly asserting the country's sovereignty and independence. Khan repeatedly stated that he was not inherently anti-American, but rather opposed to any excessive foreign interference in Pakistan's internal affairs. In an effort to restore US support for Pakistan, Khan's PTI leadership pursued a more diplomatic outreach, even as Khan continued to criticize Washington's role in his removal from office. Khan highlighted Pakistan's strategic importance to the United States, given its geopolitical location in South Asia and its role in regional security, particularly concerning Afghanistan. While his

efforts to engage with the US were primarily informal and rhetorical at this stage, there was a clear shift in his tone. He acknowledged that Pakistan would need US economic support, especially in securing financial assistance from international institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, where US influence is significant. Khan's outreach occurred when Pakistan was grappling with economic challenges, such as inflation, a growing fiscal deficit, and dwindling foreign exchange reserves. He recognized that US support could be pivotal in alleviating some of these economic pressures. This pragmatic shift contrasted with his earlier, more confrontational stance on US foreign policy. Khan's shift in relations with the US seemed to be influenced by personal needs. While he had previously accused the US of interference, his tone changed dramatically after his imprisonment. He and key members of his party began lobbying for US support to secure his release. PTI leaders like Zulfikar Bhutto were active in establishing connections with US officials, meeting with congress members, and urging them to push Pakistan to release Khan. They placed significant hope in President Trump, working hard to align with the Trump administration. However, as previously noted, the policies of countries typically do not change with leadership transitions. US-Pakistan relations are shaped by broader structural factors, and leadership changes alone are unlikely to shift this cooperation. Khan faced another setback when US President Donald Trump recently thanked Pakistan for its cooperation in counter-

terrorism efforts. In his first extensive address to Congress since taking office, Trump expressed gratitude to Pakistan for its role in the arrest of a terrorist involved in the Kabul blast of 2021. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also thanked Trump for recognizing Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts. US National Security Adviser Michael Waltz further praised Pakistan's actions, reaching out to Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to convey Trump's appreciation. The terrorist in question had been arrested based on intelligence, linked to a terrorist plot executed during the US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021. This development was a significant blow to Khan, who had hoped for a supportive tweet from Trump. However, Trump demonstrated restraint by refraining from involving himself in Pakistan's internal matters or pressuring its legal system. This move served as an eye-opener for Khan, underscoring the need for him to face Pakistan's legal system with moral courage and integrity. As a vocal proponent of establishing Riasat-e-Madina, he should understand its fundamental principle that all individuals are equal in Islam, and that the same rules and regulations apply to everyone. He should avoid hypocritical practices which he preaches. Any relief or support the PTI leadership seeks will come from Pakistan's institutions and justice system. Imran Khan must recognize this reality and refrain from actions that could harm Pakistan's interests.

## Pakistan aims to become regional hub for used textile trade; Mussadiq Malik

ARSHAD MALIK

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Coordination, Senator Dr. Mussadiq Malik highlighted Pakistan's potential to become a regional hub for the trade of used textiles during a panel discussion on circularity and sustainable textile practices held here on Wednesday.

The Minister emphasized that Pakistan has a long-standing tradition of utilizing used textiles which have proven to be naturally beneficial. "Other countries are also adopting similar approaches and

learning from Pakistan's experiences," he added. Addressing the importance of sustainability, the Minister stressed the need for green textiles made from 100% renewable materials.

He warned that improper reuse of textiles harms the environment and disrupts the food chain, calling such practices "unsustainable and unacceptable."

Acknowledging existing challenges, the Minister pointed out the lack of public awareness and technological gaps as major hurdles.

He called for a clear defini-

tion of recycling and circularity to streamline efforts in the sector.

In his concluding remarks, the Minister underscored the economic benefits of focusing on textile exports and trade, stating that it would significantly boost Pakistan's economy.

Asserting Pakistan's commitment to environmental sustainability, the Minister declared, "We are going green not because of external conditions, but for the future of our generations. Whether we receive support or not, we will make it happen and improve the environment."



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environment, Senator Dr. Mussadiq Malik, addressing the leaders in Islamabad Business Summit.

