

Field Marshal Asim Munir vows to crush cross-border terrorism with full force

TIMES REPORT
RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir on Tuesday said Pakistan's armed forces remained fully alert to state-sponsored attempts by hostile intelligence agencies to destabilise the country and vowed that terrorism originating from across the border would be crushed with the full might of the state, said ISPR.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the army chief made the remarks while addressing graduating officers of the National Security and War Course at the National Defence University (NDU) in Islamabad. The course participants included officers from all three armed services.

During his address, the field marshal highlighted the evolving nature of modern war-

fare and stressed the importance of strategic clarity and institutional professionalism in addressing increasingly complex security challenges. He praised institutions such as the National Defence University for preparing future military and civilian leaders capable of dealing with hybrid, conventional and sub-conventional threats with foresight, confidence and resolve.

The ISPR said Field Marshal Asim Munir noted that the Pakistan Armed Forces were recalibrating their operational employment and development strategies in line with the changing character of warfare. He said the armed forces were fully aware of efforts by hostile intelligence agencies to destabilise Pakistan through proxy networks, adding that such attempts would not be allowed to undermine

the country's internal security or economic prosperity.

The army chief reiterated that terrorism emanating from across Pakistan's borders would be dealt with decisively and that the armed forces, with the support of the nation, would eliminate terrorist sanctuaries and their facilitators. According to the ISPR, Field Marshal Asim Munir also remarked that wars are not won through media rhetoric or political slogans but through faith, unity and discipline.

Concluding his address, he expressed confidence in the professionalism, morale and operational readiness of Pakistan's battle-hardened armed forces and urged the graduating officers to uphold the values of integrity, selfless service and unwavering commitment to the nation.



DC ISPR says 42 Pakistanis martyred, 54 terrorists killed after three major Balochistan attacks

TIMES REPORT
RAWALPINDI: Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry on Wednesday said security forces have killed 54 terrorists during operations launched after three major terrorist attacks in Balochistan over the past four days, while 42 civilians and security personnel were martyred.

people resisted the assault and forced the attackers to retreat. Four civilians were martyred while six others were injured during the attack.

The second major incident took place at the police checkpoint protecting Pumping Station No. 3 of Mangi Dam in Ziarat district.



The DG ISPR said the attackers launched a multidirectional assault on the checkpoint. Police personnel defended their position, killing 15 terrorists before reinforcements from the Pakistan Army and FC arrived. However, the militants managed to take several police officials hostage before additional forces reached the area. He said security forces avoided using aerial assets because of the hostage situation, continuing ground operations while attempting to minimise collateral damage.

According to Lt-Gen Chaudhry, nine policemen were martyred during the initial attack, while a further 18 police personnel lost their lives

during continued engagements in the mountains around Ziarat. He stated that all the martyred policemen were local residents. The military spokesman added that 11 more terrorists had been killed during the ongoing operation, bringing the total number of militants eliminated in the Ziarat operation to 26.

The third major incident occurred on Wednesday when an army convoy came under attack near the N-25 highway in the Bela-Winder area. Lt Gen Chaudhry said 11 soldiers, including one Junior Commissioned Officer and 10 soldiers, were martyred during the engagement with militants belonging to the banned Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), referred to by the government as Fitna al-Hindistan. He said security forces killed 14 militants during the operation.

The DG ISPR also disclosed that separate operations in Kharan and Dalbandin resulted in the deaths of six and eight more terrorists respectively.

Providing the latest figures, he said the three major incidents claimed the lives of four civilians, 27 policemen and 11 soldiers, bringing the total number of martyrs to 42. He added that the latest verified count showed 54 terrorists had been killed during the operations conducted over the past four days.

Pak Navy, PMSA recover wreckage of K2 Airways cargo Boeing 737

TIMES REPORT
ISLAMABAD, Jul 08 (APP): The Pakistan Navy and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) have successfully located and recovered the wreckage of a K2 Airways cargo Boeing 737 after a 12-hour search and rescue operation in the deep sea.

the missing aircraft was found approximately 53 nautical miles south of the Ormara coast, according to a statement



posted by the Pakistan Airports Authority on X.

President, PM offer condolences to China over deadly storms, floods

TIMES REPORT
ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of lives and widespread destruction caused by devastating storms, tornadoes, landslides and heavy rains in China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, as well as Hubei and Gansu provinces. "Deeply saddened by the devastating floods and heavy rains affecting our Chinese brothers and sisters."

I extend my heartfelt condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones and express Pakistan's full solidarity with the people of China during this difficult time. Our ironclad friendship remains steadfast", President Asif Zardari said in a statement. The prime minister, in a separate statement extended, on behalf of the people of Pakistan, heartfelt condolences to President Xi Jinping, the Government and the people of China, especially the bereaved families.

"We stand in solidarity with our Chinese brothers and sisters during this difficult time and pray for the swift recovery of the injured and the success of ongoing rescue efforts," the prime minister added.

Pakistan, China reaffirm security partnership at UN meeting in New York

TIMES REPORT
ISLAMABAD : Pakistan and China have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening their strategic security partnership, expanding counterterrorism cooperation, enhancing border management, combating illegal immigration and drug trafficking, and facilitating greater people-to-people exchanges during a high-level meeting held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

deepen cooperation on internal security and reaffirmed their shared resolve to con-



front terrorism and emerging security challenges.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with China's Vice Minister of Public Security and head of the Special Service Bureau, Ling Zhifeng, where both sides pledged to further

The two ministers agreed to enhance cooperation on internal security matters, with particular emphasis on border management, combating illegal immigra-

tion and intensifying joint efforts against drug trafficking.

During the discus-

Addressing a detailed press conference on the security situation, the military spokesperson said the attacks targeted innocent civilians, police personnel and soldiers in coordinated incidents across Hanna Urak, Ziarat and the Bela-Winder area. He said operations were continuing at multiple locations with the participation of the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps (FC), law enforcement agencies and intelligence agencies.

The DG ISPR maintained that the attacks were backed by India and claimed that Afghanistan territory was being used as a base for anti-Pakistan terrorist activities.

Lt-Gen Chaudhry said the first incident occurred on the night of July 4-5 in Hanna Urak, where militants identified by the government as Fitna al-Khawarij attacked local residents. According to the military spokesperson, local

exemptions, Naqvi stressed that terrorist financing must be stopped at every level, emphasizing that countries involved in supporting or financing terrorist groups should be confronted through coordinated international action.

CM requests Centre not to withdraw proposed tax exemptions in merged districts of KP

TIMES REPORT
PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi has written to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, strongly urging the Federal Government to defer its proposed withdrawal of tax exemptions for the Merged Districts and Malakand Division, stating that the move disregards the commitments made by the Federation at the time

of the merger and risks undermining public confidence in the merger process.

In his letter, the Chief Minister stated that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are not opposed to taxation and remain committed to strengthening Pakistan's economy through a fair, equitable and sustainable taxation system. He emphasized, however, that the issue is not taxation itself but the proposed withdrawal of tax

exemptions in disregard of the commitments made by the Federation during the merger process.

The Chief Minister reminded the Prime Minister that the merger of the erstwhile FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was founded upon a broad national consensus and accompanied by explicit federal commitments to provide sustained financial support and institutional assistance for the successful integration

and development of the region. He noted that, despite the Province's unwavering commitment to implementing the merger, many of these commitments remain outstanding, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continues to shoulder disproportionate financial, administrative and security responsibilities. He further pointed out that the Federation's committed NFC allocation has yet to materialize.

Blue passport facility for KP MPAs already exists under 1988 Law: Shafi Jan

TIMES REPORT
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Information and Public Relations, Shafi Jan, on Tuesday clarified that the entitlement of Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) to blue passports was not a new concession but a privilege already provided under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Powers, Privileges and Immunities) Act, 1988.

Assembly, the provincial minister said unnecessary controversy had been created



regarding the legislation relating to the powers, privileges and immunities of MPAs. He said that many claims circulating on social media and in sec-

tions of the media did not accurately reflect the contents of the law.

Shafi Jan said the

draft bill approved by the cabinet and subsequently sent to the Provincial Assembly did not include any provision for lifetime blue passports or for extending the facility to the family members of lawmakers. According to him, these amendments were introduced only after the bill had been tabled in the Assembly.

The minister said Chief Minister Sohail Afridi had directed that all provisions of the Act that had attracted public criticism be reviewed in consultation with the leaders of all parliamentary parties.

Provincial Cabinet okays KP Health Policy 2026

CM Afridi chairs 55th meeting of KP cabinet, calls review on draft of parliamentarians' Privilege Bill

KP Occupational Safety and Health Rules, 2026 also approved

TIMES REPORT
PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi, while addressing a meeting of the provincial cabinet, said that the draft of the Parliamentarians' Privileges Bill approved by the provincial cabinet had been sent to the Provincial Assembly, where certain amendments were made. He noted that these amendments have been the subject of sustained criticism in the media over the past two to

three days.

The Chief Minister said that, in this regard, he had met Speaker of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Babar Saleem Swati and directed him to convene a meeting of all parliamentary leaders in the Provincial Assembly to review the provisions of the bill that have drawn objections from the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the journalist community, and to consider the necessary revisions.

The Chief Minister said that Imran Khan had always promoted

freedom of expression and believed that journalists should be free to criticise wherever they deemed necessary. He added that both he and his government are regularly criticised by journalists, while certain black channels also continue to spread misleading propaganda against the provincial government. However, he emphasized that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government has never taken any unlawful action against anyone.

He said that even if false propaganda is disseminated, the govern-

ment pursues legal action only through the courts. He added that while incidents of enforced disappearances, violence and harassment of critical journalists are reported in other provinces, no such tactics are employed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Chief Minister said that currently, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly is the only provincial legislature in Pakistan that has been established through a genuine public mandate. Therefore, he said, public opinion and



the public interest will remain paramount in every decision. He expressed the hope that the amendments made to the Parliamentarians' Privileges Bill would be reviewed and that all future decisions would be taken in accordance with the public interest and the will of the people.

Briefing the media

on the key decisions taken during the meeting, Minister for Information and Public Relations Shafi Jan said the Cabinet approved the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Policy 2026, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Occupational Safety and Health Rules, 2026, and amendments to the Provincial Motor Vehicles Ordinance,

1965, as well as the Provincial Motor Vehicles Rules, 1969, to revise and rationalize the Personalized Registration Mark (PRM) regime.

The health policy, he said, envisions a healthier Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where every citizen enjoys equitable access to quality healthcare, contributing to healthier

lives, resilient communities and shared prosperity. Its mission is to build a resilient, people-centred health system through strong leadership, quality service delivery, sustainable financing, innovation, digital transformation, a skilled health workforce, evidence-based decision-making and strategic partnerships.

CityNews

DPO disposes of 36 departmental cases during June and July 2026

RAUF KHATTAK

KARAK: District Police Officer (DPO) Karak, Imran Khan, convened an Orderly Room at the DPO Office to address the grievances, complaints, and departmental matters of police officers and personnel in a timely manner.



During the session, he listened to individual issues, issued necessary directives to the concerned officials, and emphasized the importance of maintaining discipline, integrity, professionalism, and a strong sense of responsibility in the police force.

Addressing the participants, DPO Imran Khan urged all officers and personnel to perform their duties with honesty, dedication, and professionalism while ensuring the protection of life and property and upholding the rule of law.

He informed that during the Orderly Rooms held in June and July 2026 (to date), a total of 36 departmental cases were decided, including 14 cases of absenteeism, 10 cases of negligence, and 12 cases of misconduct.

Following thorough departmental inquiries and in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations, disciplinary action was taken against officers and personnel of various ranks. As a result, 11 officials were issued warnings, 9 were censured, the service of 7 officials was forfeited, 5 had their annual increments withheld, one official was compulsorily retired, and 3 officials were dismissed from service.

DPO Imran Khan stated that the system of rewards and accountability in Karak Police is based on transparency, merit, and the rule of law. He said that officers demonstrating outstanding performance, honesty, and public-friendly policing would be encouraged and rewarded, while no leniency would be shown towards absenteeism, negligence, misconduct, abuse of authority, or violations of departmental discipline.

He further emphasized that maintaining discipline, accountability, and professional standards within the police department is essential for effective policing and strengthening public confidence in law enforcement. He reaffirmed Karak Police's commitment to transparency, accountability, and dedicated public service.

Stream Cleaning, Flood Protection Project launched

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SWAT: Desilting and cleaning work is underway in eight streams and drainage channels across Swat, including the Mingora stream, as part of a provincial government flood protection initiative.

