



Trade corridor via rail & road needed:
Aleem Khan



Ethiopian envoy, Sindh Governor discussed expansion of bilateral ties and joint green initiative



Ulema united for peace, national unity: Ashrafi

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PM Shehbaz applauds record 42% tax revenue surge, directs swift implementation of economic reforms

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday applauded the Ministry of Finance and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for achieving a historic 42% increase in federal tax revenues during the fiscal year 2024-25 — the highest surge in the past decade. The prime minister chaired a high-level weekly review meeting on the digitization and reform agenda of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), whereas during the briefing, it was revealed that reforms and enforcement of new tax laws enabled the government to collect an additional Rs 865 billion in revenues compared to the previous year, an eightfold increase. The federal revenue-to-GDP ratio also improved significantly, reaching 11.3 per cent,

a 1.5 per cent rise over last year. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that no institutional complacency will be tolerated in achieving revenue targets and other economic goals for the new fiscal year. "All departments must work with complete dedication," he said, reaffirming his personal oversight of all stages of revenue collection and economic target implementation. He instructed FBR to treat taxpayers with dignity and respect and called upon all public sector institutions to extend full cooperation with the revenue authority. The prime minister also stressed the need to broaden the tax net through digitalization and enforcement. PM Sharif also issued key directives including expansion of the Track and Trace Digital Production System to cover all stages of production and distribution.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding matters related to FBR.

Pakistan tells UN it's time to resolve Kashmir dispute



PEAK POINT

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has urged the United Nations to take concrete steps to resolve the decades-old Kashmir dispute, calling it a key cause of friction with India. Speaking at a press conference at the UN headquarters in New York after assuming the presidency of the UN Security Council for July, Pakistan's Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad said the issue could no longer be swept under the carpet. He stressed that it was the responsibility of the Security Council, especially its permanent members, to act on their own resolutions and help bring lasting peace to the region. "It is time that this (Kashmir dispute) be addressed, and I would say this is not only a responsibility of Pakistan — we are here temporarily.

AC, tehsildar among five martyred in Bajaur blast

PEAK POINT

BAJAUR: At least five people were martyred and 11 others sustained injuries after a powerful improvised explosive device (IED) blast targeted a double-cabin official vehicle near the Sadiqueabad crossing in Khar Tehsil of Bajaur district.

The explosion occurred near a Phatak Mela where an official convoy, including Assistant Commissioner Nawagai and Tehsildar Waqil Khan, was present along with police personnel. The IED was planted near the vehicle and detonated as the officials were passing by.

According to hospital sources, the deceased include Assistant Commissioner Nawagai, Tehsildar Waqil Khan, a police subedar, and a constable. The injured, several in critical condition, were immediately shifted to Khar



Hospital for treatment.

Rescue teams reached the site shortly after the blast and launched relief and evacuation operations. Police and security forces cordoned off the area and initiated a search to trace those behind the deadly attack. The Bajaur bombing marks yet another tragic incident amid a surge in terrorist violence in

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly targeting law enforcement and government officials.

KP Inspector General of Police sought a detailed report on the Bajaur blast from the Regional Police Officer of Malakand.

IGP Zulfiqar Hameed directed the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and Central

Police Office to intensify intelligence-based operations against the militant group "Khawarij." He also ordered the dispatch of a special team to Bajaur to investigate the incident.

The IGP instructed all necessary steps be taken to arrest those involved in the attack. The Special Branch is currently collecting intelligence regarding the incident.

The nature of the explosion is under investigation, the IGP stated, adding that elements attempting to disrupt peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will be dealt with an iron hand.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the blast near Phatak Mela in Bajaur district. He expressed deep grief over the martyrdom of the Assistant Commissioner, Tehsildar Nawagai, and other officials.

ECP gives PTI's 76 reserved seats to other parties after SC verdict

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has officially reinstated 76 suspended reserved seats across the National and three Provincial Assemblies, following the Supreme Court's recent ruling. A fresh notification has been issued to restore the memberships of women and minority lawmakers who had previously been de-notified. In accordance with the June 27, 2025 verdict of the Supreme Court, the ECP has reversed its earlier notifications issued on July 24 and 29, 2024.

Quad alliance opts not to name Pakistan in Pahalgam attack condemnation

PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: The strategic group "Quad" consisting of the United States, India, Japan and Australia chose not to name Pakistan in a joint statement condemning Pahalgam attack in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) that killed 26 tourists in April this year.

