



Finance Minister chairs meeting to monitor petroleum prices amid regional tension



Iran open to peace talks if Israel ceases aggression, Dar reveals



Mustafa Kamal calls all sectors to unite for polio-free Pakistan

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National effort vital to unlock blue economy's vast potential, says PM Shehbaz

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday called for a unified national effort to tap into the immense potential of Pakistan's blue economy, describing it as the country's "new economic frontier" with promising opportunities for sustainable growth and development.

Speaking at the soft launch of the 2nd Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference (PIMEC 2025), the prime minister laid out the vision for transforming Pakistan into a regional maritime powerhouse.

"It is a great pleasure to see the Pakistan Navy, under the patronage of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and in collaboration with key partners, organising the second edition of PIMEC," said the prime minister. He lauded the leadership of Naval Chief

Admiral Naveed Ashraf and Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry for their strategic foresight and dedication in steering this important initiative. Highlighting the critical role of the Navy in national defence and regional security, he said, "The Pakistan Navy has been a formidable force through all conflicts and remains a strong pillar of our national security." Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to international peace and maritime law, he cited the AMAN Exercise, featuring participation from over 50 countries, as a symbol of Pakistan's global engagement and cooperative maritime posture. With over 1,000 kilometres of coastline and a position at the crossroads of vital sea lanes, Pakistan, the premier said, was uniquely positioned to harness the trillion-dollar global blue economy.



Islamabad: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif launches new logo of Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference.

Iran open to peace talks if Israel ceases aggression, Dar reveals

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has asserted that Iran is ready to resume negotiations provided Israel halts further military action as the conflict between Tehran and Tel Aviv enters its fourth day. "Iran's Foreign Minister [Abbas Araghchi] told me that if Israel does not carry out another attack, they are prepared to return to the negotiating table," Dar said while speaking on the Senate floor. "We conveyed this message to other countries [...] there is still time to stop Israel and bring Iran back to talks," he added. Since Friday, Israel has launched large-scale strikes on Iran, targeting military bases, nuclear sites and residential areas across the country. The attacks have killed at least 224 people in the Islamic Republic, including top military commanders, nuclear scientists and civilians. Iran has retaliated with barrages of drones and missiles that have killed at least 24 people in Israel, according to the latest figures from the prime minister's office. Iran does not recognise Israel and has long accused it of carrying out sabotage operations against its nuclear facilities, as well as assassinating its scientists. Speaking on the floor of the upper house, Dar said that Pakistan has played a constructive role in supporting diplomatic channels, adding: "Our intention was always to see successful negotiations between the United States and Iran."

Iran state TV resumes programming after Israeli attack on Tehran

PEAK POINT

IRAN: The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) building was struck in an Israeli attack on Monday, cutting live coverage immediately.

The blast occurred as the presenter was live on TV, lambasting Israel before she was seen leaving the live broadcast, Iranian media reported, sharing a video of the incident. IRNA reported that "live programmes were briefly halted at the IRIB News Network but returned to normal a few minutes afterwards". Iran's Mehr news agency posted visuals from the attack on the IRIB building on X.

Iran's Press TV also shared a video showing the aftermath of the attack.

The attack came shortly after Iranian media reported Israeli airstrikes in a civilian residential neighbourhood in Tehran.

Earlier, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the country was "on the road to victory" and claimed that his air force was "in control of



The skies over Tehran", Al Jazeera reported.

The latest military exchange between the arch-rivals began when Israel struck Iran's nuclear and military sites on Friday, killing top commanders and scientists. Tel Aviv has said it wants to stop Tehran from building an atomic weapon, which the latter has consistently denied, saying its uranium enrichment programme is for civilian purposes.

Dangers of further escalation

ing our two objectives: eliminating the nuclear threat and eliminating the missile threat," he said.

Netanyahu also threatened the citizens of Tehran, telling them to leave Iran's capital. "We are taking action."

Meanwhile, Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee posted an evacuation order for citizens in Tehran on his X account.

The post ordered citizens living in a specific area of the Iranian capital to "leave immediately", warning that Israel would attack Iran's military infrastructure in the area.

"Dear citizens, for your safety, please leave the mentioned area in the third district of Tehran immediately," the order read, enclosing a map of the city. "Your presence in this area endangers your life."

Katz also said that Iran's state television and radio were "about to disappear", after the evacuation warning was issued for the district in Tehran where the broadcaster is based.

Punjab govt tables Rs5.3tr budget for FY26

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Punjab Finance Minister Mujtaba Shuja ur Rehman presented the province's Rs5.335 billion budget for the fiscal year 2025-26.