## Pakistan and Syria Collaborate for Autism Awareness; Maroof Concludes Two-Day Free Autism & Dental Camps

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: As part of World Autism Awareness Month, a significant step forward in regional collaboration and community care was marked as the Maroof Early Intervention Therapy Unit (EITU) successfully concluded its two-day free medical camps on April 15 at its facility in Silver Oaks Apartments, F-10, Islamabad. The event aimed to address the critical need for autism awareness, early diagnosis, and accessible care in Pakistan. The closing session was graced by the attendance of H.E. Dr. Rameez Alraee, Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic to Pakistan, as Chief Guest. Also present was the Deputy Head of Mission from the Embassy of Iraq H.E. Ms. Raghda Raghda Nabeel Fauzi. The dignitaries appreciated Pakistan's growing efforts in inclusive education and healthcare, particularly for children with special needs. During his remarks, H.E. Dr. Rameez Alraee emphasized the



importance of cooperation between Pakistan and Syria in the field of special education and health, expressing the Syrian community's commitment to assist Pakistan in promoting inclusive care models. He praised Maroof's initiatives, calling them "deeply inspiring and essential for building an inclusive society." Haroon Naser, the CEO of Maroof Int'l Hospital said that according to global estimates, 1 in 100 children is diagnosed with ASD in Pakistan, where awareness remains limited and diagnostic capacity critically low, the burden is growing. There are fewer than 100 trained consultants across the country

capable of accurately diagnosing autism—a gap that severely delays early intervention, often critical before the age of 5. He reiterated the hospital's long-standing commitment: "Our Early Intervention Therapy Unit reflects MIH's vision of timely, accessible, and dignified care for every child, regardless of their challenges." The free autism diagnostic consultations were led by Prof. Dr. S. Hashim Raza, Consultant at East Surrey NHS Trust, UK, and one of only two certified specialists in Pakistan qualified to diagnose autism spectrum disorder (ASD). He was assisted by Ms. Tehreem Khan, Head of Maroof EITU.

## NIC to Serve as MR Number Under Pakistan's "One Patient, One ID" Health Reform

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Health, Mustafa Kamal, visited the office of NADRA Chairman, Lieutenant General Muhammad Munir Afsar, to advance a landmark health initiative: the nationwide rollout of the "One Patient, One ID" vision. The meeting marked a significant step toward integrating Pakistan's health data systems under a unified identification mechanism. Minister Kamal announced that the national identity card number (NIC) will now function as the Medical Record (MR) number for all citizens. This reform seeks to resolve the persistent problem of fragmented and inaccessible patient health histories by linking medical data directly to NADRA's centralized database—the country's most comprehensive data repository. The integration will enable secure and seamless access to a patient's

medical information from any healthcare facility across Pakistan. This centralized system is expected to significantly enhance continuity of care, diagnosis accuracy, and treatment outcomes by equipping healthcare professionals with instant access to patient histories. The Ministry of Health and NADRA will jointly lead the implementation, with digital tools playing a critical role in delivering healthcare services to citizens' homes. Telemedicine is set to become a core feature of the new system, allowing for remote medical consultations and timely delivery of medications. The Minister emphasized that, amid rapid population growth and increasing strain on healthcare facilities, digital health solutions are no longer optional. With approximately 70% of patients bypassing basic health units in favor of overcrowded hospitals, the need for reform is urgent.

## PAC Recovers Rs118bn in Two Months, Moves to Publish Toshakhana Records from 1947

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has exposed widespread financial mismanagement within Wapda, including the misuse of project vehicles, inflated costs of major hydropower projects like Dasu and Neelum-Jhelum, and controversial appointments. The committee also condemned retaliatory actions allegedly taken against MNA Sanaullah Masti Khel after he raised accountability questions, calling it an attack on parliamentary integrity. Multiple cases have now been referred to NAB and FIA for investigation. The National Assembly's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has come down hard on the Water and Power

Development Authority (Wapda) over financial irregularities, mismanagement of major hydropower projects, and alleged retaliatory actions against a committee member. In a stormy session chaired by MNA Junaid Akbar Khan, the PAC scrutinized Wapda's expenditure records and audit reports for 2022-2024. A key revelation was the unauthorized use of 88 vehicles, bought for project operations, by Wapda officers, consultants, and even officials at the Ministry of Water Resources. Some vehicles, procured through contractors with monthly operation and maintenance (O&M) costs, incurred unjustified expenditures amounting to Rs153.2 million. Audit officials insisted these vehicles were to

be returned to project sites, and recovery made from those responsible. PAC members also reviewed audit objections on the Dasu Hydropower Project (DHPP), which has seen its cost rise alarmingly from Rs4 billion to Rs36 billion due to repeated changes in scope and persistent land acquisition delays. The Ministry of Water Resources blamed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, saying land settlement had dragged on for 13 years. The project's total cost is now projected at over Rs1.7 trillion, up from its 2014 approval estimate of Rs486 billion. Committee members accused Wapda of negligence, with Senator Shibli Faraz calling the project a display of "arrogance and incompetence."