Executive Engineer Irrigation Swat, Faisal Parvez, said the first phase includes cleaning waterways before the monsoon season, while the second phase will see the construction of RCC retaining walls to safeguard nearby communities from flooding.

Scholar Saima Ali defends Ph.D research thesis

IZZAT MUHAMMAD

TAKHT BHAI: Saima Ali, daughter of Shaukat Ali and a scholar at Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, has successfully defended her



PhD research thesis in the Department of Education.

Saima Ali completed her research thesis under the supervision of Dr. Raheem. The examination board appreciated her research work, academic standard, and research capabilities, and declared her thesis successful. On this occasion, the university faculty, fellow scholars, and family members congratulated Saima Ali on this significant academic achievement and expressed their best wishes for her bright future.

Award ceremony announced for outstanding administrative officers

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR : The Secretariat Coordination Council has announced a prestigious award ceremony to honor outstanding PMS and other administrative officers for their integrity, professionalism, excellent performance, and contribution to good governance.

The award recipients include Haji Abdul Akbar Khan (Baba Secretariat), Iqbal Noor, Saif-ur-Rehman, Shahryar Khan, Asif Khan, Haji Fazal-e-Ala, Zeeshan Khan (Finance), Mansoor Khan, Zeeshan Khan (Housing), Mudassar Khan, Farhan Adil, Imran Anwar, Kifayat Khan, Shafiq Khan, Nadir Khan Afridi, Malik Shujauddin, Syeda Bano, Asif Nabi, and Khan Raziq.

According to the Council, these officers have demonstrated exemplary public service and have played a key role in supporting employees, strengthening administration, and promoting good governance. The date, time, and venue of the award ceremony will be announced soon.

ANP Criticizes KP Govt, Calls July 13 Jirga Over Malakand Taxes

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Awami National Party on Wednesday criticised Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for what it described as misplaced priorities amid worsening security and economic challenges, while announcing that it would convene a grand Loya Jirga on July 13 against the imposition of taxes in the Malakand Division. Addressing a press conference, the ANP provincial president Mian Ifthikhar Hussain said that the province was grappling with insecurity, inflation, unemployment and governance issues, but the government remained focused on securing privileges instead of addressing public concerns.

KPFA seizes adulterated milk and counterfeit beverages

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Food Authority (KPFS&HFA), on the directives of the Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Food Dr Muhammad Israr Khan, continued its province-wide crackdown against the transportation and distribution of substandard and adulterated food items.

According to the Food Authority spokesperson, special checkpoints were established at key entry and exit points across various districts, where food-carrying vehicles were thoroughly inspected. Mobile Food Testing Laboratories were also deployed to conduct on-the-spot testing of milk and other food products to ensure compliance with food safety standards.

During operations in Peshawar, Food Safety teams seized approximately 1,200 litres of substandard and counterfeit

beverages from a vehicle. In addition, 80 litres of substandard milk

were discarded on the spot, while fines were imposed on the violators.



In Haripur, more than 300 litres of adulterated milk were recovered and destroyed, and legal proceedings were initiated against

those responsible. Similarly, in Dera Ismail

Khan, Food Safety officials seized and disposed of 1,400 litres of hazardous milk. In another operation, the Malakand Food Safety team intercepted a vehicle at the Swat Expressway, confiscated 500 litres of adulterated milk, destroyed the

consignment, and imposed fines on the offenders.

The spokesperson added that similar inspection drives and checkpoint operations were also carried out in Bannu, Swabi, Charsadda, Abbottabad, Swat, Nowshera, Buner, Chitral, Khyber, Kohat, Lower Dir, Mardan and Lakki Marwat to prevent the movement of unsafe and substandard food products across the province.

Speaking on the occasion, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Food Dr Muhammad Israr Khan, said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government remained fully committed to ensuring the availability of safe, hygienic and quality food for the public. He reiterated that indiscriminate action against those involved in food adulteration and counterfeiting would continue until the food adulteration mafia was completely eliminated from the province.

AC Directs One-Window Services for Farmers at Facilitation Centre

CORRESPONDENT

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Assistant Commissioner Dr. Muhammad Hamid Siddique paid a detailed visit to the Farmer Facilitation Centre near Bab-e-Dera, where he reviewed its performance and directed officials to establish a comprehensive one-window service system aimed at providing farmers with all essential agricultural facilities under one roof.

During the visit, officials from the Agriculture Department, Livestock Department, Soil Consortium and other relevant departments briefed the Assistant Commissioner on the centre's operations,

ongoing activities and the services currently being provided to the farming community.

The visit was conducted on the directives of the Deputy Commissioner of Dera Ismail Khan to assess the centre's performance and further strengthen services for farmers. Dr. Siddique also inspected the Agriculture Research Block and the Soil Testing Laboratory, where he reviewed the soil testing process and agricultural research initiatives.

He instructed the centre's management to develop, within 15 days, an integrated system under which every farmer visiting the facility can access soil test-

ing and analysis, crop-specific recommendations, subsidised fertilisers under government schemes, tractors, threshers and other agricultural machinery, along with technical guidance and field support from agricultural assistants throughout the cultivation process.

The assistant commissioner further directed the centre to regularly organise awareness sessions, training programmes and advisory meetings to familiarise farmers with modern agricultural technology, improved farming practices, efficient irrigation methods, crop protection measures and updated livestock management techniques.

Clearing Agents Demand Immediate Reopening of Torkham Border for Trade

MIZHAR ALI SHAH

PESHAWAR : All Torkham Border Clearing Agents Association, president Muejeb Shinwari, on Wednesday urged federal and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governments, along with the security authorities, to immediately reopen the Torkham border for transit trade, claiming that its prolonged closure had pushed thousands of workers and businesses into severe financial hardship.

Speaking at a press conference at Peshawar Press Club, Mr Shinwari said the border had remained closed for commercial activity for the past 10 months, leaving daily wage earners unemployed and clearing agents struggling to survive.

He said the suspension of trade had devastated the livelihoods of people dependent on cross-border commerce, forcing many families to leave the area in search of alternative sources of income.

Mr Shinwari called on the federal and provincial governments to hold meaningful negotiations with the Afghan authorities to resolve the issue permanently and restore trade through the Torkham crossing.

He said the tribal districts lacked industrial infrastructure, making cross-border trade the primary source of employment for local residents. According to him, prolonged unemployment was exposing young people to social problems, including drug addiction, while

increasing the risk of them being drawn towards militant groups.

The clearing agents' leader also criticised the provincial government, saying they had repeatedly sought a meeting with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister but had not been given an opportunity to present the concerns of those associated with transit trade.

He appealed to the authorities to separate security issues from commercial activities, arguing that repeated closures of the border in the name of law and order had become a recurring problem, disrupting trade, affecting families living along the border and causing heavy financial losses to businesses.

Chairman BoG Dr Shahzad Bangash reviews Rehab Services at PCP

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Dr. Shahzad Khan Bangash, Former Chief Secretary and Chairman BoG PCP, accompanied by members of BoG, paid a comprehensive visit to various departments of the Paraplegic Center Peshawar to review the facilities and rehabilitation services being provided to patients.

Director Rehabilitation Dr. Aamir Zeb, briefed them on the Center's performance, achievements and multi-disciplinary rehabilitation services of PCP. He informed that the Paraplegic Center Peshawar is Pakistan's premier rehabilitation institution, providing comprehensive physical, psychological and social rehabilitation services under one roof for individuals with spinal cord injuries, polio and other persons with disabilities (PwDs).

He further explained that the Center offers a full range of rehabilitation services completely free of cost, including medical rehabilitation, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, nursing care, orthotics, wheelchair

services, psychosocial rehabilitation and vocational rehabilitation. These services are aimed at enabling persons with disabilities to regain independence and reintegrate into society as



productive and dignified citizens.

Dr Shahzad Bangash also visited various wards, rehabilitation units and support service departments, interacted with patients, and observed the quality of care being provided.

The Chairman and Board members appreciated the Center's professional standards, patient-centered approach and comprehensive rehabilitation model, expressing their satisfaction with the services being delivered.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Shahzad Khan Bangash described the Paraplegic Center Peshawar as a source of pride not only for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but for the

entire country. He reaffirmed the BoG's commitment to supporting the institution in expanding its capacity, enhancing its services and further developing it into a model rehabilitation center of national excellence.

Expressing his gratitude to the Chairman and members of the Board of Governors, Director Rehab Dr. Aamir Zeb stated that the Center remains fully committed to its mission of providing high-quality, patient-centered rehabilitation services.

15 Illegal marble factories sealed

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Acting on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Captain (R) Sanaullah Khan, the district administration carried out an operation against illegal marble factories and sealed 15 units located on Warsak Road.

According to the Deputy Commissioner, these marble factories were operating without filtration plants. As a result, contaminated water generated during the cutting process was being discharged through drains into canals, causing frequent blockages and negatively impacting agricultural production. The situation was also contributing to increased environmental pollution.

The polluted water from these factories often flowed onto roads in nearby areas, causing severe inconvenience to the public. Factory owners had previously been issued multiple notices directing them to install filtration plants in accordance with Environmental Protection Department regulations. However, due to non-compliance, the district administration took action and sealed the factories. Legal proceedings will be initiated against the factory owners, and operations against illegal marble factories will continue.



UoP MPhil Scholar Saima defends thesis

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Saima, an MPhil scholar in the Department of Food and Nutrition at the College of Home Economics, University of Peshawar, successfully defended her thesis on the role of Citrullus colocynthis in glycemic index management for women with Type 2 dia-



betes. Supervised by Dr. Razia Tariq Khan with co-supervisor Prof. Dr. Anwar Ali Shad, the research was praised for its potential contribution to nutrition-based diabetes management. Principal Prof. Dr. Shazia Shah congratulated the scholar and appreciated the study's scientific value.

More than 200 passengers rescued in Lower Chitral timely operation

PESHAWAR: Rescue 1122 in Lower Chitral safely evacuated more than 200 passengers after flash floods triggered by heavy monsoon rains blocked the Drosh-Ashiret Road at several locations with debris and mudslides, leaving numerous vehicles stranded.

According to Rescue 1122 on Wednesday, under the supervision of the District Emergency Officer, Rescue 1122 launched an immediate response operation. First response points stationed at the Sheshi Koh and Bregnesar watch points initiated rescue efforts, while additional teams from the district headquarters were dispatched to the affected areas. Rescue teams continued relief activities for six hours in Kalkarak, Kaldam Gol, Soir and Ashiret.

Four stranded passenger vehicles were moved to safe locations and all travelers were assisted to safety. The operation involved 20 Rescue 1122 personnel, three ambulances and a disaster response vehicle. Authorities maintained close coordination with the National Highway Authority and the district administration to restore the road and ensure public safety. According to Rescue 1122, no casualties or injuries were reported in the situation. —APP

President PCAC meets Commissioner Kohat

TIMES REPORT

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah, Wednesday, met with President, Pakistan Christian Arts Council (PCAC) Kohat, Riaz Razi to discuss the promotion of literature, culture, interfaith harmony and social cohesion. During the meeting, the commissioner commended the Pakistan Christian Arts Council Kohat for its literary, cultural and social initiatives describing the organization as an important contributor to interfaith harmony, national unity and for promotion of positive cultural traditions in the district. Riaz Razi thanked the Commissioner for encouraging literary and cultural activities alongside efforts to maintain law and order saying such support strengthens social harmony and community engagement.

Shaza, Somalia minister discuss enhancing cooperation in IT & digital transformation



Shangla: NCHD Concludes ALP Program, Certificates and Shields Distributed Among 140 Students

SYED SAJJID SHAH

ALPURI: The National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) organized the closing ceremony of its Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) at the Alpuri Jirga Hall. The event was attended by Deputy Commissioner Shangla Pir Abdullah Shah as the chief guest, while former Tehsil Nazim Taif Khan presided over the ceremony.

A total of 140 male and female students from seven religious seminaries (Madaris) across District Shangla were awarded certificates and shields in recognition of successfully completing the program. On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Pir Abdullah Shah also presented cash prizes of PKR 5,000 each to the students who secured first, second, and third positions.

Addressing the ceremony, District Bar President Syed Salman Shah highlighted the importance of education, while journalist Syed Sajid Shah spoke about educational awareness, the value of learning, and future challenges. District Education



Officer Aurangzeb also delivered a detailed address on educational reforms and the challenges facing the education sector.

In his speech, Deputy Commissioner Pir Abdullah Shah said it was a day of celebration, as children who were once deprived of education are now moving forward on the path of learning. He emphasized that education is the key to a brighter future and expressed confidence that these students would make their parents, society, and the country proud. He added that an educated generation is essential for Pakistan's progress, prosperity, and stability.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Deputy Commissioner distributed prizes among the position holders, while NCHD also presented commemorative shields to the participating seminaries.