Speaking on the floor of the Punjab Assembly, the finance minister said that the present government has allocated a total of Rs1,240 billion for the development programme that is 23% of the budget 2025-26 and is 47% higher than the current FY 2024-25 containing Rs842 billion on this count. In next FY budget, he said, estimated expenditures under Account-II (Food) have been reduced up to 88% (Rs53.3 billion) while compared with that of current fiscal year, which is clear proof of the best economic planning of the government, and that is why we have managed to overcome internal debts servicing by 94%. He said that health, education and other sectors under the social sector have always been top priority of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government, that is why a hefty grant of Rs494 billion (40% of the ADP)



have been earmarked for the social sector.

Giving break-up of the budget in his speech during the assembly session, Mujtaba said that the total revenues collection is estimated at Rs4,890.4 billion, adding that under National Finance Commission (NFC), Punjab will receive Rs662.2 billion from the federal divisible pool, while provincial receipts (Own Resource Revenue) are estimated at Rs828.2 billion for financial year 2025-26. Regarding

provincial receipts, he mentioned, Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) has been given a revenue collection target of Rs340 billion for the next fiscal year, Board of Revenue Rs135.5 billion, and Excise Department Rs70 billion.

Terming the provincial budget as "tax-free, progressive and pro-business", Mujtaba added that during the financial year 2025-26, a total of Rs2,706.5 billion would be spent on under heads of provincial government

employees' salaries, pension, PFC transfers and service deliveries, asserting that these expenditures are reduced by 6%. Similarly, Rs590.2 billion under the head of Current Capital Expenditures is made part of the budget. He said that Rs764.2 billion fund of provisional PFC Award (Provincial Finance Commission) have been allocated to empower the local governments, while Rs150 billion and Rs20 billion have been allocated as special grants for waste management and municipal corporations, respectively. As per welfare state vision of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he said, the Punjab government has set aside Rs70 billion package to provide social protection to the people. While maintaining the fiscal management, he mentioned, Rs470 billion EPS under the agreement between the federal government and the IMF, has been incorporated in the budget, adding that the completion of this provincial surplus is subject to the achievement of the FBR (Federal Board of Revenue) revenue target.

Iran denies asking Cyprus to convey messages to Israel

PEAK POINT

DUBAI: Iran did not send any message to Israel via a third country, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said on Sunday, after Cypriot President Nikos Christodouides said earlier Tehran had asked Nicosia to convey "some messages" to Israel. President Nikos Christodouides said Sunday Iran has asked Cyprus to convey "some messages" to Israel, as the east Mediterranean island appealed for restraint in a rapidly escalating crisis in the Middle East. Christodouides spoke to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and he has also spoken to the leaders of Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Greece, his office said Sunday. Christodouides told journalists Iran had asked Cyprus to convey "some messages" to Israel but he did not say who specifically the messages were from or what they said. Cypriot officials offered no clarity on the nature of the messages, which came after the Cypriot foreign minister spoke to his Iranian counterpart on Friday night. Christodouides also said he was not happy with what he said was a slow reaction by the European Union to the unfolding crisis in the Middle East.





ICC unveils 2025 Womenscricket World Cup schedule

MUHAMMAD USMAN

ISLAMABAD: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday announced the schedule for the Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 set to be held in India and Sri Lanka in September.

Pakistan will play all their matches of the 50-over World Cup in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo when India hosts this year's tournament. Following India's refusal to travel to Pakistan for the Champions Trophy earlier this year, a "hybrid model" was decided upon whereby India would play all its matches in Dubai, chosen as a neutral venue.

Hosts India will get the tournament underway against Sri Lanka in Bengaluru on September 30 at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, with action starting at 3pm local time according to the schedule.

Defending champions Australia then get their campaign up and running against neighbours New Zealand at Holker Cricket Stadium in Indore on October 1, while Pakistan will face Bangladesh a day later in Colombo.

The highly anticipated India-Pakistan clash is set for October 5, after which Pakistan will play Australia on the 8th, England on the 15th, New Zealand on the 18th, South Africa on the 21st and Sri Lanka on the 24th.

The semi-finals are scheduled for October 29 and 30, before the final takes place on November 2.

ICC Chairman Jay Shah said: "The confirmation of the schedule only builds further excitement and anticipation" for the world cup.

"With the eight best teams in the women's game descending on India, alongside incredible venues and what promises to be record-breaking crowds, we are all looking forward to an unforgettable tournament." Pakistan qualified for the World Cup when they beat Thailand by 87 runs during the ICC Women's World Cup 2025 Qualifiers in Lahore in April.