The April 22 attack sparked heavy fighting between nuclear-armed Pakistan and India in the latest escalation of a decades-old rivalry as India blamed it on Pakistan without offering any evidence. Pakistan denied responsibility while calling for a neutral investigation into the deadly attack. The US State Department issued a



joint statement by the foreign ministers of the grouping, who met in Washington, but stopped short of naming Pakistan or blaming Islamabad. "The Quad unequivocally condemns all acts of terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations, including cross-border terrorism," the ministers said in the statement.

They called on all

armed forces launched a large-scale retaliatory military action, named "Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos", and targeted several Indian military targets across multiple regions.

Pakistan downed its six fighter jets, including three Rafales, and dozens of drones. After at least 87 hours, the war between the two nuclear-armed nations ended on May 10 with a ceasefire agreement brokered by the US. The ceasefire was first announced by US President Donald Trump on social media after Washington held talks with both sides, but India has differed with Trump's claims that it resulted from his intervention and threats to sever trade talks.

Iran suspends cooperation with UN nuclear watchdog

PEAK POINT

VIENNA, AUSTRIA: Iran on Wednesday formally suspended its cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog, a measure drawn up in the wake of unprecedented Israeli and US strikes on the Islamic republic's nuclear sites.

The war between Iran and Israel, which broke out on June 13 and lasted for 12 days, has intensified tensions between Tehran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On June 25, a day after a ceasefire took hold, Iranian lawmakers overwhelmingly voted in favour of the bill to suspend cooperation with the agency. State media said today that the legislation had cleared the final hurdle and was in effect. The text, published by Iranian media, states that the legislation aims to "ensure full support for the inherent rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran" under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, and "especially uranium enrichment".





Pakistan defeat Indonesia 2-0 in AFC Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers

MUHAMMAD USMAN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's women's football team secured a historic 2-0 victory over Indonesia in their Group D clash of the 2026 AFC Women's Asian Cup qualifiers on Wednesday. The win marks Pakistan's first international triumph since September 2023. Nadia Khan opened the scoring in the eighth minute, netting her fifth international goal and giving Pakistan an early lead. Suha Hirani doubled the advantage in the 18th minute by converting a penalty, securing a commanding position for her side.

Despite being ranked 157th by FIFA, 62 places below 95th-ranked Indonesia, Pakistan displayed resilience, particularly in defense. Goalkeeper Zeeyana Jivraj played a crucial role, denying multiple Indonesian attacks to preserve the clean sheet. Indonesia had at least 8 shots on target.

Statistically, Indonesia dominated possession (63%) and out-shot Pakistan 20-5, but Pakistan's disciplined defending and clinical finishing proved decisive. The hosts also had a shot hit the post, while Pakistan managed three shots on target from five attempts.

Pakistan's final group stage match will be against Kyrgyzstan on July 5. Their last international win before this came in September 2023, when they defeated Laos on penalties.

The victory provides a significant morale boost for Pakistan's women's football program as they aim to make further progress in continental competitions.

Furqan Khan secures bronze medal at World Police & Fire Games 2025

SAMRA ATHAR



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's pride, Furqan Khan, won the Bronze Medal in the 130-kg Greco-Roman Wrestling category at the World Police & Fire Games 2025, held in Birmingham, Alabama, USA.

Competing against some of the world's top athletes, Furqan Khan delivered a powerful performance, securing impressive victories against opponents from the United States and Mongolia. Despite a highly competitive and hard-fought match, he was edged out by India in the semi-finals. Nevertheless, Furqan's determination and skill earned him a well-deserved spot on the podium.

Speaking after the event, Furqan Khan stated that he showed up with the best he had. Every drop of sweat was for my country, and I'm proud to bring the medal home for Pakistan.

The remarkable achievement highlights the strength, talent, and fighting spirit of Pakistani athletes on the international stage. Furqan Khan's success is a proud moment not only for the national wrestling community but for the entire nation.

Pakistan and India likely to clash on Sept 7 in Asia Cup 2025: report

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India are expected to play against each other "likely" on September 7 in the Asia Cup 2025 — set to begin on September 4 or 5 in the UAE, according to a report by The Times of India on Wednesday.

The T-20 tournament will mark the 17th edition of the Asia Cup, beginning with a group stage and then a super-four round. The participating teams include India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and the UAE.