Gomal VC Opts for Staff Bus to Promote Austerity

TIMES REPORT

DI.KHAN: In a first for Gomal University, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Naimatullah Babar has started travelling on the university's staff bus instead of using the official vehicle, setting an example of austerity, discipline and responsible use of public resources. Following the provincial government's policy of cost-saving and efficient resource management, the Vice Chancellor also directed that his official vehicle be placed in the university's transport pool. He will now commute daily on the staff bus.



During the journey, Prof. Dr. Babar interacted with university employees in a friendly atmosphere, listened to their concerns and suggestions, and stressed the importance of stronger coordination between the administration and staff.

He said the university administration is taking practical steps to make Gomal University financially stable and self-sustaining, adding that every employee has an important role to play in achieving this goal.

Pakistan unveils landmark E-sports policy to drive digital economy

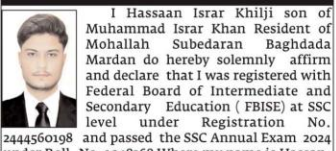
TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet on Wednesday approved Pakistan's first National E sports Policy, paving the way for the formal recognition and regulation of competitive gaming as a professional, educational and economic sector. Developed by the Pakistan E sports Task Force under the chairmanship of Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, the policy aims to strengthen the digital economy, create employment opportunities and position Pakistan as a regional hub for E sports. The policy establishes a comprehensive national framework for the growth of the E sports sector through collaboration among government institutions, the private sector, academia, telecom operators, game publishers and professional players. It seeks to build a modern, inclusive and internationally competitive E sports ecosystem by strengthening digital and institutional infrastructure and introducing a structured governance mechanism.

Under the policy, the government will establish the Esports Federation of Pakistan to regulate and promote the sector.

It also envisages structured competitive pathways for players, stronger institutional support and measures to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship and digital skills development. The policy places particular emphasis on education and training in game development, animation, visual effects (VFX) and other emerging technologies to prepare young Pakistanis for careers in the rapidly expanding digital economy. It also promotes responsible gaming practices and includes measures to safeguard the wellbeing of young players while encouraging wider youth participation. According to the PMYP, the policy was developed under the guidance of the Pakistan E-sports Task Force constituted by the Prime Minister.

Name Correction



I Hassaan Israr Khilji son of Muhammad Israr Khan Resident of Mohallah Subedaran Baghdada Mardan do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I was registered with Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (FBISE) at SSC level under Registration No. 2444560198 and passed the SSC Annual Exam 2024 under Roll. No. 1048268 Where my name is Hassan.

I have decided to change my name from Hassan to Hassaan Israr Khilji which is written as Hassan in Boards documents/ record. Hence the same may be changed/ corrected.

That the statement given above is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and that nothing has been concealed and withheld.

Pakistan-Russia agree to deepen security cooperation at UN meeting

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi, held a meeting with Russian Interior Minister Vladimir Alexandrovich Kolokoltsev at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation on key security issues.

The two ministers held detailed discussions on the prevailing regional situation and explored avenues to enhance collaboration in counter-narcotics,

counterterrorism, cybercrime prevention, and joint police training exercises. They also discussed developing a coordinated strategy to counter terrorist networks operating in the region, particularly in Afghanistan.

During the meeting, Pakistan and Russia agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between their respective interior ministries to institutionalize and expand bilateral cooperation. The discussions also included a review of progress made on decisions taken during their previous meeting. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi invited his

Russian counterpart to visit Pakistan, underscoring Islamabad's commitment to strengthening engagement with Moscow. Speaking during the meeting, Naqvi said that more than 25 terrorist organizations are currently active in Afghanistan, describing the elimination of extremist groups as a shared international responsibility.

"We need to work together and take effective measures to eradicate this menace," Naqvi said, emphasizing the importance of coordinated regional and international efforts to combat terrorism.

China's rise a remarkable transformations in contemporary history: Experts

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad, hosted a special seminar to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC), titled 'China's Remarkable Socioeconomic Transformation under the Leadership of the CPC

al of its top leaders had engineering backgrounds, and pointed to Beijing's dramatic improvement in air quality as a symbol of the change. Pakistan and China, he said, were 'partners in peace, partners in progress, and development partners.' Professor Gao Jian, Secretary General at Shanghai International Studies University, stated that China's



and Its Growing Contributions to Global Public Good'. Moderated by Ms. Nabila Jaffer, Head of the China Program, the seminar brought together senior diplomats, government officials, scholars, youth, and media, said a press release.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President of IRS, described China's rise as one of the most remarkable transformations in contemporary history, lifting around 800 million people out of poverty and raising per capita income from about 165 US dollars in the 1970s to close to 13400 US dollars today, and leaping towards modernization. He identified meritocracy as the single most important lesson of China's development, noting that sever-

path to modernization, achieved through a governance model rooted in China's own realities, has proved Fukuyama's claim wrong that modernization would ultimately take the form of Westernization. Chinese modernization, he stressed, is not a template to be copied but an example that every nation must adapt to its own social realities.

Ambassador Masood Khalid, Pakistan's former ambassador to China, traced the CPC's journey from its founding in Shanghai in 1921 to the current 15th Five-Year Plan. He highlighted China's system of five-year planning, begun in 1953, as systematic, scientific, and pragmatic, with built-in course correction and a strong emphasis on data accuracy. He emphasized the Party

leaders' critical role in setting the stage for China's socioeconomic ascent, delineating the policies from Mao to Xi era. He also opined that China is steering the rise of Asia as well. China's rise, he said, had been peaceful; it sought not to dismantle the international order but to seek adjustments reflecting new realities, and aimed to become a fully modern country by 2049.

Ambassador Mo'in ul Haque, Pakistan's former Ambassador to China, focused on the CPC's engagement with the Global South. He traced the evolution of Chinese foreign policy from the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and the 1955 Bandung Conference to President Xi Jinping's global initiatives, under which China had moved from a recipient of development assistance to a development provider. He detailed China's contributions to global public goods across infrastructure connectivity, development financing, poverty reduction, science and technology, public health, green development and human capital, citing CPEC projects, the provision of COVID-19 vaccines as a global public good, and training and scholarship opportunities for Pakistani students, officials and farmers.

Delivering the guest of honour address, Shi Yuanqiang, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Islamabad, drew on General Secretary Xi Jinping's July 1 address in Beijing to outline three keys to the CPC's success: a people-centered approach, a global vision oriented toward the common good, and rigorous party self-governance guided by 'seeking truth from facts'.

DI Khan Honours Stakeholders for Peaceful Muharram 2026

MUHAMMAD RAIHAN

DI.KHAN: A ceremony was held in Dera Ismail Khan to honour the

Khan and attended by RPO Ghulam Mubashir Mekan, Station Commander Brigadier Muhammad Abu Bakar, Deputy Commissioner



Peace Committee, religious scholars, traders, civil society and media for their role in ensuring the peaceful observance of Muharram 2026.

Addressing the event as chief guest, Major General Mudassar Saeed, General Officer Commanding (GOC) 40 Division, praised the cooperation of all stakeholders and said unity, harmony and public support were key to maintaining lasting peace. He added that the Pakistan Army and law enforcement agencies, with the support of the people, would continue to counter Fitna Al-Khawarij and safeguard stability in the region.

The ceremony was hosted by Commissioner Dera Division Dawood

Hikmatullah, DPO Ziauddin Ahmad, members of the Peace Committee, religious scholars, traders, lawyers and representatives of civil society.

Commissioner Dawood Khan said the peaceful conclusion of Muharram in one of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's most sensitive regions reflected the collective efforts of law enforcement agencies and the community. RPO Ghulam Mubashir Mekan also appreciated the role of religious scholars, traders, the Peace Committee and the public in maintaining peace and promoting inter-sect harmony.

Bishop Condemns Alleged Forced Entry into Mission House

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Bishop of Peshawar Humphrey Sarfraz Peters has condemned the alleged breaking of locks and forced entry into the Mission House



by Edwards College Acting Principal Shujaat Ali Khan. Calling the act unlawful and unacceptable, he urged the federal and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governments to restore the Mission House, suspend the acting principal, and ensure a transparent police investigation.

He reaffirmed the Christian community's commitment to pursuing its constitutional and legal rights through peaceful means.

Lok Virsa launches three-month singing training programme

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa), working under National Heritage and Culture Division, has launched a three-month singing training programme aimed at preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich musical heritage by providing aspiring vocalists with professional training in diverse musical genres.



Sardar Waqar Shahzad Invites Korean Envoy to Visit Swat

TIMES REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Waqar Shahzad Advocate met with His Excellency HAN Sungho, the newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Pakistan, at the Korean Embassy in Islamabad, where they discussed strengthening bilateral ties



through tourism, cultural exchanges, and agricultural cooperation.

Sardar Waqar Shahzad presented the ambassador with fresh peaches from Swat Valley as a gesture of goodwill and invited him to visit the scenic valley. Ambassador HAN Sungho appreciated the quality of the peaches, accepted the invitation, and said, "I will visit Swat soon." Both sides agreed that greater cooperation in tourism, culture, and agriculture would further strengthen friendship and mutual understanding between Pakistan and South Korea.

Indonesian Embassy Hosts Blood Donation, Emergency Training Drive in Islamabad

SAHAID QURESHI

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Indonesia, in collaboration with the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), organized a blood donation and emergency response training programme titled 'Share Blood, Share Hope' at the Indonesian Embassy in Islamabad, bringing together diplomats, students and humanitarian volunteers to promote the spirit of saving lives. A large number of Indonesian students studying in Pakistan participated enthusiastically in the event alongside ambassadors, diplomats and embassy staff



from ASEAN member countries. The programme also featured practical emergency response training aimed at enhancing first-aid and disaster preparedness skills among participants. Speaking on the occasion, Indonesian Ambassador Lieutenant General (Ret.) Chandra Warsenanto Sukotjo highlighted the importance of voluntary blood donation.

saying that a single blood donation can save several lives and reflects the values of humanity, compassion and solidarity. He appreciated the partnership with the Pakistan Red Crescent Society in promoting public awareness about blood donation and emergency preparedness.

Dera Press Club Reviews Performance, Announces New Appointments

STAFF REPORTER

DI.KHAN: The registered Dera Press Club held an important meeting under the chairmanship of President Ahmad Khan Kamrani, where members reviewed the club's overall performance, ongoing projects, financial affairs and welfare initiatives for journalists. The house expressed satisfaction over the club's progress, reaffirmed confidence in its leader-

as part of efforts to further improve the club's administrative structure.

The meeting also unanimously decided to lift the restrictions imposed on senior journalist Muhammad Raihan. Participants emphasized professional ethics, mutual respect and unity among journalists to enhance the prestige of the press club.

It was also announced that membership of the registered Dera Press



ship and pledged to continue working with unity and mutual consultation to strengthen the institution.

During the meeting, Chaudhry Ikramuddin was appointed Vice President, while Muhammad Farooq Baloch was named Finance Secretary

Club remains open to eligible professional journalists who meet the club's constitution and membership criteria. Special prayers were offered for the speedy recovery of ailing journalists, including Naveed Sultan, Mohsin Saleem and Abdul Shakoor.

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING

JUNE 26

World Drug Day 2026

On the International Day against Drug Abuse, I call upon the people of District mansehra to stand together for a healthier and drug-free future.

The district medical Superintendent remains committed to this cause. Through awareness sessions, counseling, treatment, and rehabilitation services at DHQ/THQ hospitals and BHUs, we are working to support those affected and prevent new cases.

Say No To Drugs!

Dr Jawad Majeed Swati
Medical Superintendent King
Abdullah hospital district mansehra

Editorial & Opinion

The Voice of the Time

DAILY TIMES

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Who Speaks for Balochistan?

SYED MUBASHIR SHAH

While the pursuit of liberty in Pakistan's largest province has turned into a bloody proxy war, Balochistan exists in a state of tragic irony. As Pakistan's largest, resource-rich province, its people are frequently denied the most fundamental components of human development, from clean drinking water to functioning schools and basic healthcare.