Arshad Nadeem named in Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list

SAMRA ATHAR



ISLAMABAD: Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem was named in Forbes' 30 Under 30 Asia list following his historic Olympic performance at the Paris 2024 Olympics, it emerged on Monday.

The entertainment and sports list, which was originally published last month, aims to "spotlight" the next generation of talent — on court and the screen.

Nadeem, 28, changed Pakistan's sporting trajectory when he won gold and broke the Olympic record with a massive 92.97m throw in Paris — which Forbes called a "stunning show" — winning Pakistan's first individual gold medal and the first of any colour in more than 30 years. His Olympic feat got him more than \$253 million in cash prize from Punjab and Sindh, in addition to several other rewards handed out by various government entities and companies. The government also named a road in Islamabad in Nadeem's honour, while Pakistan Post issued a commemorative stamp on Independence Day to pay tribute. Nadeem retained his javelin supremacy when he took home gold at last month's Asian Athletic Championships with a 86.40m throw, narrowly missing out on the meet record of 86.72m. His triumph marked the first time Pakistan won gold at the Asian Athletics Championship in more than 50 years.

Nadeem rose to prominence after he bagged gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, followed by a silver medal at the 2023 World Championships in Budapest. He will soon be going to England to prepare for September's World Athletics Championships, the only major tournament where he has yet to win gold.

Pakistan defeat Japan in FIH Nations Cup

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

KUALA LUMPUR: Pakistan beat Japan on Monday, scoring 3-2 in their second match of the FIH Nations Cup at National Hockey Stadium in Kuala Lumpur. Pakistan staged a comeback after trailing 2-1 to secure the win against Japan. Chazanfar Ali gave Pakistan an early lead with a goal in the first quarter. However, Japan equalised just one minute later through a goal by Kazumasa.

Two minutes after that, Koji Yamasaki scored to put Japan in the lead. By the end of the first quarter, Japan was leading 2-1. No goals were scored by either team in the second quarter. In the third quarter, Pakistan's Rana Waheed Ashraf scored to level the match at 2-2. In the final quarter, Sufiyan Khan converted a penalty corner into a goal, giving Pakistan the lead once again. Sufiyan's decisive goal secured a 3-2 victory for Pakistan. Pakistan would play its third group match of the event against New Zealand on Wednesday at the same venue.

A 4 day earlier, Pakistan and Malaysia played out a thrilling 3-3 draw in their opening match of the FIH Nations Cup on Sunday, despite Pakistan holding the lead twice during the match.

Ahmed Nadeem and Abdul Rehman gave Pakistan an early advantage with two quick goals in the first quarter, helping their



side head into the fourth quarter with a commanding 2-0 lead.

However, Malaysia bounced back with two goals in quick succession in the final quarter, leveling the score. Fitri Saari and Syed Cholan were on target for the Malaysians.

Pakistan regained the lead when Rana Waheed Ashraf found the net, but Malaysia responded just two minutes later with another equaliser by Cholan, his 2nd goal of the match, to make it 3-3.

It is pertinent to mention that the tournament's

format includes preliminary pool matches, with the top teams advancing to the semi-finals on June 20 and the final and bronze medal matches scheduled for June 21.

The eight participating teams are split into two pools for the preliminary rounds. Pool A consists of France, Korea, South Africa, and Wales, while Pool B features Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Pakistan.

The FIH Hockey Nations Cup serves as a crucial stepping stone for teams aiming to qualify for the elite FIH Hockey Pro League. The

winner of this tournament will earn promotion to the 2025-26 Pro League season.

Pakistan squad for Nations Cup: Aamud Butt (captain), Rana Waheed (vice captain), Muneer-ur-Rehman, Abdullah Ishtiaq, Mohammad Abdullah, Mohammad Sufyan Khan, Abdul Manan, Hamad Anjum, Arshad Liaquat, Moeen Shakeel, Zakrya Hayat, Chazanfar Ali, Salman Razaq, Junaid Manzoor, Afriz Khan, Abdul Rehman, Ahmed Nadeem and Mohibullah.

Global football community lauds Pakistan-made Fifa 2025 ball

JAVED KHAN



ISLAMABAD: The Fifa Club World Cup 2025 Pro Ball, the official match ball unveiled by Adidas earlier this year, caught the world's attention for its striking stars-and-stripes design, ahead of the mega event kicks off this weekend in the

United States. The ball not only captures American pride but also reflects exceptional performance and engineering, proudly marked with a "Made in Pakistan" label. Sam Hardy, Adidas' general manager for football, described the ball as the result of 18 months of rigorous development, aiming to create something "bold, loud, iconic and unmistakably American." This blend of aesthetics and functionality showcases Pakistan's manufacturing expertise. The 2025 Club World Cup ball also marks a significant move towards sustainability, crafted entirely from eco-friendly materials. Composed of 61% polyurethane, 30% recycled polyester, and 9% viscose, this new iteration underscores a commitment to environmentally conscious practices while enhancing the game experience on the global stage. However, behind its patriotic aesthetic lies a testament to Pakistan's manufacturing excellence and high-performance engineering.