According to Asia Cup's website, recent political tensions between India and Pakistan have made UAE the frontrunner to host the tournament or serve as part of a hybrid hosting model. The multi-nation tournament was initially going to be hosted solely by India.

According to the Indian media report, a 17-day window has been almost finalized by the Asian Cricket Council, where India and Pakistan are to clash on September 7. The



two teams could also see a Pakistan tensions briefly an arrangement made by the second match on September 14, depending on how the teams progress.

The report said that all the participating teams are currently in the process of getting approvals from their respective governments, Trust of India. India has been suspended since adding that promotional host the women's 50-overs World Cup this year, but Pakistan will play all their other only in multi-team matches in Sri Lanka under event.

Australia's fit-again Smith set to play second test v Windies

PEAK POINT

AUSTRALIA: Australia are set to be reinforced by Steve Smith's return to their top order but may miss his reassuring presence in the slip cordon in the second test against West Indies in Grenada this week. Smith missed Australia's victory in the series opener in Bridgetown with a dislocated finger in his right hand, an injury suffered during the World Test Championship final against South Africa last month. The 36-year-old has reunited with the squad at the National Cricket Stadium and is likely to replace Josh Inglis, who managed five and 12 batting at number four in Bridgetown, in the second test beginning on Thursday. "Anytime you add 10,000 runs back into the line-up, you're going to be pretty happy with it," Australia wicketkeeper Alex Carey said of Smith's impending return after their training on Tuesday. "He seems pretty confident, so he's excited to get back in.

World U-23 Squash Champion Noor Zaman Meets KP Sports Minister - Awarded Rs. 500,000 Cash Prize

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: World Under-23 Squash Champion Noor Zaman met with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs, Syed Fakhar Jihan here at his office in Peshawar.



Noor Zaman, recently secured the U-23 World Championship title, a major achievement for Pakistan after several years. During the meeting, Minister Syed Fakhar Jihan congratulated Noor Zaman on his remarkable success and presented him with a cash prize of Rs. 500,000 as a token of appreciation for bringing honor to the country and the province. The minister lauded Noor Zaman's dedication and outstanding performance, assuring him of continued support. "Insha'Allah, we will continue to support you in the future as well," he stated. Minister Fakhar Jihan encouraged all athletes to work hard and perform with excellence in sports events, emphasizing that the provincial government would continue to provide full support to talented players. He further stated that under the vision of PTI founder Chairman Imran Khan and Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, the KP government is committed to promoting sports and athletes.

Chairman PMYP engages youth in Democracy-Building efforts, announces cricket talent hunt trials

RIZWAN HAIDER

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to foster democratic values and civic responsibility among Pakistani youth, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP), Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan on Wednesday hosted an interactive session with selected candidates of the prestigious Parliamentary Internship Program at Parliament House.



The session, themed "Engaging Youth for Responsible Democracy," aimed to empower Pakistani youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to become active contributors to the country's democratic and developmental journey.

During the session, Chairman Rana Mashood emphasized the critical role of youth in upholding democratic values, highlighting the PMYP's commitment to integrating these values through its initiatives. He elaborated on the program's comprehensive support systems for youth empowerment and reaffirmed its commitment to building a responsible, youth-led Pakistan. The Parliamentary Internship Program received an overwhelming response, with over 16,000 applications submitted from students across the country. Only 200 exceptional students were selected for the four-week program, including 25 students from Sukkur IBA University and 30 from Aitchison College.

In a separate development, Chairman Rana Mashood announced that 10,000 young individuals were participating in the Prime Minister's Cricket Talent Hunt trials in Quetta. The trials, now partnered with Lahore Qalandars, aim to identify and nurture young cricketing talent in the country.

The Chairperson also introduced key flagship initiatives under the PMYP, including 'Perfect Pitch', a national innovation platform connecting young entrepreneurs with investors through prime-time television.

He urged the interns to register on the Digital Youth Hub, a transformative platform offering education, employment, engagement, and empowerment opportunities. The session concluded with a question-and-answer session, allowing the selected interns to engage directly with the Chairman and gain guidance on becoming active contributors to Pakistan's democratic and developmental journey.