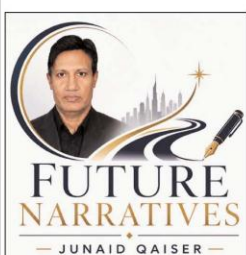
This long-standing economic neglect is worsened by an outdated feudal structure where local waderas often abuse power over vulnerable communities with near zero accountability. When the state apparatus fails to address these local tyrannies or actively manages peaceful constitutional demands with force, a volatile sociopolitical vacuum is created. In this context, the problem of enforced disappearances has come to represent the central cause of collective grief among the Baloch people. The non-violent human rights movements, including the Baloch Yakehti Committee (BYC), under the leadership of Mahrang Baloch, have organized their people on the basis of an open manifesto that advocates the cessation of extrajudicial abductions and the strict adherence to due process. But the heavy-handedness of the state through the recent judgments of the anti-terrorism court imprisoning non-violent activists for many years has criminalized protest politics. Yet, these systemic failures also feed a far more dangerous undercurrent: the armed militancy of the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). While the BLA uses revolutionary rhetoric to claim the mantle of Baloch liberation, its actions reveal a profound moral abyss. During mass-casualty events like the Nushki and Musakhel incidents, militants systematically intercepted passenger vehicles, checked national identity cards, and executed dozens of civilians solely based on their Punjabi ethnicity. By shifting from a political struggle against state overreach into an ethnocentric campaign targeting low-wage laborers, the BLA strips itself of any moral legitimacy.

This ethical breakdown mirrors the core thesis of French philosopher Albert Camus in *The Rebel*. Camus argued that true rebellion must possess a moral limit. When a revolutionary movement decides that its ends justify the slaughter of innocents, it ceases to be a force for liberation and becomes a mirror image of the tyranny it opposes. By adopting tactics of indiscriminate terror against everyday citizens, the BLA has crossed that exact line. Moreover, the crisis is complicated due to heavy regional geopolitics. The Islamabad government has time and again accused external intelligence services such as India's RAW of funding and arming the BLA to create unrest in Pakistan and hamper economic projects such as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Even though New Delhi denies such claims, it is seen by the security experts that foreign patrons exploit the actual internal dissatisfaction in order to play the proxy game regionally. Some lessons that Baloch people know more than any outsider: Rebellion has its own limit. Mahrang Baloch set this limit even in his prison cell, protests peacefully do not mean taking arms; no one can mix these things up – neither the government nor the militants. Putting people in prison because they talk will not help much; it will only drive more Baloch youngsters toward armed men. And when the BLA murder laborers due to their last name, it does not free anybody but creates another grave on an uncounted list. There seems to be something between all these – ordinary Baloch citizen who still lacks water and misses his brother and wants to be treated like a citizen.

ing a dressing change, another individual reportedly claimed to be more experienced and administered two injections. Her family alleges that immediately after receiving the injections, Areeza cried out in severe pain and said to her father: "Dad... I'm in so much pain... my body is turning blue." These words will likely echo in her father's heart for the rest of his life. Moments later, she lost consciousness and was rushed to the DHQ Hospital in Sargodha. According to her family, doctors there informed them that a severe infection had spread following the allegedly incorrect injection. Despite fighting for her life on a ventilator for three days, Areeza passed away on 6 July.

If these facts are confirmed through an impartial investigation, this would represent not only an act of medical negligence but also a grave failure to protect the sanctity of human life. Unfortunately, quackery has become a silent yet dangerous epidemic in Pakistan. Across cities and rural communities alike, unqualified individuals continue to provide medical treatment without proper education, professional training, or legal authorization. What begins as treatment for a minor illness or

The Libya Initiative: Pakistan's Quiet Diplomatic Rise



Pakistan has quietly begun mediating between Libya's rival eastern and western power centres, a previously unreported effort that could significantly raise Islamabad's diplomatic profile if it succeeds. While much of the world's attention remains focused on conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, and the broader Middle East, an important diplomatic development appears to be unfolding largely away from the spotlight. If developments continue in this regard, Islamabad may be positioning itself as a credible mediator in one of North Africa's most complex and long-running political crises.

For more than a decade, Libya has remained divided between competing political and military authorities. The instability that followed the 2011 uprising against Muammar Qadhafi created a fragmented political landscape in which rival governments, armed groups, and foreign powers have competed for influence. Numerous international conferences, ceasefires, and peace initiatives have attempted to bridge these divisions, yet a durable political settlement has remained elusive. Against this backdrop, Pakistan's

reported involvement deserves serious attention.

According to reports, Islamabad's mediation efforts began late last year after both Libya's eastern and western camps sought Pakistan's engagement. Reports suggest that the U.S. is fully aware of the initiative, while Saudi Arabia is supporting the effort. Qatar and Türkiye are also said to have encouraged Pakistan's participation.

Whether these reports ultimately prove entirely accurate is less important than what they reveal about Pakistan's evolving diplomatic standing. The very fact that multiple stakeholders are reportedly willing to accept Islamabad as a facilitator speaks to a growing confidence in Pakistan's ability to engage constructively across political and ideological divides.

Traditionally, Pakistan's foreign policy has been shaped by concerns closer to home. Relations with neighbouring countries, regional security, counterterrorism, economic diplomacy, and engagement with major powers have naturally dominated Islamabad's strategic calculations. However, international politics is changing. In an increasingly fragmented world, countries that can maintain dialogue with competing actors are becoming more valuable than ever.

This is where Pakistan's recent diplomatic trajectory becomes noteworthy. Over the past year, Islamabad has increasingly demonstrated its ability to maintain communication channels with countries and political actors that do not always engage easily with one another. Its reported role in facilitating dialogue connected to US-Iran engagement earlier this year con-

tributed to a perception that Pakistan could serve as a bridge between competing interests rather than merely a participant in regional rivalries.

The Libya initiative appears to reflect the same diplomatic approach.

What makes Libya particularly challenging is the sheer number of actors involved. The eastern-based Libyan National Army under Khalifa Haftar and the western-based Government of National Unity have long competed for legitimacy and authority. Beyond Libya itself, regional and international powers have often backed different factions, turning the country into a theatre for broader geopolitical competition.

In such an environment, trust becomes one of the most valuable diplomatic assets.

Pakistan appears to possess an advantage that some larger powers lack: it is not widely viewed as pursuing direct political control or economic dominance in Libya. Instead, it maintains working relationships across multiple camps. That neutrality—or at least the perception of neutrality—can often create opportunities for dialogue where more heavily invested actors struggle to gain acceptance from all sides.

Reports indicate that discussions have centred on a possible transitional arrangement that would distribute authority among key Libyan actors. Details remain under negotiation, and any final agreement would require substantial political compromises. Yet the fact that such discussions are reportedly taking place suggests that the search for common ground remains alive. The initiative also highlights the growing importance of Pakistan's relations with key regional partners. Saudi Arabia's

reported support for the effort is particularly significant. The strategic partnership between Islamabad and Riyadh has deepened in recent years, extending beyond traditional security cooperation into broader diplomatic coordination.

Similarly, Pakistan's ability to maintain positive relations with Qatar and Türkiye demonstrates a flexibility that many countries would welcome. Field Marshal Asim Munir's recent meeting with Libyan military leader Saddam Haftar in Rawalpindi further underscored Pakistan's interest in developments beyond its immediate neighbourhood. The meeting was followed by Haftar's visit to Washington, where he held talks with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

The United States has consistently supported efforts aimed at preserving Libya's unity and stability. If Pakistan can contribute positively to that objective, it would strengthen Islamabad's reputation as a constructive diplomatic partner rather than merely a recipient of international initiatives.

If Pakistan can help create even a modest pathway toward greater stability in Libya, it will have achieved something of considerable significance—not only for Libya but also for Pakistan's standing in the international community. At a time when global politics is increasingly defined by division and confrontation, countries that can facilitate dialogue occupy an important space. Pakistan appears determined to claim that space. The Libya initiative may still be in its early stages, but it represents a noteworthy example of Islamabad's evolving diplomatic ambitions and its growing confidence on the world stage.

The Perils of Power in Sports: From Biased Umpires to Presidential Calls



MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL

In the 1980s, when bilateral cricket between India and Pakistan burned with unmatched intensity, the two nations met not only as rivals on the field but as embodiments of national pride. Series were contested on home soil, featuring five Test matches and a handful of One-Day Internationals, with local umpires presiding over the proceedings. On the 13th of March 1987, at Bangalore's Chinnaswamy Stadium, Pakistan, led by Imran Khan, faced India in a Test match overseen by umpires RB Gupta and WK Ramaswamy. Pakistan's spinners, Iqbal Qasim and Tauseef Ahmed, delivered masterly spells, their every appeal for leg-before-wicket or caught behind resounding through the ground. Yet the umpires appeared resolute in their reluctance to dismiss the Indian stalwarts Sunil Gavaskar and Gundappa Viswanath. Despite such apparent partiality, Pakistan pre-

vailed by a narrow margin of sixteen runs and claimed the series by a single victory.

The episode laid bare a troubling truth: when officials from the host nation wield the power of decision, fairness may yield to favoritism. Another Indian umpire, long remembered in cricketing lore as "Umpire Punjabi," earned notoriety for his readiness to raise the finger against Pakistani batsmen while sparing his countrymen. Such conduct wounds the very soul of sport, breeding resentment among fans and eroding the trust that binds competitors and spectators alike. In time, the outcry compelled the appointment of neutral umpires, a reform born of necessity to restore credibility to the game.

Decades later, the world finds itself once more confronting the spectre of interference in sport, this time on the grand stage of the FIFA World Cup. Co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico, the tournament had unfolded with considerable promise until a recent controversy cast a long shadow over its integrity.

In the Round of 32, American forward Folarin Balogun, who had already scored three goals and emerged as his side's chief threat, received a red card for planting his foot awkwardly upon the ankle of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Tarik Muharemovic.

The offence, witnessed by referee Raphael Claus, triggered an automatic one-match suspension under established rules. Many viewed the decision as harsh, Balogun himself suggesting a yellow card might have sufficed for what appeared an accidental collision born of imbalance. Yet the laws of the game were clear.

What followed has shaken the foundations of fair play. United States President Donald Trump, declaring the incident no foul at all but merely two athletes colliding at speed, telephoned FIFA President Gianni Infantino to urge a review. FIFA, invoking Article 27 of its disciplinary code, suspended the implementation of the ban for a probationary period, permitting Balogun to line up against Belgium in the last sixteen. The decision marked the first time since 1962 that a World Cup red card had not resulted in automatic absence from the subsequent fixture. In that earlier case, Brazil's Garrincha had benefited from the era's less rigid procedures; here, the intervention bore the unmistakable imprint of political influence.

The reaction has been swift and severe. Belgium's football authorities expressed astonishment, declaring their intent to safeguard the principles of fair play and investigating every avenue of recourse. Their coach, Rudi Garcia, likened the affair to an April Fools' jest misplaced in July.

UEFA condemned the ruling as having crossed a red line, while Sepp Blatter, former president of FIFA, warned pointedly that red cards are overturned by evidence and independent judgment, not by telephone calls from heads of state. "Quo vadis, FIFA?" he asked.

Coaches of other nations voiced unease: Norway's Stale Solbakken foresaw damage to the tournament's reputation, while England's Thomas Tuchel questioned where such overturns might end—might yellow cards too become negotiable? Former players, including Ian Wright and Roy Keane, decried the episode as shameful to the game's integrity.

Critics rightly observe that FIFA appears to have strained its own regulations. The automatic suspension enshrined in multiple articles of the disciplinary code and World Cup regulations. By setting aside this provision after presidential intercession, the governing body has invited accusations of bending rules to accommodate a powerful host nation. The United States, as co-host, carries the weight of expectation and influence; yet when politics intrudes upon the pitch, the universal language of sport risks translation into the dialect of power. But alas, despite all these irregularities, the United States lost the match to Belgium 4-1 and was eliminated from the tournament.

History whispers caution. From the biased umpires of Bangalore to the controversial reprieve granted Balogun, the lesson endures; once the impartiality of officials is compromised, whether by national loyalty or political pressure, the spirit of competition withers.

Fans across continents watch not merely for spectacle but for the assurance that merit, not manipulation, decides the outcome. As the World Cup advances toward its knockout climax, the controversy surrounding this American player lingers like a cloud.

It serves as a reminder that sport, at its noblest, must remain a sanctuary from the machinations of the political realm. Should governing bodies fail to defend that sanctuary, they risk alienating the very hearts that sustain the game. In the end, true victory belongs not to nations or presidents, but to the timeless ideals of fairness and honour.

One Wrong Injection.& the End of an Innocent Life

SYED NOUMAN UD DIN

The Areeza Fatima Case: Quackery, Negligence, and a Question Mark Over Our Healthcare System. "When human life becomes cheap, every claim of progress loses its meaning."

Some news stories are more than headlines—they shake the conscience of an entire nation. They force us to reflect on where we stand as a society and where we are heading. The tragic death of 14-year-old Areeza Fatima from Sargodha is one such heartbreaking incident that has left every compassionate person deeply saddened.