KPCTA-sponsored bikers rally culminates in Thandiani



PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: The bikers rally jointly organised by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) and the Peshawar Bikers Club concluded at the scenic Thandiani in Abbottabad district on Monday. Around 30 motorcyclists participated in the rally. As part of the rally, bikers reached Thandiani via Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi, Haripur, Havelian, and Abbottabad. At Thandiani, the participants engaged in camping, tree plantation, and a cleanliness drive, contributing to environmental sustainability in the scenic area. KPCTA Director Admin and Finance Umar Khan was the chief guest during the closing ceremony. He distributed certificates among the bikers.

Peshawar Bikers Club captain Sajid Ali Khan and other members were also present at the event. Speaking on the occasion, Umar Khan said that adventure tourism was essential for boosting tourism in the province. He said that bike tourism was an affordable and effective way to promote tourism while making it easier to access remote scenic destinations.

Peshawar Bikers Club captain Sajid Ali said that the club main goal was to promote tourism in the province.

Syed Mohsen Gilani hails government support for football revival in Pakistan

RIZWAN HAIDER

ISLAMABAD: The President of the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) Syed Mohsen Gilani, has lauded the Government of Pakistan for its encouraging support towards the development and promotion of football in the country. He expressed his strong commitment to working in an environment of cooperation to ensure sustainable progress for the sport.

Referring to a recent high-level meeting in Islamabad with Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs & Senator Ishaq Dar and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Rana Sanaullah, Mohsen Gilani emphasized the importance of overcoming the challenges that have historically plagued football in Pakistan.

"Pakistan football has suffered in the past due to internal power struggles and third-party interference, leading to suspensions that not only damaged the country's reputation internationally but also deprived talented young players of opportunities," Gilani stated. "It is very encouraging to see that the Government, the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination, the Pakistan Sports Board, and all key football stakeholders are united in their resolve that Pakistan must not face such



setbacks again."

Gilani expressed sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination and the Pakistan Sports Board for their full support in reestablishing PFF on democratic foundations. He reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening the football structure in Pakistan and ensuring that national teams represent the country with pride on the global stage.

"We will work closely with government institutions to identify and nurture the real football talent of Pakistan," he added.

The meeting was attended by PFF President Mohsen Gilani and Acting General Secretary Muhammad Shahid Niaz Khokhar. During the session, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar assured full cooperation for the promotion of football, stating that all necessary facilities would be provided for the sport's revival and for achieving success at the international level.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister Rana Sanaullah also congratulated the PFF on the successful completion of the historical 2025 elections in a free, fair and transparent manner and pledged the government's continued support for football in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Chinese business delegation, led by Mr Yao Yu, CEO of Dongkal Internation Investment called on Federal Minister for Housing and Works, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada.

FGEHA sets up inquiry to probe BUP compensation discrepancies in Sector G-14/1

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Captain (R) Zafar Iqbal, Director General of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA), has constituted a fact-finding committee to thoroughly investigate discrepancies in the Built-Up Property (BUP) compensation awards for 26 constructed properties in Sector G-14/1, following recent reports highlighting the issue. The committee, comprising four

senior FGEHA officers including Faiz Umar Sial, Director (Admin), Asim Aamir, Director (IT), Sahibzada Qasim Noor, Deputy Director (Finance), Haris Fawad, Assistant Director (GIS), is tasked with identifying any irregularities, errors or deviations from established policies. The Terms of Reference (TORs) for the committee include reviewing the partial BUP awards to identify any irregularities, contradictions, or errors, verifying the details of constructed properties using GIS technology, determining whether the intent was genuinely to compensate the original and legitimate awardees or if unlawful constructions were favored. DG has directed the committee to submit its investigative report within seven days, along with a clear determination of responsibility.