Opinion & Editorial

Imran Khan's Controversial Tactics Before and After Operation Bunyan Un Marsoos

Abdul Basit Alvi
 Imran Khan's appeal to the overseas Pakistani community to engage in civil disobedience and withhold remittances from the country reflected a disregard for Pakistan's economic well-being. Fortunately, this call was overwhelmingly rejected by the patriotic diaspora, which responded instead with record-breaking remittances, reaffirming their commitment to the nation. Subsequently, reports emerged that Imran Khan had sent a letter to Field Marshal Asim Munir, the Chief of Army Staff. However, Field Marshal General Munir publicly denied receiving any such communication. He made it clear that even if such a letter had been delivered, it would have been forwarded directly to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, not entertained by the military. General Munir reaffirmed the Army's neutral stance and underscored that he would not engage with such correspondence. This principled position from the Field Marshal reassured the public that the military remained committed to constitutional boundaries, allowing the legal system to address elements acting against the state. Despite having repeatedly demanded military neutrality, Imran Khan now appears to contradict himself by trying to involve the Army in his personal political and legal battles. This inconsistency highlights a broader pattern: while publicly rejecting the idea of a National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), he continues to pursue behind-the-scenes efforts to obtain one. These actions have led many to conclude that he is, in fact, desperately seeking an NRO. To regain credibility, both Imran Khan and his party must demonstrate the integrity to address their challenges through legitimate political and legal means. Another deeply troubling issue has surfaced. While in custody, Imran Khan has been publishing articles on international platforms, raising serious questions. Prison regulations do not permit inmates to send out written material, and authorities have confirmed that there is no record of Khan writing or submitting any articles from jail. This raises a critical question: if he is not the author, who is orchestrating this narrative? There is growing suspicion that foreign elements—including the Goldsmith family and Western lobbying groups—may be operating



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his social media accounts and distributing anti-state content on his behalf. Reports suggest that individuals based in London are crafting and promoting this "article writing" narrative, using Imran Khan's name and influence to advance their own agendas. It is alarming that Imran Khan appears to have allowed anti-state forces and foreign actors to exploit his platform to spread hostility against Pakistan and its institutions. This behavior has prompted serious concerns that he is no longer engaged in a democratic movement, but is instead at the center of an expensive, externally driven political project. Rather than promoting national interests, his actions increasingly appear to serve those of Pakistan's adversaries. His propaganda, once again, stands exposed as a vehicle for personal ambition and foreign manipulation—not a sincere struggle for democratic reform. Imran Khan has consistently placed his personal interests above national priorities, demonstrating a clear disregard for Pakistan, its people, and its institutions. This narrative gained further complexity when two U.S. lawmakers introduced a bipartisan bill in the House of Representatives aimed at imposing sanctions on Pakistani state officials over alleged human rights violations. According to U.S. media reports, these violations include the so-called "persecution" of former Prime Minister Imran Khan. The bill, titled the Pakistan Democracy Act, was presented by Republican Congressman Joe Wilson of South Carolina and Democratic Congressman Jimmy Panetta of California. It has since been referred to the House Foreign Affairs and Judiciary Committees for further consideration. The proposed legislation called for sanctions against Pakistan's Army Head to be enacted within 180 days if Pakistan failed to address ongoing human rights concerns. The bill sought to invoke the U.S. Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which empowers the U.S. government to deny visas and entry to individuals accused of human rights abuses. Additionally, it directed U.S. authorities to identify and penalize those allegedly

involved in suppressing political opposition in Pakistan. The President of the United States would have the authority to lift such sanctions if Pakistan ceased military interference in civilian governance and released all political detainees considered to be wrongfully imprisoned. This raises an important question for the two lawmakers who introduced the bill: How would they respond if a similar piece of legislation were introduced in another country, advocating on behalf of individuals imprisoned in the United States on serious charges? Would they welcome foreign support for someone like Aafia Siddiqui—an individual the U.S. judicial system has found guilty and considers a national security threat? It is almost certain they would reject such external interference in their legal process. Similarly, Pakistan has the sovereign right to manage its internal affairs and prosecute individuals under its own legal framework. While these lawmakers may personally support Imran Khan and his political party, the bill reflects their individual opinion rather than official U.S. policy. It is unlikely to influence Pakistan's legal system and appears more as a symbolic gesture of solidarity with Imran Khan's supporters rather than a serious diplomatic position. It's also worth noting that during President Donald Trump's previous term, his administration maintained constructive relations with Pakistan's elected leadership. In one notable instance, President Trump publicly expressed his appreciation for Pakistan's assistance in capturing a terrorist suspect, highlighting ongoing counterterrorism cooperation. In May 2025, as tensions between India and Pakistan escalated into a significant military confrontation, Pakistan launched Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos in response to India's Operation Sindhoor. This marked a critical turning point in South Asian geopolitics. Amidst the growing threat of a full-scale war, U.S. President Donald Trump played a crucial role in brokering peace. On May 10, Trump announced that both countries had agreed to an "immediate and full ceasefire"—a declaration later confirmed by both governments. His successful mediation underscored the importance of U.S.-Pakistan relations in maintaining regional stability. Beyond the ceasefire, President Trump acknowledged Pakistan's