Imagine a father taking his daughter from home with nothing more than the hope of treating a minor problem with her toenail. Within hours, the same father is desperately praying for her life outside a hospital, and only days later, he is forced to bury his beloved child. Few tragedies can be more devastating for any family.

According to reports, Areeza was initially treated by an alleged unqualified practitioner at a medical store located on Girls College Road, Block No. 18, Sargodha, where a minor procedure was performed on her toenail. The following day, dur-

ing a dressing change, another individual reportedly claimed to be more experienced and administered two injections. Her family alleges that immediately after receiving the injections, Areeza cried out in severe pain and said to her father: "Dad... I'm in so much pain... my body is turning blue." These words will likely echo in her father's heart for the rest of his life. Moments later, she lost consciousness and was rushed to the DHQ Hospital in Sargodha. According to her family, doctors there informed them that a severe infection had spread following the allegedly incorrect injection. Despite fighting for her life on a ventilator for three days, Areeza passed away on 6 July.

If these facts are confirmed through an impartial investigation, this would represent not only an act of medical negligence but also a grave failure to protect the sanctity of human life. Unfortunately, quackery has become a silent yet dangerous epidemic in Pakistan. Across cities and rural communities alike, unqualified individuals continue to provide medical treatment without proper education, professional training, or legal authorization. What begins as treatment for a minor illness or

injury can quickly turn into a life-threatening tragedy.

authorities occasionally conduct enforcement operations, the reality on the ground suggests that this dangerous practice has not been eliminated. The Health Department, district administration, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Healthcare Commission, drug inspectors, and law enforcement agencies must intensify sustained and impartial action against illegal medical practices before more innocent lives are lost.

There can be no compromise when it comes to human life. Anyone who practices medicine without proper qualifications, administers incorrect medication or injections, or endangers a patient's life through incompetence should be held accountable under the law. Registering a criminal case alone is not enough. Transparent investigations, scientific evidence, fair trials, and effective punishment are essential to ensure justice and deter future negligence. This tragedy also highlights another painful reality public carelessness. Many people seek treatment from unqualified practitioners simply because they are nearby or less expensive. A few saved rupees can sometimes cost an entire life. Healthcare should never be entrusted to individuals who lack the necessary qualifications and

legal authority.

Equally important is public awareness. Citizens should know how to identify licensed doctors, registered clinics, and legally authorized healthcare facilities. Combating quackery is not solely the responsibility of government institutions; society as a whole must reject unsafe and illegal medical practices.

Areeza Fatima will never return, but her tragic death leaves us with a painful question: How many more innocent lives must be sacrificed before decisive action is taken against quackery?

How many more parents must leave home seeking treatment for a minor illness, only to return carrying the unbearable weight of loss?

If we fail to learn from this tragedy today, another child may tomorrow utter the same heartbreaking words: "Dad... I'm in so much pain..."

If the ongoing investigation establishes negligence, illegal medical practice, or responsibility on the part of any unqualified individual, the law must take its full course. Justice is not only the right of Areeza's family; it is the right of every citizen who expects safe and competent medical care for their children.

ing a dressing change, another individual reportedly claimed to be more experienced and administered two injections. Her family alleges that immediately after receiving the injections, Areeza cried out in severe pain and said to her father: "Dad... I'm in so much pain... my body is turning blue." These words will likely echo in her father's heart for the rest of his life. Moments later, she lost consciousness and was rushed to the DHQ Hospital in Sargodha. According to her family, doctors there informed them that a severe infection had spread following the allegedly incorrect injection. Despite fighting for her life on a ventilator for three days, Areeza passed away on 6 July.

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Govt targets stronger farm growth in FY2027 through mechanisation, higher credit

CREDIT BUSINESS

Pakistan Railways to Offer Special Freight Rates for Mango Exports, Says Hanif Abbasi

SHAHID QURESHI.

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has set an initial target of exporting 100 tons of mangoes through enhanced collaboration with exporters and overseas Pakistanis, as government officials and business leaders called for stronger efforts to expand the country's presence in international fruit markets during the 10th Annual Mango Festival held in Islamabad on Wednesday.

The festival, organized at Centaurus Mall, showcased dozens of premium mango varieties from across Pakistan and brought together government officials, exporters, growers, diplomats and members of the public to promote one of the country's most valuable agricultural products.

Speaking at the event, festival organizer and Chairman of the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), Sardar Yasir Ilyas, said the initiative aims to connect exporters with international buyers and increase Pakistan's mango exports. He announced a target of exporting 100 tons of mangoes and said every possible facility would be provided to exporters to help achieve the goal.

"We are providing exhibi-

tion space free of cost for exporters because increasing

exports and strengthening Pakistan's economy.

duces the world's largest diversity of mango varieties. He urged

ing expand its global footprint. Federal Minister for

exports. He said the railway department is ready to provide transport services for mango exports and emphasized that greater support should be extended to farmers through incentives and subsidies.

The minister noted that when he assumed charge of the Railways Ministry, the department's annual revenue stood at Rs88 billion, which, he said, has now increased to a record Rs15 billion following administrative reforms and operational improvements. He added that Pakistan Railways would continue supporting exporters through improved freight services.

Abbasi also praised the role of Pakistan's armed forces in maintaining national security, saying the country remains the safest in the region despite security challenges. He stressed that national unity and economic development must go hand in hand and appreciated Sardar Yasir Ilyas for promoting tourism and Pakistan's positive image without seeking personal gain. The festival featured more than 70 varieties of Pakistani mangoes, highlighting the country's rich agricultural heritage and reinforcing efforts to increase exports of the internationally acclaimed fruit.



exports is our top priority," he said, adding that the initiative is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of boosting

Yasir Ilyas said Islamabad is emerging as an important hub for agriculture and agribusiness activities, while Pakistan pro-

overseas Pakistanis to act as ambassadors for Pakistani mangoes by introducing the fruit to international markets and help-

Railways Hanif Abbasi inaugurated the festival and reaffirmed Pakistan Railways' commitment to facilitating agricultural

SCCI, RTO to form a joint committee to address grievances to tobacco growers, dealers

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Regional Tax Office, Peshawar, Federal Board of Revenue have decided to constitute



a joint committee to address grievances and problems of the tobacco growers and dealers of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The proposed five members committee, consisting of representatives from SCCI and tobacco growers/dealers association, will work jointly to address issues with mutual consultation.

The decision was made during a meeting of a delegation of tobacco growers and dealers headed by acting president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Nadeem with Chief Commissioner, Regional Tax Office Peshawar Muhammad Taqi Qureshi here at RTO on Wednesday.

The Tobacco growers/dealers association president Iftikhar Ahmad, Dr Taimur Ahmad Khan,

Haji Bakh Sher, Haji Abad Khan, Mian Iftikhar ud Din, Hazrat Ali and Imtiaz Khan and others were among the delegation.

Muhammad Nadeem, acting president of the chamber in his open-

ing remarks took up issues and concerns of tobacco growers and dealers on imposition of heavy/multiple taxes, harassment through various pretexts and allied issues.

The SCCI urged the FBR to address genuine grievances of the tobacco growers and dealers, because this sector has generated massive employment and key source of livelihoods for many families.

Importantly, he mentioned that huge revenue through various taxes were collected through this sector.

Therefore, the acting president requested the RTO to take facilitation measures and avoid any such steps.

Chief Commissioner RTO Peshawar Taqi Qureshi assured the SCCI delegation to address the genuine concerns of the tobacco growers and dealers.

Fuel, electricity price cuts cushion sharp rise in vegetable costs during June

BY: INP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani households experienced sharply contrasting price movements during June, as substantial declines in fuel, electricity and poultry prices helped offset steep increases in the cost of key vegetables and other essential food items, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

The PBS's Monthly Review on Price Indices (June 2026) shows that tomatoes recorded the sharpest monthly increase among commonly consumed food items, surging 90.1% in urban markets and 90.2% in rural areas. Onion prices also rose sharply, increasing 20.8% in urban areas and 22.3% in rural areas, while potatoes became 17.8% more expensive in cities and 36.5% costlier in rural markets. Fresh vegetables, wheat, wheat flour, cooking oil, vegetable ghee and fresh milk also registered month-on-month increases, indicating broad-based pressure on household food bills.

Despite the rise in food prices, several major household expenses moved in the opposite direction during the month. Motor fuel prices fell 12.1% in urban areas and 12.7% in rural areas, while electricity charges declined 4.3% across both regions.

Poultry products also became significantly cheaper, with chicken prices dropping 22.4% in urban markets and 21.0% in rural areas. Egg prices fell 10.7% and 11.6%, respectively, offering consumers some relief from rising food costs.

The monthly price movements also reflected differing trends across food categories. While perishable food items recorded strong increases, several staple pulses continued to decline. Prices of pulse moong, pulse mash, pulse gram, beans and besan all fell during June,

alongside fish in urban areas and fresh fruits in rural markets. Sugar prices remained largely stable in urban areas but edged higher in rural markets.

Outside the food basket, consumers

potatoes, eggs, sugar and several pulses remained cheaper than in June last year, wheat, wheat flour and onions continued to record some of the largest annual increases across both urban and rural



also faced higher prices for selected goods and services. Newspaper prices recorded double-digit monthly increases in both urban and rural areas, while washing detergents, tailoring charges, medical tests, doctor consultation fees and liquefied hydrocarbons also became more expensive. Rural consumers additionally faced increases in hospital service charges and construction wage rates during the month.

The report also highlights that year-on-year price movements differed considerably from monthly changes. Although

markets. In urban areas, wheat prices were 64.7% higher than a year earlier and wheat flour prices rose 55.3%, while rural markets recorded annual increases of 62.5% for wheat and 61.4% for wheat flour. Onions increased 60.1% in urban areas and 53.6% in rural areas over the same period. The latest PBS data suggest that while lower transport and energy costs provided some relief to household budgets during June, consumers continued to face considerable volatility in food prices, particularly for fresh vegetables and wheat-based products.

Legacy Or Ruin



Athe subtle connection between Pakistan's economic survival and a ticking corporate time bomb. Approximately 6.4 to 6.5 million family firms today operate throughout Pakistan, accounting for 40 to 60 percent of the country's GDP and comprising an amazing 90 percent of the private sector. These companies are essential to Pakistan's economy. They constitute its economy. Additionally, there should be a business that should be developed, and that has a business.

There are only a few generations that go from the founding company. Not due to poor products, market failure, or uncontrollable economic circumstances, the remaining 70% fall into chaos. They fall because of quiet. The quietness surrounding succession, the quiet surrounding inheritance, the quiet surrounding governance. And that silence is damaging, intentional, and cultural in Pakistan.

The effects go much beyond the financial statements of businesses. Families are torn apart on a human level by

financial hardship and a lack of succession preparation. A financial conflict has caused at least 10% of Pakistanis to permanently close contact with a family member. Even more concerning, disputes in the boardroom often turn violent. In Islamabad, rural Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, property and land disputes are currently among the top causes of homicide. When a family business fails, it not only loses money but also takes lives, turning a patriarch's legacy into a legacy of conflict and shattered homes. A market slump is rarely what separates a rich family's legacy from business failure. It is the unsolved tension between a family's emotional needs and a business's pragmatic demands. These two forces clash if they are left unchecked. A formal Family Business Constitution is the gold standard for resolving this conflict, as it establishes rules for succession, profit distribution, and leadership before a crisis forces the conversation.

However, that kind of discussion is uncommon in Pakistan. During his lifetime, a corporate patriarch usually views any talk of authority transfers as an insult. The founders persuade themselves that purposeful ambiguity maintains family harmony and that leaving responsibilities unclear maintains harmony. It has the opposite effect. The patriarch creates a false sense of unity by ensuring that every family member stays completely dependent on his unique authority, rather than via governance. Psychology is even more profound. For many founders, the company is an

integral part of who they are. Recognizing mortality is a prerequisite for naming a successor. The main tool of loyalty in traditional households is economic management, and discussing succession in public contradicts the patriarch's decades-old order. Thus, the dialogue is avoided, avoided, and avoided. In its stead, resentment builds up. Long before the founder passes away, covert power battles begin to take shape. When he does pass away, there is no plan, no chosen leader, and no way to settle the ensuing conflicts.

There is a sudden and complete lack of power. The legal system is rarely employed to establish equity when inheritance conflicts move from the living room to the courtroom; instead, it is used as a weapon to compel a settlement. An injunction, which is a court's decision that freezes assets and bank accounts, stops operations, and prohibits the sale of property until ownership is established lawfully, is the most devastating initial action. The company cannot pay suppliers, settle accounts, or pay customs taxes on imported machinery as soon as it is approved. Before a single legal argument is heard, it suffocates. The damage intensifies when courts mandate the physical connection of factories, warehouses, and goods. Production lines stop. Raw materials degrade. The business enters obligatory dormancy, unable to service orders or earn revenue. A partition suit, which is the legal process that splits common ownership into separate physical sections, is the end result of many disagreements. When an asset is

physically divided, courts cannot be physically divided. A functional enterprise is liquidated altogether, not for commercial failure, but because it could not be broken into pieces.