Pakistan Launches AI-Powered Chatbot to Support Legislative Efficiency

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: In a pioneering step toward modernizing legislative governance, the Senate of Pakistan hosted a high-level session on artificial intelligence (AI) and digital transformation under the EU-funded Mustehkam Parliament project. Held at Parliament House, the session titled "Digital Transformation: Strategic Opportunities and Challenges for Lawmakers" brought together Senators, diplomats, AI experts, journalists, and development partners to explore the

transformative potential of AI in democratic institutions. The session was organized by the Office of the Advisor to the Chairman Senate on Special Initiatives and the Parliamentary Services Development Unit (PDU), as part of a broader €15 million EU-funded effort implemented jointly by GIZ and the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS). With over 60 participants, including Senators and parliamentary staff, the event marked a significant milestone in Pakistan's legislative innovation. EU Ambassador to Pakistan,

H.E. Dr. Riina Kionka, emphasized the European Union's global leadership in ethical AI regulation. "Artificial Intelligence is already reshaping our societies, but its development must be guided by values. The EU's comprehensive AI

legislation ensures that innovation remains ethical, inclusive, and safe," she said. Dr. Kionka praised Pakistan's Senate for embracing this shift and reaffirmed the EU's commitment to supporting institutional transformation

through collaborative, human-centered initiatives. Advisor to the Chairman Senate, Ms. Rida Qazi, opened the session by underlining the importance of AI literacy for lawmakers. She stressed that the transition from exploration to integration is underway, citing tools like the Senate's AI-powered Parliamentary Chatbot as examples of enhanced legislative responsiveness. Qazi called upon the private sector to support public institutions in developing AI tools to improve governance and service delivery. In his welcome

remarks, Secretary Senate Syed Hasnain Haider reiterated the Senate's commitment to modernization and public service through legislative innovation. The event included an introductory segment on AI fundamentals, with a demonstration of AI-powered solutions for document automation, workflow optimization, and multilingual accessibility in legislative environments. The session also featured insights from the European Union's Artificial Intelligence Act, which sets a global precedent for responsible AI governance.



Opinion & Editorial

By: Haseeb Ahmed
Early this morning, the world was shaken by a terrifying report. Israel allegedly launched a strike at 4 AM targeting a key military facility inside Iran, resulting in the martyrdom of several important Iranian military and political figures. Within hours, Iran responded by firing missiles at Israeli military installations, and military movements in the Persian Gulf escalated rapidly. This was no ordinary attack — it is one of those sparks that could ignite a full-scale war. And the devastation of such a war will not remain confined to just Iran and Israel. Regional Expansion of War? A direct war breaks out between Iran and Israel, its first impact will be felt across the entire Middle East. Hezbollah in Lebanon, an Iran-backed group, may immediately launch missile attacks on Israel. Iranian militias in Syria, already under Israeli airstrikes, could intensify the conflict. Rebels in Yemen might join by attacking Israel or even Saudi Arabia. Iran-backed groups in Iraq could trigger a regional American military bases. Who Will Stand Where? This conflict won't remain limited to Iran and Israel — major global powers could also get involved. The United States, a close ally of Israel, might provide full military support in case of large-scale attacks. Russia, which maintains relations with both Syria and Iran, could offer diplomatic or intelligence-level support to Iran. China, though likely to avoid openly siding with any party, will still be heavily affected by global trade disruptions and surging oil prices. Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Bahrain — which have been working to improve ties with Israel — will come under immense pressure, caught between Iran's growing power and public anger. A scenario of Global Devastation? If the war continues, oil prices will skyrocket, directly impacting global economies. Countries like Bahrain, UAE, and Saudi Arabia could become active battlegrounds. Tensions in Palestine may reach unprecedented levels. Global economy, food supply chains, air travel, and stock markets will be severely affected. A Test for the Muslim Ummah? This is a crucial test of unity and wisdom for the Muslim world. The Israel-Iran war is not just a bilateral issue — it's a fire that could engulf the entire Muslim Ummah. Immediate diplomatic initiatives and efforts for ceasefire, and a united stance by Muslim nations are the need of the hour. Conclusion The world stands at a critical crossroads. If wisdom does not prevail, the spark between Iran and Israel could turn into a global blaze — one that destroys countless lives, economies, and generations to come. This is the moment for global leadership and the Muslim world to step forward. If we fail now, history will not forgive us.