ongoing contributions to global counterterrorism efforts. In his first address to Congress since returning to office, he publicly thanked Pakistan for its role in capturing Muhammad Sharifullah, a key suspect in the 2021 Kabul airport bombing. This recognition further strengthened U.S.-Pakistan ties and demonstrated Pakistan's commitment to international cooperation. Following the successful conclusion of Operation Bunyan Marsoos, Pakistan's Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir received an official invitation to visit the United States from President Donald Trump. During his visit, Field Marshal Munir was warmly welcomed by the U.S. administration, and President Trump personally expressed his appreciation for Munir's leadership, particularly in ensuring regional security and counterterrorism efforts. This high-level engagement marked a significant strengthening of ties between Washington and Islamabad. These developments represent a major political blow to former Prime Minister Imran Khan, who has consistently sought to distance Pakistan from the United States. These developments dealt a blow to Imran Khan, who had been hoping for a different trajectory in U.S.-Pakistan relations aligned with his personal political interests. The introduction of the Pakistan Democracy Act also highlighted the persistent lobbying efforts of PTI supporters in the U.S. Since Imran Khan's ouster in 2022, these activists have been organizing rallies, meeting with lawmakers, and urging increased American involvement in Pakistan's internal politics. Over the past three years, their efforts have intensified in an attempt to reshape the international narrative in Khan's favor—though with limited success on official diplomatic fronts. In June 2024, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a similar resolution with overwhelming bipartisan support—garnering 98 percent approval. The resolution called on then-President Joe Biden to urge Pakistan to uphold democratic principles and the rule of law. However, despite the strong congressional backing, the Biden administration chose not to take any concrete action. At the core of Imran Khan's political conduct lies an inflated ego. He has consistently demonstrated a lack of trust in his own party leader-

ship, insisting on maintaining complete control over all decisions. This raises serious questions: How can someone imprisoned on criminal charges continue to run a political party from behind bars? Ironically, Imran Khan has frequently criticized others for similar behavior in the past. Now, he finds himself doing exactly what he once condemned—revealing a clear pattern of hypocrisy and contradiction in his actions. Imran Khan appears more focused on preserving his image than accepting responsibility for his mistakes and alleged crimes. Instead of owning up, he seems intent on using his loyal followers as a shield to protect himself. While he publicly accuses the U.S. and the Pakistan Army, behind the scenes he is eager to seek their favor—particularly in hopes of securing a National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO). However, it is increasingly clear that the U.S., including Donald Trump, has shifted its priorities away from Khan, aiming instead to strengthen ties with Pakistan's current democratic government. This shift was further solidified after the success of Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos, which enhanced Pakistan's global standing and credibility. Having lost support from these quarters, Imran Khan now appears to be exploring alternative channels—allegedly involving the Israeli lobby through his relatives, the Goldsmith family—who have historically sought internal influence to destabilize Pakistan. Imran Khan's contradictory behavior, along with the backing he continues to receive from his party, paints a picture of inconsistency and unreliability. On one hand, he accuses the U.S. of orchestrating his ouster, yet on the other, he desperately seeks their help to evade Pakistan's legal system. The ongoing support from certain factions raises questions about their motives—clearly aiming to weaken Pakistan's institutions and nuclear capabilities by reinstalling Khan in power. However, following the success of Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos, Pakistan's people are acutely aware of their country's core strengths, making it nearly impossible for anyone to undermine them. After exhausting other avenues, Khan has now instructed his followers from prison to prepare for another agitation. Yet, this latest attempt seems destined to fail, as the people of Pakistan have demonstrat-