## Senator Bushra Anjum Butt Leads Major Push for Education Reform and Degree Attestation Relief

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Senator Bushra Anjum Butt is leading a comprehensive push for educational reforms in Pakistan, addressing major development projects, legislation, and the critical issue of delayed degree attestations affecting over 54,000 students. From launching new initiatives like the Center of Excellence for Autism to demanding transparency from the Higher Education Commission (HEC), she is spearheading efforts to resolve systemic challenges in the sector. In a recent meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training, Senator Bushra Anjum Butt oversaw discussions

on the Proposed Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) 2025-26. Key among the projects was the Rs 2.7 billion Center of Excellence for Autism in Islamabad's H-9/4, aimed at delivering high-standard care and education for children with autism. The committee also evaluated digital education initiatives in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, and the deployment of school support specialists focused on entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and climate awareness. The committee reviewed nutrition standards in institutions managed by the Allah Waly Trust. Senator Bushra Anjum Butt requested a detailed assessment of the meal programs, highlighting

the importance of healthy, nutrient-rich diets for students. Efforts to improve access to education through hybrid schools and Accelerated Learning Program centers in underserved Karachi areas were also discussed. Another key topic was the progress of projects targeting out-of-school children in Islamabad, including the Daanish School in Kuri, which carries a budget of Rs 30 billion and is scheduled for completion in 2027. Legislative matters, including the amendment to the "Federal Supervision of Curricula, Textbooks and Maintenance of Standards of Education Bill 2024," were deferred pending review by the Islamic Council of Ideology.

## Pakistan thanks Kuwait for extending oil credit facility

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Ali Pervaiz Malik, on Wednesday extended gratitude to Kuwait Petroleum for extending Pakistan's oil credit facility for two years.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik held meeting with Ambassador of Kuwait H.E. Nassar Abdulrahman Almutairi.

He said such cooperation has been pivotal in enabling the structural reforms led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, according to a news release. Ambassador Almutairi lauded Pakistan's recent strides in economic stabilization and investment facilitation under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. He expressed confidence in Pakistan's economic trajectory and reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to deepening cooperation,

especially in the energy sector. Malik appreciated the flexibility shown by Kuwait in accommodating Pakistan's needs and highlighted the strengthening relationship between Pakistan State Oil (PSO) and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation. He also welcomed the interest shown by Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUPPEC) in Pakistan's offshore exploration activities. He emphasized

Pakistan's strong commitment to expanding ties with Gulf countries, particularly in energy and trade. "Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif holds deep respect and affection for the Amir and Crown Prince of Kuwait and the people of Kuwait," he said. The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both sides expressing a firm resolve to further enhance the enduring partnership between Pakistan and Kuwait.

## Justice Ali Baqar Najafi sworn in as SC judge

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Newly appointed Justice Ali Baqar Najafi formally took the oath of office as a Supreme Court judge on Wednesday. According to the channel report, the oath was administered by the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi, in a solemn ceremony in the Supreme Court building in Islamabad.

As per the channel report, Justice Ali Baqar Najafi will serve as a judge of the Supreme Court until 14 September 2028. According to the notification issued by the Ministry of Law following the approval of President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari yesterday, Justice Najafi's elevation to the apex court has been formally confirmed. His nomination had earlier been approved by the Judicial Commission of Pakistan.

Born on 15 September 1963 in Lahore, Punjab, Justice Ali Baqar Najafi has been serving as a senior judge of the Lahore High Court (LHC) since 16 April 2012. He has also been an active member of the Administration Committee of the LHC. Justice Najafi completed his graduation from Government College University, Lahore, and earned his LLB from University Law College, Punjab University, in 1989.

## Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's Laptop Scheme

## Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari graced the event, personally handing over laptops to the students



BY CH M RASHEED SAI

ISLAMABAD: A ceremony was held at the university's auditorium where Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's Laptop Scheme distributed laptops to students. Vice Chancellor

Prof. Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari graced the event, personally handing over laptops to the students. In his address, Dr. Shinwari emphasized that we live in an era of knowledge, technology, and research. He noted

that the government's initiative would empower youth with opportunities for growth and development. The students were visibly thrilled and hopeful, seeing the laptops as a valuable resource for their academic journey.