War Between Israel and Iran: From the Middle East to Global Devastation

By: Haseeb Ahmed
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Rise of legal AI

Danish Ahmed Soomro
A quiet revolution is underway in courtrooms and law firms from New York to Nairobi. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), powered by large language models like GPT-4, is no longer a distant concept or Silicon Valley novelty. It's reshaping how legal systems operate: automating research, streamlining drafting and aiding legal decision-making in ways unimaginable just a few years ago. In elite global law firms such as Allen & Overy and platforms like Case text's CoCounsel (recently acquired by Thomson Reuters), AI is already functioning as a digital co-pilot — reviewing contracts, preparing depositions and generating memos in minutes. In response, regulatory frameworks like the EU AI Act have introduced stringent guidelines, particularly for high-risk use cases such as judicial decisions. Courts worldwide are adopting cautious optimism: embracing AI's efficiencies while guarding against bias, opacity and dehumanisation. Now, Pakistan has entered this arena. In a landmark April 2025 decision, SC Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah issued an 18-page ruling that may define the trajectory of legal AI in the country. While adjudicating a seemingly routine rent dispute, the Supreme Court addressed a much deeper issue: how AI might help fulfil Article 10-A (right to a fair trial) and Article 37(d) (inexpensive and expeditious justice) of the constitution. The judgment called AI a "viable instrument for access to timely justice" — urging the National Judicial (Policy) Committee to establish clear guidelines. These must ensure AI remains a "facilitative tool", never replacing judicial discretion or compromising the conscience of human judgment. Justice Shah's vision is calibrated. While recognising the promise of AI in clearing judicial backlogs and democratising access to legal knowledge, he emphasised non-negotiable boundaries. "Justice is a human endeavour", he noted. Algorithms can assist, but only humans can weigh morality, emotion and fairness. The ruling warns against biases embedded in historical legal data and AI's "hallucination" tendency. Courts must adopt AI, but ethically and deliberately. While the apex court delineated principles, practitioners on the ground took action. In May 2025, Pakistan saw its first-ever Generative AI Masterclass for Lawyers, a historic, practice-oriented training co-organised by EnableAI and the Legal Aid Society. Courtesy Dawn

Close the gap

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The Global Gender Report 2025 is dark enough to recast the way Pakistan is viewed by the world. The country's descent to the bottom 18th rank, with a gender parity mark slipping from last year's 57pc to 56.7pc, is an unsettling comment on how male-centric narratives and cultural mores push women into a social void. The report claims that this year's results record a second consecutive dip from the best economic score of 57.7pc in 2023, while Pakistan's parity in economic participation and opportunity sank by 1.3pc. A closer look at the four key indices reveals that Pakistan's was a downward slope on the performance graph: it came in at 147 in economic participation and opportunity — women constitute a dismal 25pc of the formal labour force — and 137 in educational attainment — the sole indication of progress as educational parity rose by 1.5pc though that is partially attributed to a decline in male enrolment in tertiary education. In health and survival, we rank 131, and 118 in political empowerment. Our imbalanced scorecard in the main gauges that power, development and prosperity reflect the shallowness of political claims. The blame for this state of affairs falls on successive governments who failed to create protective systems, reframe patriarchal discourse, or respect the mandate for more women lawmakers. This, along with a corrupt and biased criminal justice system, have shaped an unsafe environment where violence is a daily truth: a rape happens every two minutes due to a 3pc conviction rate.

Downfall

Zarrar Khuhro
The crash of Air India's 787-8 Boeing Dreamliner on Thursday will go down as one of the deadliest disasters in the history of aviation, and certainly the second deadliest disaster in Indian history after the 1996 Charki Dadri mid-air collision that claimed 349 lives. While the human cost is still being counted, we know that, at the time of writing, at least 290 lives had been lost. For us in Pakistan, this tragedy brings up bitter memories of the May 2020 crash of PIA flight 8303 which, like the Dreamliner crash in Ahmedabad, impacted on a populated area. In both cases, we also saw miraculous survival stories. In Pakistan, Zafar Masud and Mohammad Zubair survived the crash, and in Ahmedabad, Ramesh Viswashikumar managed to open the emergency door at the time and jump out of the plane. Amazingly, he survived with relatively minor injuries, but his brother was not so lucky. Flight crash investigations are lengthy and time-consuming, and many questions will be asked about Air India's maintenance capabilities and the possibility of pilot error, there is increasing focus on Boeing, the aviation giant that produces the 787 Dreamliner, and which saw its share price plummet after the crash. Courtesy Dawn

Parliamentary procedures strictly followed in ECP appointments: NA Secretariat



AVESHA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly Secretariat has clarified that the appointment process for the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) members is being conducted in accordance with constitutional and parliamentary procedures. A National Assembly spokesman, responding to media reports, stated that Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has sent a letter addressing the recent correspondence from Opposition Leader Omar