ed remarkable unity—especially during and after Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos—and are determined not to allow division or hatred to resurface. Those involved in the May 9 events, including Imran Khan, must face the full force of Pakistan's legal system rather than attempting to bypass it or exert undue pressure to weaken the country's judiciary. Khan should learn from the principles of Riisat-e-Madina, where laws apply equally to all citizens. The nation continues to grapple with the damage caused by the anti-state actions of May 9 and demands that the perpetrators be held accountable with the same severity reserved for terrorists and criminals. The public calls on the government to resist external influence and take firm, decisive measures that set a strong precedent against future attempts to destabilize the country. Imran Khan's international campaign against Pakistan and its institutions further exposes his lack of genuine commitment to the nation. He and his supporters must recognize that justice—whether punishment or relief—can only come through Pakistan's legal framework, and they should refrain from pressuring this system for personal or political gain. As a sovereign nation, Pakistan has every right to address its criminals through its own legal system and established procedures. Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos served as a turning point, clearly distinguishing Pakistan's true well-wishers from its adversaries. Genuine supporters of Pakistan demonstrated unwavering unity and stood firmly with the country and its armed forces. Meanwhile, the enemies and their collaborators focused solely on securing their own benefits, even at the expense of Pakistan's national interests. The conflict between Pakistan and India remains unresolved, with ongoing issues such as the Kashmir dispute and the Indus Water Treaty still posing significant challenges. In these critical times, it is essential to maintain unity and fully support our armed forces. Spreading division and hatred now would be the greatest betrayal to the nation. Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos has strengthened the patriotism and awareness of the Pakistani people. They are no longer willing to be misled by Imran Khan, who appears to prioritize his personal ambitions over the interests of the state.

Industry 4.0, standardization, and smart manufacturing: a game changer for Pakistan's industrial future

By Prof. Dr. Saud Altaf
 As global markets race toward automation and smart production, Pakistan finds itself at a pivotal crossroads. Industry 4.0, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, is redefining manufacturing through integration of cyber-physical systems, the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and real-time data analytics. While many global economies are already transitioning to Industry 5.0, blending human expertise with intelligent systems, Pakistan is still in the early phases of embracing this change. For Pakistan, the core opportunity lies not only in adopting these technologies but



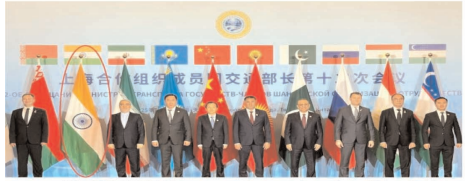
also in overhauling how standardization and quality assurance are approached. With major exports like textiles, rice, surgical instruments, and sports goods facing growth pressure to meet stringent international standards particularly those set by the United States and the European Union, Pakistani industries must modernize to remain globally competitive. Standardization forms the backbone of global trade. International buyers demand conformity to ISO certifications, traceability protocols, environmental compliance, and consistent

product performance. Unfortunately, many Pakistani SMEs continue to rely on outdated, manual quality control methods that are inconsistent and error-prone. This gap severely undermines trust in "Made in Pakistan" products. Enter smart manufacturing, a key pillar of Industry 4.0. Smart factories use connected sensors, real-time monitoring, robotics, and AI algorithms to optimize every stage of the production process. These systems not only increase output but ensure consistent quality. With smart sensors, for example, manufacturers can detect and isolate defects at the earliest stage, minimizing waste and reducing rework.

AI-driven quality analytics can flag recurring issues and offer predictive insights, making processes more efficient over time. Another critical area is predictive maintenance. In many factories across Pakistan, machines break down unexpectedly due to poor maintenance, causing delays, cost overruns, and compromised quality. Smart manufacturing enables real-time monitoring of equipment health. Using data patterns, AI can predict equipment failures before they occur, allowing timely intervention and improving operational reliability. Implementing such solutions is essential for Pakistani exports to compete with neighboring

countries like India, Bangladesh, and Vietnam, who are rapidly adopting smart industrial practices. These countries are improving efficiency and aligning with global sustainability and ethical production goals areas where Pakistan risks falling behind without timely intervention. Government support is vital in this transformation. Pakistan needs a coordinated national strategy to promote smart manufacturing and standardization. This includes funding for research and innovation, fiscal incentives for companies adopting Industry 4.0 tools, and partnerships between academia and industry to develop a workforce skilled in automation, AI, and quality management. Technical universities and vocational training institutes must also revamp their curricula to produce industry-ready graduates. Courses on digital quality assurance, industrial IoT, and smart factory design should be integrated into engineering and technology programs. The future of Pakistan's industry depends on its ability to meet international standards through smart manufacturing and rigorous quality assurance. Industry 4.0 offers the tools to do just that but the clock is ticking. It's time to move from vision to execution and secure Pakistan's place in the global industrial arena.