The incredible slowness of Pakistan's legal system exacerbates all of this. A normal inheritance or partition lawsuit takes 15 to 25 years, according to Pakistan's Law and Justice Commission. There isn't a quarter. Additionally, when an anchor family business fails, the entire supply chain of smaller contractors and vendors that depend on it also fails, transforming a private family quarrel into a regional economic shock. Fixed inheritance portions for women are required by both Islamic doctrine and Pakistan's Constitution.

Both are frequently disregarded in societal practice. In a society where divorce is highly stigmatized, brothers continue to be the only dependable social safety net for many women. Families take advantage of this reliance by forcing daughters to return their legal share to male relatives under the pretense of maintaining family unity. The most popular defense is the wedding dowry, or *jahez*, which is used to completely deprive daughters of their entitlement and is presented as an advance on inheritance.

Financial harm is irreversible. Appreciating assets, such as land, property, and equity, usually make up inheritance.

Depreciating consumer goods, such as electronics, clothes, and furniture, make up *jahez*. Due to this replacement, women are permanently barred from accumulating

wealth for future generations and have no financial recourse if a marriage ends in divorce or widowhood. Without inherited property, women lack collateral for bank loans, stability for homes, and capital for any independent future. Institutional corruption exacerbates this at the local level. Local tax authorities, or *patwaris*, often falsify inheritance records — removing women's names or fraudulently attesting that they voluntarily sold their shares — leaving women unknowing their rights were ever stolen. Since digital land records were created directly on top of these manually faked, uncorrected ones, provincial digitization initiatives have largely failed to rectify this.

In comparison to the cost of their absence, the governance tools that stop each of these failures are neither novel, complex, nor costly. Everything a family avoids talking about is codified in a formal Family Business Constitution, which is established while the founder is still alive.

This includes who owns and manages the company, how earnings are divided, and how disagreements are settled. It develops legally obligatory exit procedures for dissident heirs, separates ownership from management, establishes dividend and reinvestment plans, and establishes meritocratic standards for leadership succession. It turns succession from a potentially fatal moment of vulnerability into a deliberate handover of institutional power.

Families need to safeguard their most significant intangible assets, the family name, in addition to governance. The

brand dilution and internal competitive strife that damage multigenerational reputations developed over decades can be avoided by registering the family surname as a legal trademark under a centralized holding corporation, with formal licensing agreements governing each family branch's use of that name.

To overcome these shortcomings, South Korea implemented regulatory reform, requiring its chaebol companies to have independent boards and transparent holding structures. To solve them, India classified family owners as promoters with certain disclosure requirements and personal culpability. Pakistan lacks both frameworks. Its family businesses remain ungoverned by formal succession law, unprotected by independent boards, and unguided by any institutionalized ownership structure. The 70% of Pakistani family firms that won't last this generation aren't failing because there aren't enough skilled founders, qualified heirs, or successful companies in Pakistan.

They are failing because the most crucial conversations — about succession, about inheritance, about governance — are the conversations Pakistani business families are most determined never to have. Nobody is being protected by the quiet. It is merely shielding the issue. If the issue is not resolved, Pakistan's businesses, families, communities, and the generational riches that ought to have outlasted them will all continue to suffer.

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SPORTS

Fakhar, Usman, Sufiyan make gains in ICC T20I rankings

MOL Pakistan Sponsors Football Tournament to Promote Sports and Youth Engagement in Lachi, Kohat

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: The MOL Pakistan Oil and Gas Company B.V. is sponsoring the All KPK MOL Football Tournament in Lachi, District Kohat, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme aimed at promoting youth engagement and community development in its operational areas.

The tournament is being organized by Al Masoom Football Club, Lachi. 32 football clubs from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will compete in the tournament, giving players from across the province a platform to compete and be seen. The opening ceremony was held on July 7, 2026, and brought together club representatives, local officials, and residents of Lachi to mark the start of the competition.

Matches will be played in a knock-out format over the following weeks, culminating in a final that is expected to draw large crowds from across the district. Beyond football, the tournament is designed to give young people in Lachi and the wider Kohat region a constructive outlet for their energy and talent, while strengthening ties between MOL Pakistan and the communities near its operations.

MOL Pakistan, said: "MOL Pakistan is proud to support Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Sports have a unique power to bring communities together and instill values of teamwork and discipline in young people.

This tournament reflects our longstanding commitment to the wellbeing and development of the communities where we operate."

Mr. Ali Murtaza Abbas, Regional Vice President, MOL Group, added: "We've been operating in this region for over 26 years. Besides our business goals, a major part of what that means to us is giving back to the communities we've worked alongside. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has no shortage of young footballers with real ability; what they've often lacked is a stage big enough to showcase their skills. Supporting this tournament is one way we give these young players the platform to prove their mettle."

MOL Pakistan, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hungary-based MOL Group, has been operating in Pakistan since 1999 and holds working interests in multiple exploration and production blocks, including the TAL and Margalla Blocks. The company remains committed to sustainable community development through investments in healthcare, education, infrastructure, and youth-focused initiatives across its operational areas.



Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Matić Saša, Chief Executive Officer, the All KPK MOL Football Tournament and to stand behind the youth of together and instill values of teamwork and discipline in young people.

Gautam Gambhir says Sanju Samson has 'clarity' over India T20i exclusion

BY: WEB DESK

NOTTINGHAM: Indian head coach Gautam Gambhir has insisted that Sanju Samson has been given complete clarity regarding his omission from India's playing XI and the squad for the



upcoming T20i series against Zimbabwe. Samson, who was named Player of the Tournament during India's victorious T20 World Cup campaign in March after scoring an unbeaten 97, 89 and 89 in his final three innings, has endured a difficult run of form since.

Scores of 5, 0 and 1 during the tours of Ireland and England resulted in him losing his place to 15-year-old prodigy

Although Samson remains with the squad in England, where India trail the T20i series 2-0, he has been left out of the squad for the three-match T20i series in Zimbabwe later this month.

Speaking after the third T20i at Trent Bridge, Gambhir said the wicket-keeper-batter had already received the explanation he needed.

"The clarity that should have been given to Sanju Samson, he has got from me. That conversation is between a head coach and a player, and obviously I won't reveal the contents of that discussion.

"As far as clarity goes, we are absolutely clear. What Sanju did for India during the World Cup was phenomenal, but sometimes you also have to look at a player's form. There is no hard and fast rule that he cannot make a comeback in this series. "More importantly, international cricket is ultimately about results. Whatever we feel is the best combination to deliver those results is the combination we will play. I've always believed that everyone needs to earn their place and earn the right to play for India."

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Zimal Wazir, Ayesha Win Best Gymnast Trophy

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar Inter-Club Women Junior Gymnastics Championship concluded at Hayatabad Sports Complex, with Hayatabad Gymnastics Academy's Zimal Wazir and Ayesha emerging as the Best Gymnasts after outstanding performances in multiple categories. More than 50 young gymnasts from across Peshawar participated in the championship, competing in various events. Gold medals were won by Nasiba, Alizey, Maroosh, Daniya, Louiza, Anfai, Hania, and Hareem, while several other participants secured silver and bronze medals.

The closing ceremony was attended by Hayatabad Sports Complex Administrator Abid Nazim as the chief guest. He presented trophies and medals to the winners in the presence of academy coaches Muhammad Gul and Muhammad Asim. Speaking on the occasion, Abid Nazim said



mental abilities and help build age their children, especially sports play a vital role in developing children's physical and a healthy and progressive society. He urged parents to encourage girls, to participate in sports alongside their education.

Aaqib Javed reveals why Babar Azam replaced Shan Masood as Test captain

BY: WEB DESK

LAHORE: Pakistan's director of high performance, Aaqib Javed, has defended the Pakistan Cricket Board's decision to reinstate Babar Azam as the national Test captain, saying the move was prompted by recurring leadership and game-management issues rather than individual performances.

Speaking during a recent podcast alongside former Pakistan captain Salman Butt, Javed said the board believes Babar is the right candidate to provide long-term stability as Pakistan prepare for challenging Test tours of the West Indies and England. Explaining the reasoning behind the decision, the former Pakistan pacer said the team's inability to dismiss opposition tailenders across different conditions highlighted deeper leadership concerns.

"We have brought Babar Azam back because the same problems kept recurring. most recently, Bangladesh, the opposition's tailenders continued to frustrate us. The conditions and bowlers changed, but the outcome remained the same and that pointed towards issues in leadership and game management," Javed said.

The 53-year-old also outlined the management's long-term vision, expressing confidence in Babar's leadership abilities and revealing that the PCB intends to back him for the next two to three years.

"I believe Babar is mature enough to lead the team again. He is one of our key players and our plan is to give him a two to three-year run as captain. Every captain brings a fresh mindset and we expect him to inspire the team through his own performances," he stated.

The remarks came after the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) confirmed Babar's return as Pakistan's Test captain for the upcoming tours of the West Indies and England.

The 31-year-old, who previously captained Pakistan in 20 Tests between 2020 and 2023, replaces Shan Masood, whose 16-match tenure yielded four victories and 12 defeats, giving him a 25 per cent win rate.

Masood's spell as captain began with a 3-0 series defeat in Australia and ended following a disappointing 2-0 whitewash loss to Bangladesh in May this year. His only series triumph came in a 2-1 home victory over England in 2024.

Pakistan are scheduled to depart for the West Indies on 13 July, where they will play a four-day warm-up match from 18 July before the two-Test series in Trinidad and Tobago from 25 to 29 July and from 2 to 6 August.

Following the Caribbean tour, Pakistan will travel to England for a three-match Test series. The opening Test will be played at Headingley in Leeds from 19 to 23 August, followed by the second at Lord's from 27 to 31 August.

The series will conclude with the third and final Test at Edgbaston in Birmingham from 9 to 13 September.



Whether it was in Australia, South Africa, the West Indies or, used to frustrate us. The conditions and bowlers changed, but in leadership and game management," Javed said.

FIFA World Cup 2026: Argentina's Historic Comeback Against Egypt as Quarter-final Line-up is Complete After Thrilling Round of 16

SHAKEEL REHMAN

The quarter-final line-up for the 2026 FIFA World Cup has been completed following the conclusion of the Round of 16, which produced several unforgettable encounters featuring dramatic comebacks, penalty shootouts, major upsets, and outstanding individual performances. The most thrilling match of the Round of 16 saw Argentina stage a remarkable comeback to defeat Egypt 3-2 in Atlanta and secure a place in the quarter-finals.

Egypt made an aggressive start and took the lead in the 15th minute through Yasser Ibrahim. Goalkeeper Mostafa Shobeir then boosted Egypt's hopes by saving a penalty from Lionel Messi. In the 67th minute, Mostafa Zico doubled Egypt's advantage after being set up by Mohamed Salah, giving the Pharaohs what appeared to be a commanding 2-0 lead.

Despite trailing by two goals, Argentina produced a sensational comeback. Cristian Romero pulled one back in the 79th minute, Lionel Messi equalized in the 84th minute, and Enzo Fernández scored the dramatic winner in the second minute of stoppage time to seal a memorable 3-2 victory.

The match, however, was overshadowed by controversy over several refereeing decisions. Egypt's players and coaching staff strongly protested after Mohamed Salah appeared to be fouled inside the penalty area during a crucial stage of the match, but the referee did not review the incident using the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system despite repeated appeals from Egypt head coach Hossam Hassan.

Following the match, many football pundits, former referees, refereeing decisions remained the main talking point among fans and analysts after the final whistle.

In another Round of 16 clash, Switzerland edged Colombia 4-3 on penalties after the teams played out a goalless draw through both regular and extra time. Both sides created numerous chances, but the goalkeepers produced outstanding performances to keep clean sheets. Switzerland's goalkeeper made a missed the target, sending the Swiss into the quarter-finals for the second consecutive World Cup.

Switzerland will now face Argentina in what promises to be one of the most intriguing quarter-final encounters, with Lionel Messi's attacking brilliance set to meet Switzerland's disciplined defence and excellent goalkeeping.

crucial save during the shootout, while one Colombian penalty





Rescuers search for survivors of China storms as super typhoon nears



WORLD NEWS

UNGA votes 136-9 to override US bid to halt debate on embargo against Cuba, Pakistan seeks its end

TIMES REPORT

UNITED NATIONS: With Pakistan supporting, the UN General Assembly overwhelming voted to debate United States' sanctions against Cuba in a meeting on Tuesday to discuss the decades-long embargo amid warnings of increasing suffering in the Caribbean island.