Ayub. According to the spokesperson of the National Assembly, the constitutional and legal procedures for the formation of the parliamentary committee are being followed in letter and spirit. It was clarified that the first step in this process is mutual consultation between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. The spokesperson further stated that the speaker also referred to the letter dated 16 May 2025, sent by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to the Opposition Leader, in which the Prime Minister written for initiation of consultations regarding

the nominations. The Speaker National Assembly also written that if the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition fail to reach an agreement on the names of the Chief Election Commissioner or members, then the matter will be referred to the Speaker under Article 113(2a) of the Constitution, so that the process for forming the parliamentary committee can be carried forward. The spokesperson added that the Prime Minister will formally write to the Speaker to seek nominations for committee members from all parliamentary leaders. After this, the Speaker will issue letters to all parliamentary leaders and request them to submit names. It has been clarified that the composition of the Parliamentary committee will be based on the proportional representation of each party currently represented in the National Assembly, ensuring the formation of the committee is completely constitutional and fair. The spokesperson further stated that the parliamentary committee can only be constituted when names of members are received from both the government and the opposition.

Mustafa Kamal calls all sectors to unite for polio-free Pakistan

E.G REPORT



QUETTA: Federal Minister for Health Mustafa Kamal on Monday urged politicians, religious scholars, academia, civil society's members, parents and media to use their influence with renewed determination by actively participating in the anti-polio campaign to help ensure a polio-free Pakistan in the near future.

Addressing a press conference after chairing a review meeting on polio eradication held here which was attended by key stakeholders, including the Capt. (Retd) Anwar Ul Haq, National Coordinator for Polio, Secretary Health Balochistan Mujeeb-Ur-Rehman Panezal, Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) Coordinator Balochistan Inam Ul Haq, as well as representatives from, WHO, UNICEF, and provincial health authorities, Mustafa Kamal stressed to intensifying polio eradication efforts aimed to vaccinate the children against the crippling

Ho disease. He warned that "if we do not take things seriously, Pakistan risks becoming the last country where polio persists as the virus is remain active in only two countries."

Kamal mentioned that the Afghanistan will be polio-free country as the current Afghan government is running extensive door to door anti-polio campaign in all provinces to administer the anti-polio drops to children up to five years of age.

He pointed out that all Muslim countries and others around the world have eliminated polio by using the same vaccine currently being administered in Pakistan.

Finance Minister chairs meeting to monitor petroleum prices amid regional tension

HUMA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday chaired the inaugural meeting of high-level committee formed to monitor petroleum prices amid regional tension, which conducted a detailed assessment of the global and domestic petroleum market situation. In response to the evolving geopolitical situation following Israel's recent attack on Iran and the resulting volatility in the international oil markets, the Prime Minister has constituted a high-level committee to monitor petroleum product pricing and supply dynamics, said a press release.

The committee is chaired by the Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb, and includes senior representatives from key federal ministries, regulatory authorities, and energy sector experts. The formation of this committee reflects the government's proactive approach to safeguarding national energy interests and ensuring market stability during a time of heightened international uncertainty. The committee has been entrusted to closely monitor the forward/futures prices of petroleum products and the

predictability of supply chain in view of the current conflict in the region, besides determine forex implications of price volatility for the short and medium term. The committee tasked to suggest a plan (if required) to ensure that there are no supply disruptions and the market is well supplied and carry out detailed analysis of the fiscal impact, in the event of a protracted conflict. The committee expressed satisfaction that Pakistan currently holds adequate stocks of petroleum products and there is no immediate risk of supply disruption. Nonetheless, members emphasized the need for continued vigilance given the rapidly changing regional context. To ensure timely response and effective coordination, a working group will monitor developments on a daily basis, and the full committee will meet weekly to review the situation and submit recommendations to the Prime Minister. The Petroleum Division has been designated to provide secretarial support and ensure effective implementation of the committee's mandate. The government remains fully committed to maintaining energy security, stabilizing markets, and protecting the national interest during this critical time.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the inaugural meeting of high-level committee.

SBP keeps policy rate unchanged at 11pc

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan on Monday decided to keep the policy rate unchanged in the final meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) for the fiscal year 2025.

The current policy rate of the State Bank stands at 11%. The important meeting, chaired by the Governor of the State Bank, where economic indicators were reviewed, followed by the announcement of the new policy rate.

It is worth noting that the State Bank has been reducing the interest rate since June 2024, with a total cut of 11 percentage points across eight meetings held since then. Meanwhile, the business community had demanded that the interest rate be brought down to single digits. "Going forward, inflation is expected to trend up and stabilise in the target range during FY26," the statement said. The MPC also noted that economic growth is gradually recovering and is expected to gain further momentum next year, driven by the lagged impact of earlier policy rate cuts. "At the same time, the Committee noted some potential risks to the external sector amidst the sustained widening in the trade deficit and weak financial inflows.