Trade corridor via rail & road needed: Aleem Khan



AYESHA REHAN
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan has reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to enhance trade through rail, road, and air routes. Addressing the Ministerial Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Tianjin, China, he expressed Pakistan's keen interest in establishing trade corridors through China, Afghanistan and Iran, highlighting the country's strategic role in regional connectivity and trade activities, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. He emphasized

that under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan has achieved major milestones in road infrastructure. "Our focus now is to expand trade beyond the borders of Afghanistan and Iran with fully functional international-standard cargo ports in Gwadar and Karachi," he added. The minister also underscored the significance of Khunjerab in the North and the coastal gateways of Gwadar and Karachi in Pakistan's trade expansion strategy. Highlighting regional development initiatives, Abdul Aleem Khan noted that the proposed Uzbekistan-

Afghanistan-Pakistan Railway Project would be a transformative step for the entire region. He confirmed that Pakistan supports the construction of Silk Road Stations with China's cooperation and that the Khunjerab-Sust Route will now remain operational year-round from year 2023.

It is worth mentioning that 10 Member countries are participating in the ongoing SCO Ministerial Conference while India once again opted not to attend. As per details from India Anand Prakash was listed to attend this SCO who remained absent and his seat was left vacant.

Talking about this, Abdul Aleem Khan remarked that such irresponsible behavior on a global forum is regrettable and shows India's unwillingness to face its regional counterparts. "Pakistan has always advocated for mutual respect and cooperation while as a nuclear power, India must adopt a responsible attitude and behave like a good neighbor," he stated.

DG FAO commends Pakistan's agricultural transformation agenda

HUMA REHAN
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, held a one-on-one meeting with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Qu Dongyu, during the 44th Session of the FAO Conference in Rome. The minister expressed Pakistan's deep appreciation for FAO's longstanding support to Pakistan's agriculture sector, said a press release received here on Wednesday. He briefed the Director-General on Pakistan's ongoing reform efforts aimed at transforming its agri-food systems to become more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient in the face of climate change. Highlighting agriculture's critical role contributing 24 percent to GDP and employing 37 percent of the labor force—Rana Tanveer Hussain outlined major initiatives under Vision 2025 and the Prime Minister's Agricultural Emergency Program. These include reforms in water conservation, seed systems, digital extension services, and tar-

geted farmer subsidies. He also discussed new national policies on biotechnology, e-commerce integration for smallholders and soil health mapping. The minister noted significant outcomes such as the improved affordability of a healthy diet (from 37 percent of households in 2019 to 52 percent in 2024) and a drop in the real cost of healthy diets. However, he also underscored persistent challenges, including food insecurity affecting 36.9 percent of the population, rising input costs, and severe climate-induced stress. Calling for enhanced international cooperation, Mr. Hussain urged FAO to support Pakistan's access to climate financing, carbon markets, and adaptation mechanisms for vulnerable farming communities. Director-General Qu Dongyu appreciated Pakistan's strong reform momentum and reaffirmed FAO's continued technical and policy support. He praised Pakistan's efforts in climate-smart agriculture, digital innovation, and capacity building.



Federal Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain meeting with FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu during the 44th session of the FAO conference in Rome.

Ethiopian envoy, Sindh Governor discussed expansion of bilateral ties and joint green initiative

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula met with Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori on Wednesday to discuss expanding cooperation between Ethiopia and Pakistan in a range of key sectors including trade, investment, energy, aviation, and climate change.



over 40 billion seedlings and aims to plant another 7.5 billion this year as part of efforts to improve food security, create jobs, and combat climate change.

During the meeting, both sides emphasized the importance of strengthening bilateral and multilateral engagement. Ambassador Dr. Jemal Beker shared details of Ethiopia's "Green Legacy Initiative," launched this year by Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed under the theme "Renewal through Planting." He said that since 2019, Ethiopia has planted

To mark growing ties between the two nations, the Ethiopian Ambassador proposed a collaborative plantation and awareness campaign in Sindh titled "Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity under the Green Legacy Initiative."

He expressed hope that this effort would serve as a symbol of environmental cooperation and shared commitment to sustainable development.