The vote in the 193-member Assembly was 136 in favour to 9 against, with 30 abstentions, to proceed with a special debate regarding United States embargo against Cuba.

Voting against the resolution, besides the US, were: Argentina, Israel, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Morocco, the Czech Republic, North Macedonia and Ukraine.

This procedural vote to place the economic embargo on the assembly's debate agenda was championed by Cuba, overcoming strong objections from the United States delegation. The debate itself featured extensive discussions and drew support from a broad coalition of African, Asian, Latin American, and European nations.

"We share the concerns regarding the impact of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba and its people," Pakistan's UN Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, said after the vote.

"Ending the embargo will be an

important step to alleviate the humanitarian situation, also enabling the Cuban people to realize their right to development and prosperity," the Pakistani envoy said.

Pakistan's commitment to multilateralism and the UN Charter is "consistent and longstanding," he pointed out.

"We believe that international cooperation, and multilateral engagement underpinned by sovereign equality and mutual respect remain the cornerstone

of global order," Ambassador Asim Ahmad said.

"Unilateral economic measures particularly their selective application on developing countries run counter to those principles."

At the outset of the debate, Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Eduardo

more cruel over the last seven months."

He first drew attention to the energy siege – which is equivalent to a naval blockade, an act of war. Cuba's access to fuel supplies is being hindered by direct threats, unilateral coercive actions and intimidation of oil tankers by the United States military.

Added to these pressures are "unprecedented actions of an extreme extraterritorial nature," the Cuban foreign minister said, pointing to the use

of secondary actions enacted to pursue the "macabre" goal of provoking a humanitarian crisis and complete destabilization of Cuba.

This would "forcefully urge an imperialist military intervention" and provoke a bloodbath, he stressed.

In recent months, the humanitarian toll has intensified, Rodriguez Parrilla continued, resulting in the systematic violation of the human rights of an entire people – an act of collective punishment.

Such "highly important and urgent" matters deserve the clearest statement by the UN and its most universal and representative body, he said: the General Assembly.

The Cuban foreign minister drew attention to Cuban families who are suffering from blackouts, a lack of water, shortages of medication, food scarcity and the high prices of staple goods.

On the other hand, US Ambassador Michael Waltz said that, despite talk of a blackout, "there always seems to be enough power for the Cuban dictatorship."

Indeed, enough power for "the Cuban propaganda shop" to "clip and post and translate their lies they're spreading in this body, once again, around the world".

He urged the Cuban regime: "Change your ways, turn the lights back on for your people."



Pakistani student wins "Progress Star" award at Chinese University

TIMES REPORT

BEIJING: A 20-year-old Pakistani student has been recognized for academic excellence in China, receiving a "Progress Star" award for outstanding preparatory overseas students at Northeast Normal University (NENU) for the second semester of the 2025-2026 academic year.

Sanaullah, a native of Musakhel district in Balochistan, was honored by the university's preparatory school for overseas students on July 1 for his hardworking performance and dedication during his Chinese language studies at NENU from September 2025 to July 2026. NENU is the first institution in Northeast China authorized to administer the national HSK and among the first to offer the Business Chinese Test. Sanaullah has already passed

HSK4, demonstrating his readiness for academic studies in China.

room, the university has built an immersive learning environment that integrates cal-

him apply Chinese in practice and deepened his interest in the language, as well as his understanding and appreciation of China, CEN reported on Wednesday.

He will begin his undergraduate studies in Computer Science at Harbin Engineering University (HEU), which is renowned for its strengths in marine engineering and computer science, this September.

"I want to work for space missions in the future," Sanaullah said, explaining his choice of computer science as his major. His special fields of interest are machine learning, robotics, and cybersecurity. With countries around the world, including Pakistan, rapidly advancing digitalization, he sees immense potential for youth from Balochistan and other underserved regions to contribute to this transformation.



"Our curriculum is comprehensive, improving all skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing," Sanaullah said of his learning experience. Beyond the class-

igraphy competitions, recitation contests, singing competitions, traditional Chinese cultural experiences and visits to historical sites. He noted that these activities helped

UK to lead European long-range missiles initiative: govt

BY: AFP

LONDON: The UK government will lead a coalition of around a dozen European countries to step up funding for the next generation of long-range missiles designed to protect Europe, the UK government said on Wednesday. Prime Minister Keir Starmer was set to unveil details of the programme at the NATO summit in Ankara.

The premier would "convene around a dozen European partners at the summit today to launch the new initiative, which is expected to announce that allies will spend \$50 billion (37 billion) over the next 10 years to develop deep precision strike capabilities to bolster defence and deterrence across the alliance", his Downing Street office said in a statement. The investment would "deliver the most advanced weapons NATO will have at its disposal in the future --

with the ability to strike targets no less than 300 kilometres (186 miles) away and in some cases beyond 2,000 km,



with pinpoint accuracy", it added. Starmer on Wednesday urged leaders to "show the unity and the strength of NATO" against a background of the Ukraine conflict and the US war with Iran.

Trump says Iran ceasefire 'over' after fighting flares

BY: AFP

TEHRAN: US President Donald Trump said the ceasefire with Iran was "over" Wednesday but left the door open to more talks, after fighting flared sparked by Iranian attacks on ships in the vital Strait of Hormuz.

The strategic shipping route remains a flashpoint in the conflict, which began in late February with massive US-Israeli strikes on Iran.

Tehran insists on controlling the waterway, saying it will charge fees for passage and threatening to hit vessels that deviate from its authorised route.

Its military struck at least three ships in recent days, prompting extensive US strikes against Iranian targets Tuesday followed by retaliatory attacks from Iran on Gulf countries.

"As far as I'm concerned, it's over," Trump said at a NATO summit in Turkey on Wednesday when asked if the truce was intact.

"It's just a waste of time dealing with them," he added.

"I'll let our wonderful negotiators keep talking if they want, but I don't see it. I don't like these people."

Oil prices immediately jumped five percent after Trump's remarks, having already reached their highest level in two weeks.

Both the US and Iran said they had hit dozens of targets, placing fresh strain on their interim deal to end the Middle East war.

Iranian state media reported a wave of explosions around the strait, including six on the island of Qeshm, seven in the city of Sirik and more in the major

port city of Bandar Abbas.

It later reported a series of blasts in the coastal city of Bushehr, which hosts the country's only civilian nuclear power plant and lies near Kharg island, the main oil terminal through which 90 per cent of Iran's crude exports transit.

State media said a member of the military's Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) had been killed, while the foreign ministry said monitoring and observation sites had been hit on the southern coast.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) said its forces had struck over 80 targets, including Iranian air-defence systems, coastal radar sites and 60 IRGC small boats. The strikes aimed "to degrade Iran's ability to continue attacking international commerce flowing through the international trade corridor", it said.

Mark Rutte, secretary general of

NATO, said at the summit in Ankara that the American strikes were "absolutely necessary".

Tehran's reply came quickly, with the Guards saying they hit dozens of US military facilities in Kuwait and Bahrain, where an AFP journalist heard blasts.

Kuwait said it intercepted two ballistic missiles and 13 drones, while the Iranian army said it had also attacked US forces at Sheikh Isa air base in Bahrain.

Nawal Saad, a Bahraini civil servant, lamented that "the spectre of war is looming once more", saying "I do not want to go through that experience of fear and anxiety again".

Hamad Althunayyan, an assistant professor at Kuwait University, said Tehran views Bahrain and Kuwait "as the most accessible and lower cost pressure points in the Gulf".

"It allows it to project power, impose costs, and test US and GCC resolve," he said. Oman, which sits on the other side of Hormuz from Iran, condemned the targeting of Bahrain and Kuwait as well as the strikes on ships, but without blaming Iran.

The former mediator has not blamed Iran for attacks throughout the war in an effort to maintain its neutrality, which is being tested by talks with Tehran over the administration of Hormuz. Washington wants free passage for ships while Iran is insisting on fees and has refused to allow vessels to pass through Omani waters. All three vessels recently struck were sailing close to Oman, which had proposed a temporary transit corridor hugging its coast-line.

The Harder Assignment



UMAIR AHMAD

A profile of Umair Ahmad, one of the most quietly consequential cybersecurity professionals from Pakistan, working in the Gulf today.

When Umair looks back at sixteen years of work across Pakistan and the Middle East, he does not describe a planned career. He describes a series of choices. "I never set out to become a global expert," he says. "I just kept choosing the harder assignment."

That instinct, repeated consistently across different countries and diverse sector, has produced something rare: a professional whose experience spans the exact sectors that governments and regulators worldwide are now most desperate to secure.

Ahmad, 38, grew up in Mansehra, Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa. He graduated with distinction in Information Technology from the University of Engineering and Technology in Peshawar, then earned a Master's degree in Information Security from the National University of Sciences and Technology in Islamabad, both independently verified against international academic standards. His professional certifications place him among a genuinely small global cohort. He holds the CISM, a senior leadership qualification in information security held by fewer than 50,000 professionals worldwide; the CRISC, which recognizes demonstrated mastery of managing technology risk inside large organizations; the CDPSE, certifying expertise in protecting sensitive data at the engineering level; and the AISM, a specialist credential in governing artificial intelligence within security environments held by only a fraction of the global security community. He also holds ISO 27001 Lead Implementer and Lead Auditor qualifications and the CHFI, the Computer Hacking Forensics Investigator Certification. In February 2021, he spoke at the World Cyber Security Summit, one of the most prominent international gatherings of security professionals and policymakers in the world.

He began his career at the Bank of Khyber before taking on his first serious national challenge at a local huge telecommunication organization, owned by

the government whose networks formed a critical part of Pakistan's critical national communications backbone. There, he led a complete overhaul of how the organization identified, assessed and responded to security threats, conducting formal risk assessments using internationally recognized methodologies, building continuity frameworks that kept services running through live cyber incidents, and designing a governance model that was later adopted during its merger with the main telecommunication company in the country.

The harder assignment came next. In Oman, he was placed in charge of protecting a critical energy company operating active national drilling infrastructure, including the kind of computerized industrial control systems that physically govern energy production. He built the organization's entire information security function from nothing, developed its first formal business continuity system, and identified and closed a specific network vulnerability that both the U.S. Department of Energy and the Cybersecurity Agency have formally identified as one of the primary attack vectors used by state-sponsored actors against national energy infrastructure. The security architecture he designed remained the organization's active compliance standard seven years after he left.

Most cybersecurity professionals spend their careers protecting office systems and data centers. Ahmad worked where a security failure has physical consequences. That distinction matters more today than it ever has.

In Bahrain as well as Saudi Arabia, over eight years at one of the world's top professional services networks, he served as outsourced head of information security for heavily regulated banks, investment firms and government agencies. He helped institutions achieve compliance simultaneously with the security requirements of regulators across the Gulf, the United States and Europe. He contributed strategic input that shaped cybersecurity rules now mandatory for every licensed bank within an entire national financial system. He oversaw hundreds of security compliance audits for one of the world's most security-sensitive energy producers, leading a specialist team across multiple countries.

But it was a pattern he kept observing across every organization he worked in that would eventually define the next chapter. "Every organization I worked in had the same blind spot," he reflects. "They knew they had risks. They just had no idea how serious those risks actually were."

Nowhere is that blind spot more dangerous today than in the adoption of artificial intelligence. Across the world, banks, hospitals, government depart-

ments and defense establishments are using AI tools to work faster and make sharper decisions. Most do not realize that almost every one of those tools requires sending sensitive information to outside servers, beyond the organization's walls, beyond its borders, and beyond its control. For institutions with strict legal obligations to protect that information, the consequences range from severe regulatory penalties to direct compromise of classified operations.

Ahmad has spent years watching the same crisis unfold across the world's most regulated institutions. Banks, hospitals, government departments and defence establishments are using artificial intelligence tools to work faster and make sharper decisions. Most do not realise that every one of those tools sends sensitive information to outside servers, beyond the organisation's control, often beyond its borders entirely. For institutions legally obligated to protect that information, whether under American banking laws, European data protection regulations, or national security classifications, this is not a minor oversight. It is a direct and growing legal exposure that regulators across the United States, the European Union and the Gulf are now actively enforcing.

Hunbal AI resolves this at its foundation. It deploys inside the organisation's own environment, on its own servers, under

its own security policies. Nothing leaves. Every interaction is automatically logged, attributed and auditable. For a bank it means the full power of AI without client data ever reaching an external system. For a hospital it means AI-assisted care without patient records crossing any boundary. For a government agency it means AI-enabled operations with every output legally traceable and defensible.