Parliamentarians hail govt's stance over Iran-Israel war

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Religious Affairs and Information Haniya Khan Das Kohistani here on Monday said that Pakistan always played a major role for the peace, prosperity and development in the region.

Talking to the mediapersons outside of the Parliament House, he said that Pakistan will keep continue its full support to Iran.

Commenting over the new increase on petroleum products, he said that the government has increased the prices of petroleum products due to the increase at international market. He said that the government has taken various steps to make this budget low income friendly budget. MNA JUI-F Shahda Akhtar said that it is the need of hours all Muslims countries should unite against Israel and full support to



Iran as western countries openly supporting to illegal state Israel.

She said that his party will talk to the government to bring some changes in the budget.

Senior leader of PMLN MNA Tahira Aurangzeb said that no doubt Pakistan is fully supporting to Iran against Israel in this current war.

She urged that all Islamic countries should show the unity and play effective role against Israel. She said that Israel is a terrorist country who is killing innocent powerless people of Gaza and now Israel has attack on Iran.

Sajjad Khan holds key meeting with elders of Kam Chashmi and North Waziristan

UMER DIAZ KHAN

BANNU: Regional Police Officer Bannu Sajjad Khan Holds Key Meeting with Elders of Kam Chashmi and North Waziristan on Law and Order. According to details Regional Police Officer (RPO) Bannu Sajjad Khan along with District Police Officer (DPO) Bannu Saleem Kalachi held separate meetings with elders from Kam Chashmi (Tehsil Domel) and North Waziristan at the DIG Office to discuss matters related to law and order. During the meetings, detailed discussion was held on the current security situation ongoing challenges and the importance of local elders cooperation in addressing them. The elders expressed satisfaction over the recent police operations in Kam Chashmi and Bargo to stating their full support for police efforts in maintaining



peace and stability in the region. On the occasion DIG Sajjad Khan assured the participants that the police are taking all necessary steps to ensure public safety and establish lasting peace in the region. He further stated that those arrested during the operations will be investigated on merit and no injustice will be done to anyone. Appreciating the role of local elders he emphasized that strong ties between the police and the public are key to sustainable peace.

Young visionary leads KP's digital transformation

ARSHAD MALIK

ISLAMABAD: In the mountainous belt of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), where digital access was once scarce and youth employment a constant struggle, a quiet revolution is taking shape—led not by institutions, but by a determined 25-year-old from Haripur.

Hassan Nisar, a graduate in economics from the University of Haripur, founded Metrix Pakistan in 2022 with a mission to bridge KP's growing digital divide. Drawing inspiration from his early education in Abbottabad and his deep-rooted ties to the region, Nisar envisioned a platform that would empower rural youth through hands-on technology training.

Young visionary leads KP's digital transformation. Since its inception, Metrix Pakistan has trained more than 13,000 young people in digital skills ranging from freelancing and e-commerce to blockchain and cybersecurity. The initiative spans remote districts including Lower Dir, Malakand, Haripur, Swat, Abbottabad, Mansehra, and Peshawar. "We've worked within the context of each youth conventions, bootcamps, and summits—organized under its banner—are bringing urban-level exposure to rural spaces, offering not just skills but also hope.

Beyond the digital frontier, Metrix has made inroads into health and sustainability. In collaboration



with local bodies, the organization has launched medical camps and supported eco-tourism development in Haripur to promote employment and environmental awareness.

When tensions flared with media in 2023, and misinformation began flooding social media, Metrix pivoted. It launched a grassroots

fact-checking initiative to support local administrations in debunking false narratives. "It wasn't just about fake news—it was about restoring trust during a volatile moment," Nisar explained.

The initiative has also become a safe haven for women navigating the digital world. More than 2,000 women from KP's rural areas have received help in removing fake or impersonation accounts. "This is empowerment too," Nisar said. "If a young woman is afraid to go online, it limits everything—from education to employment."

Metrix's success is evident in the numbers. Around 70 percent of its graduates have found employment—a

through freelancing, others via startups or positions at tech firms. Partnerships with global tech giants like Microsoft, Binance, Bitget, and CoinEx have further unlocked opportunities in blockchain and Web3 technologies for KP's youth.

Dozens of students from once-isolated districts now run e-commerce sites and hold international contracts. "Digital literacy isn't just a skill—it's a spark that ignites dreams," Nisar remarked. Young visionary leads KP's digital transformation. For his contributions, Nisar has received awards including the Pride of Khyber in Pakhtunkhwa, Fakhir-e-Hazara, High Achiever, and Hamaray Heroes.