PTI presents 'message of unity', warns against toppling KP govt

JAVED KHAN
ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Wednesday said that the party was standing together and presenting a "message of unity" amid rumours of rifts while warning the federal government against toppling the party's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa administration. Background briefings revealed a complete lack of trust among PTI leaders, with doubts about each other's sincerity and intentions, particularly regarding messages from party founder Imran Khan, who has been behind bars since August 2023. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad and flanked by senior PTI leaders, the party chairman outlined the issues dis-



cussed in a high-level meeting and maintained that the PTI would continue efforts to try and free Imran. "We discussed the aftermath of the reserved seat ruling, which was the first time that the party formed a strategy together," Gohar said. "It is our decision that we will stand up together for Imran Khan. We have no personal conflict, we are and will remain united and a message of unity needed to be sent in today's meeting."

Flash floods, heavy rain kill 64 in a week: NDMA

MOHSIN ALI
ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority said on Wednesday that flash floods and heavy rain across the country have killed 64 people and injured 117 in a week. The highest toll was in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 23 dead, including 10 children, the authority said. Fourteen of the victims were swept away in a flash flood in the Swat Valley last week. Flash floods and homes collapsing in heavy rain killed 21 others in Punjab, including 11 children, the authority said. In Sindh, 15 people were killed, while five people died in Balochistan. Separately, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) forecast a significant intensification of monsoon activity across the country beginning from the evening of July 5, with widespread rain, thunderstorms and the possibility of flash floods and urban flooding in several regions. According to the Met Office, moist monsoon currents were continuously penetrating the country and would likely strengthen over the weekend.

Ulema united for peace, national unity: Ashrafi

PEAK POINT
SARGODHA: Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council and President National Solidarity Council Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi reaffirmed collective commitment of religious scholars to national unity, peace, and the Paigham-e-Pakistan code of conduct during a press conference, held at a private hotel on Wednesday. He announced that all religious leaders and spiritual figures in Sargodha unanimously endorsed the Paigham-e-Pakistan Charter. He urged clerics, preachers, religious scholars, and general public across the country to strengthen the ongoing atmosphere of unity and religious harmony. "No scholar or speaker has the



right to disrespect any sect or its sacred beliefs," he added. "All must implement and uphold the Paigham-e-Pakistan code without exception," he stressed. The Ulema Council chairman called for full cooperation with the law enforcement and administrative authorities at national, provincial, divisional, and district levels, noting the proactive involvement of peace committee members.

Ministry Slammed for 70-Year Failure to Formalize Ties with Cambridge, British Council

Cambridge, British Council Operating Without Legal Agreement in Pakistan, Ministry Admits

NADEEM TANOLI
ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Professional and Technical Training came under heavy fire during a recent parliamentary subcommittee meeting after it was revealed that the ministry lacks any formal legal agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with either Cambridge International Education or the British Council—despite more than seven decades of their operations in the country. The revelation came amid parliamentary hearings con-



vened to address the fallout from the recent leak of Cambridge exam papers. Lawmakers identified the absence of a documented framework as a fundamental administrative failure that contributed to a lack of regulatory clarity and poor crisis response. An Officer from the Ministry of Federal Education

confirmed the lapse during the session, stating, "I have checked with all the wings in the ministry. It has been determined that no such document exists with us." The admission followed weeks of delay in responding to repeated requests from the subcommittee, prompting visible frustration from its chairperson MNA Sabheen Ghouri. "What is the reason? Why is it being delayed?" the chairperson asked, condemning the ministry's inaction and lack of preparedness. While representatives from the British

Council maintained that their operations in Pakistan fall under a broader government-to-government agreement signed via the Economic Affairs Division in February 2024, lawmakers insisted that the Ministry of Education should have direct and binding documentation in place. "This is the obligation of the Federal Education Department," the chairperson stated emphatically. "You are dealing with education. This is the main problem—the communication problem—because they didn't even sign any MOU." The lack

of formal agreements was directly tied to deeper governance issues, including confusion over syllabus approval authority between the National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC). Lawmakers argued that the Ministry's passive oversight has allowed jurisdictional gaps and regulatory ambiguity to persist unchecked. "The ministry never thought to ask how these organizations are operating," the chairperson remarked. "An issue came up,

we raised the point, and only then was it raised. I am surprised at the representatives here." In response, the committee issued a series of urgent directives for the Ministry of Federal Education: Draft and sign a comprehensive MOU with all international education providers operating in Pakistan. Establish a centralized archiving system for all legal and regulatory documentation. Lead the creation of a third-party investigation mechanism for future exam-related breaches.