The question every regulated institution in the world is now being forced to answer is exactly the one Hunbal AI was built to solve.

What makes this solution credible is not the technology alone. It is the fact that the person who built it spent sixteen years sitting across from regulators, closing the exact vulnerabilities this platform is designed to prevent, in the most demanding environments in the world.

He just kept choosing the harder assignment. It turns out the world needed someone who would.

Umair Ahmad holds a Master's in Information Security from NUST Islamabad and active certifications including CISM, CRISC, CDPSE, AISM, and ISO 27001 Lead Implementer and Auditor. He serves as Director of Information Security at Moore JFC Technologies, an independent member firm of Moore International, and is the founder of Digital Era, registered in New York, Bahrain and Pakistan.

REAR WINDOW

Malik Liaqat inspects Special Education Complex in Mardan

AKHUNZADA FAZALE HAQ

MARDAN: On the directives of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, Adviser to the Chief Minister on Social Welfare, Special Education, Ushr and Zakat, and Women Empowerment Malik Liaqat Ali Khan visited Mardan on Wednesday to inspect the Special Education Complex, Darul Aman and the Drug Rehabilitation Centre.

Accompanied by Social Welfare Secretary Sharif



Hussain, the adviser reviewed facilities being provided to patients, women and persons with disabilities at the institutions.

During his visit to the Drug Rehabilitation Centre, Mr Khan expressed dissatisfaction over its poor performance, administrative irregularities and unhygienic conditions. He ordered the immediate suspension of the centre's in-charge and directed the Secretary Social Welfare Department to conduct a thorough inquiry into the alleged violations of rules and submit a comprehensive report for legal action against those found responsible.

At Darul Aman, the adviser inspected residential and welfare facilities for women and ordered an inquiry after taking notice of the prolonged absence of a vocational teacher. He directed officials to ensure a safe and dignified environment for the residents.

Efficient utilization of mineral resources is the top priority of KP govt, Arif Ahmadzai

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: An important meeting was held under the chairmanship of Arif Ahmadzai, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Mines and Mineral Development. The meeting deliberated on various strategic measures to ensure the effective utilization of the province's mineral resources and to boost revenue



generation. The Secretary of the Mines and Minerals Department, Dr. Muhammad Israr, along with other high-ranking officials, attended the meeting.

During the session, the provincial minister was given a detailed briefing on the department's current performance and the potential avenues for increasing revenue. The participants reviewed various aspects of the optimal and efficient use of the province's mineral resources, keeping the public interest at the forefront. A detailed discussion was also held regarding the overall role, utility, and active participation of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mineral Development and Management Commission in enhancing provincial income through better resource management.

Speaking on the occasion, Provincial Minister Arif Ahmadzai stated that minerals are a vital asset of the province and their transparent and efficient utilization is among the government's top priorities. He emphasized the need to make the company's role and future roadmap more distinct and comprehensive. It was agreed to convene another meeting shortly to further clarify the role and detailed plan of the KP MDMC. It was decided that a comprehensive presentation would be delivered in the next meeting, based on which recommendations for proper implementation and future action would be prepared. These recommendations will subsequently be submitted to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the provincial government for final approval and next steps.

Meeting on Upgradation of Katlang Tehsil to Sub-Division convened

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Minister for Revenue and Estate, Tariq Mehmood Aryan, chaired an important meeting to review the proposal for the upgradation of Katlang Tehsil to the status of a Sub-Division. The meeting was attended by the Chairman of the District Development Advisory Committee (DDAC), along with concerned government officials. Participants held a detailed discussion on the administrative, legal, and developmental aspects of the proposed upgradation and reviewed the progress made so far. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Tariq Mehmood Aryan said that granting Sub-Division status to Katlang is a longstanding demand of the local population. He said the move would significantly improve public service delivery, strengthen the administrative structure, facilitate better governance, and accelerate the pace of socio-economic development in the area.

He reiterated that the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is committed to strengthening administrative institutions and ensuring that quality public services are delivered efficiently to people, particularly those living in remote and underserved areas. The Minister directed the concerned authorities to expedite all necessary legal and administrative formalities required for the upgradation of Katlang Tehsil to a Sub-Division.



Governor stresses youth skills, slams KP govt over perks bill

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday said investing in the skills and abilities of young people was an investment in Pakistan's brighter future, stressing that equipping children with modern education and technical skills was the need of the time.

Addressing a certificate and toolkit distribution ceremony at the Governor House for youths who completed a mobile phone repairing course, the Governor said skilled youth could create dignified employment opportunities for themselves and contribute to the economic stability of their families.

The training programme was organised by the Society for Skill, Training and Development (SSTD) in collaboration with Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Pakistan.

Senior Director SSTD Muhammad Haseeb Khan, Country Director of Helvetas Swiss

Intercooperation Pakistan Dr Arjumand Nizami, trainees and their parents attended the ceremony.

The Governor said the programme represented an effective



and sustainable investment in the future of children, adding that Pakistan's youth had been affected by various national challenges and therefore deserved special attention in education and skills development.

Kundi appreciated the role of

the private sector in promoting technical education and urged both public and private organisations to expand such skill development programmes to all districts of the province.

He assured that the Governor House would continue extending all possible support for initiatives aimed at promoting vocational education and appreciated the services of Helvetas and SSTD in empowering young people through technical training.

Talking to media later, the Governor criticised the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government over the recently approved perks-related bill, asking the party claiming transparency and justice to explain how the legislation was passed by the provincial assembly.

He said the provincial government had secured benefits for itself but failed to provide relief to the people, while expressing concern over attempts to impose restrictions on the media, terming them contrary to democratic values.

The Governor said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was facing serious security challenges and needed effective governance and public service instead of additional privileges.

He alleged that the provincial government had failed to protect the lives and property of citizens and that the health, education and other essential sectors were in poor condition.

Review meeting on KP-RIISP held

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Public Health Engineering(PHE), Fazal Shakoor Khan, chaired a high-level review meeting on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rural Investment and Institutional Support Project (KP-RIISP) on Wednesday at the committee room of the PHE department.

The meeting was attended virtually by Mr. Carlo Amedi., Consultant to the World Bank, while Secretary PHE department Masood Younas, Project Director Adnan Ahmad, and other relevant officials were also present.

During the meeting, participants were given a comprehensive briefing on the progress of the KP-RIISP. The briefing covered the project's various components, ongoing development activities, achievements to date, financial progress, implementation status, and future targets.

Participants were informed that multiple projects are currently underway under the initiative to provide safe drinking water, sanitation, drainage systems, and other essential civic services in the merged districts, with their timely completion remaining a top priority of the KP government.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Carlo reaffirmed the World Bank's continued commitment to providing full technical and institutional support for the successful implementation and completion of the KP-RIISP.

PARD Trains Officials on Disaster Management; KP DRR Policy Ready for Launch

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Pakistan Academy for Rural Development (PARD) here on Wednesday organized a day-long training session for officials from federal and provincial government departments on strengthening community resilience through disaster risk reduction (DRR), emergency response, and relief management. Officials from various federal and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government organizations including Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Tehsil Municipal Administrations (TMAs), and district administrations attended the training. Participants were briefed on the identification and resolution of issues related to disaster risk reduction, government policies for mitigating natural and man-made disasters, and strategies for responding to hazards such as earthquakes, floods, forest fires, and Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs). PDMA Adviser on disaster risk management, Ismail Khan Yousafzai, highlighted various types of disasters as well as hazards and outlined the government's efforts to mitigate their impact.

He said that in the event of disasters such as floods or earthquakes, the immediate priority is rescue operations, followed by rehabilitation and reconstruction. He stressed that enhanced coordination, effective planning, and close collaboration among government departments and relief organizations could significantly reduce human casualties and economic losses during natural and man-made disasters.

"The impact of major disasters such as the devastating 2005 earthquake, the 2010 floods, TDPs and the COVID-19 pandemic could be minimized through collective efforts by communities and government institutions," he said. Ismail Yousafzai said the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the country's tiered disaster management system were established under the National Disaster Management Act, 2010.

KP Govt committed to HIV Prevention, Treatment and Ending Stigma: Khaleeq

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Health Khaleeq ur Rehman has reaffirmed the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's unwavering commitment to strengthening HIV prevention, expanding access to quality healthcare services, and eliminating stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV. He expressed these views while addressing an HIV related advocacy event on legislation organized by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women.

Director General Health Services Dr. Shaheen Afridi, former Member Provincial Assembly Sumera Shams, several former women

Members of the Provincial Assembly, representatives of development partners, senior officials, health-



care professionals, and members of civil society also attended the event.

Addressing the participants, the Provincial Health Minister said that HIV is a disease, not a stigma, and every individual living with HIV deserves dignity, respect, timely diagnosis, uninterrupted treatment, and equal access to quality health-

care services. He stressed that awareness, early diagnosis, and timely treatment are essential to

controlling the spread of HIV and improving health outcomes across the province.

The Minister shared that 10,655 people are currently registered as living with HIV in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while an estimated 39,000 people may be living with the infection. He informed the audience that the reg-

istered cases include 7,721 males, 2,684 females, and 250 transgender persons, highlighting the need for inclusive healthcare services for all segments of society.

Khaleeq ur Rehman stated that the provincial government is implementing comprehensive measures under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Policy 2026 to strengthen HIV prevention and control. These measures include expanding screening services, ensuring the uninterrupted availability of antiretroviral medicines, improving laboratory facilities, strengthening disease surveillance, integrating HIV services with other public health programmes, and enhancing the capacity of healthcare professionals.

KP to Introduce New Land Acquisition Law

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has decided to introduce a new Land Acquisition Act aimed at providing a permanent solution to land acquisition issues and preventing future legal disputes. Provincial Minister for Law, Human Rights and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam announced on Wednesday.

The announcement came during a meeting of the Cabinet-constituted Standing Committee on Land Acquisition, chaired by the minister at the Higher Education Department Committee Room.

The meeting was attended by provincial cabinet members Meena Khan Afridi, Muzammil Aslam, and MPA Zahir Shah Toru, along with vice chancellors of pub-

lic universities, senior officials from the Higher Education Department, Board of Revenue, Finance Department, Agriculture



Department, Advocate General's Office and other relevant government departments.

The committee reviewed legal, administrative and financial matters relating to the transfer of land acquired for various public welfare and development projects. Participants were briefed on pending cases, decree amounts, land ownership trans-

fers, record completion and obstacles delaying the implementation of several development schemes. Officials informed

further informed that, in accordance with court judgments issued in 2018 and 2019, the applicable markup on compensation would be calculated from the dates of those decisions, and the financial implications of the rulings are currently under review.

The meeting also discussed the issue of decretal amounts relating to the Mardan Ring Road project. Participants examined proposals for revising relevant provisions in the Finance Bill to address liabilities arising from court decrees. Expressing dissatisfaction over the lack of progress on directives issued to a sub-committee constituted during the previous meeting, Aftab Alam directed all concerned departments to ensure timely implementation of committee decisions.

Mian Umar assures farmers of prompt resolution of issues

TIMES REPORT

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Agriculture Mian Muhammad Umar chaired an Khuli Kachari organised by Agriculture Department in Nowshera, where farmers presented their concerns, grievances and suggestions relating to agriculture sector.

Khuli Kachari was attended by member Provincial Assembly Zar Alam Khan, Secretary Agriculture Dr Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khan, directors general of various wings of Agriculture Department, executive engineers irrigation and public health engineering departments, Farmer and other relevant officials.

Addressing the participants, Advisor Agriculture Main Muhammad Umar said that in line with vision of PTI founding chairman Imran Khan and directives of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Muhammad Sohail Afridi, Khuli Kachari were being held across province to hear public grievances directly and ensure their effective resolution.

He thanked Agriculture Department officials and farming

community for their active participation and valuable input, saying that resolving farmers problems remained a top priority of both provincial government and Agriculture Department. He added that proposals to provide



subsidies to farmers under various schemes were also under consideration.

Main Umar said there was no room for corrupt elements in the Agriculture Department and warned that strict and indiscriminate action would be taken against anyone found involved in corruption. He added that provincial government remained in constant contact with public and

that public welfare continued to be among its foremost priorities.

Referring to irrigation-related issues, advisor Agriculture said that capacity of Water Management Wing would be further strengthened to ensure long-

term solutions for farmers. He said modern irrigation technologies were being introduced to improve water use efficiency and enhance agricultural productivity.

He also announced that a Soil and Water Laboratory would soon be established in Nowshera, enabling farmers to have scientific testing of their soil and water carried out locally.