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Editor: Javed Siddiqui

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Pakistan delegation pays respects to Iran's late supreme leader Khamenei



ANI

TEHRAN: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir arrived in Tehran on Friday to attend the funeral of Iran's late supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was assassinated in a US-Israeli strike on February 28.

Pakistan's leadership, which also includes PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, is taking part in the funeral ceremonies alongside delegations from around 30 countries as Iran begins several days of commemorations for one of its most influential figures.

Field Marshal Asim Munir was

received by Iranian officials and Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who had already arrived in Tehran. PM Shehbaz was welcomed at Mehrabad Airport by Iran's interior minister, Pakistan's ambassador to Tehran and senior diplomatic officials from both countries. According to the Prime Minister's Office, Shehbaz is on a one-day visit to Iran to participate in the funeral rites and convey Pakistan's condolences to the Iranian leadership. The prime minister is also expected to reaffirm Pakistan's solidarity with the Iranian people during what the government described as a time of national grief. Following the funeral events, Prime Minister Shehbaz is scheduled to travel onwards to

Turkiye for a bilateral visit. Iran's state media reported that Khamenei's body arrived at Tehran's Grand Mosalla, where mourners, clerics, government officials and foreign dignitaries gathered to pay their respects. Images from the ceremony showed his coffin, draped in the Iranian tricolour, being carried into the vast ceremonial complex before being placed against a backdrop decorated with red flowers and white butterflies. The Grand Mosalla has been prepared to host mourning ceremonies over three days, with banners displaying Khamenei's images and quotations throughout the venue. Millions of mourners are expected to attend Saturday's official funeral ceremony,

while representatives from around 30 countries have travelled to Tehran. Visitors have also arrived from neighbouring Iraq and Afghanistan to participate in the commemorations. Among those seen at the ceremony was Ahmad Wahidi, head of the Revolutionary Guards, making his first public appearance since the outbreak of the conflict in February. The bodies of Khamenei's slain relatives are also expected to be present during the official funeral events. The funeral programme will continue beyond Tehran, with ceremonies planned in the holy cities of Qom, Najaf and Karbala before Khamenei is laid to rest on July 9 at the shrine of Imam Reza in Mashhad, his birthplace.

At least 40 killed as passenger coach plunges into ravine on Sherani-Zhob highway



ANI

QUETTA: At least 40 people were killed and eight others injured when a New Mekhtar passenger coach travelling from Quetta to Peshawar plunged into a deep ravine in the Danasar area on the Sherani-Zhob highway, near the border between Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P), on Friday. According to the Medical Emergency Response Centre (MERC), 40 bodies have been recovered from the crash site, while eight injured passengers have been shifted to the Trauma Centre in Zhob. Six ambulances, 12 emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and 10 light transport vehicle (LTV) drivers were deployed as part of the rescue operation. In a statement, K-P Rescue 1122 spokesperson Bilal Ahmad Faizi said the bus was carrying 48 passengers when it crashed near Zhob. Faizi said eight injured passengers were given first aid at the scene before being shifted to the District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital in Zhob. According to rescue officials, teams from the Sherani district administration, Rescue 1122, police, the Frontier Corps (FC), and other relevant agencies rushed to the scene soon after the accident was reported.

Rescue personnel from K-P also joined the operation. The difficult mountainous terrain hampered rescue efforts, but all injured passengers and the bodies of those killed were eventually recovered from the ravine and shifted to nearby

hospitals. The spokesperson said the bodies of 40 people killed in the crash were initially taken to a nearby Rural Health Centre (RHC) before being transferred to DHQ Hospital Zhob by joint teams from Rescue 1122 Frontier Region Darazinda and Emergency Services Zhob. Faizi said Rescue 1122 personnel are working in coordination with Emergency Services Balochistan and other relevant agencies to provide timely assistance to the injured and support the families of those killed. He added that, on the instructions of Rescue 1122 K-P Director General Shah Fahad, if any of the victims are identified as residents of K-P, Rescue 1122 will transport their bodies to their native areas in its ambulances with full respect.

Sherani Deputy Commissioner Hazrat Wali Kakar said the injured were being provided with immediate medical treatment, while arrangements were being made to transport the bodies of the deceased to their hometowns. Hospitals in Sherani and Dera Ismail Khan were placed on emergency footing following the accident. Authorities said an investigation was launched to determine the cause of the accident. One of the injured passengers claimed the coach had been carrying diesel without passengers being informed. He alleged that the diesel was unloaded at the last Frontier Corps checkpoint in Balochistan after an argument broke out between passengers and the driver.

President Zardari felicitates Belarusian leadership on Independence Day

ANI

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday extended felicitations to the President of the Republic of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko and the people of Belarus on their Independence Day. The president, in a message, said that the historic day, commemorating the liberation of Minsk from Nazi occupation, symbolised the courage, resilience and steadfast determination of the Belarusian people in their quest for freedom and sovereignty. He noted that the Day served as a proud reminder of the remarkable journey of Belarus towards peace, stability and national unity. President Zardari said that Pakistan deeply valued the cordial, coopera-



tive relations between the two countries, which were rooted in mutual trust and shared aspirations for progress. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further enhancing bilateral ties across various fields for the mutual benefit of both nations.

17 killed, 41 injured in Pakistan's monsoon rains, says NDMA

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has reported continued loss of life and property across Pakistan as monsoon rains persist in different parts of the country.

According to the NDMA, one person was killed and three others were injured in rain-related incidents during the past 24 hours. The authority's latest data shows that since June 26, a total of 17 people have lost their lives while 41 others have been

injured in various rain-related accidents nationwide.

Among those killed were eight children, five men and four women.

Provincial figures revealed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa recorded the highest death toll with nine fatalities, followed by Punjab and Balochistan, where four people were killed in each province.

The report further stated that of the 41 injured, 26 were from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, nine from Punjab and six from Balochistan.

Prosecution returns police report again in Karachi Gul Plaza fire case



ANI

KARACHI: Prosecutors have returned the police investigation report in the Gul Plaza fire case for a second time, citing incomplete and inadequate investigations, during a hearing at the City Court in Karachi, according to prosecution sources. The prosecution identified several deficiencies in the report, saying police had failed to address concerns that were highlighted when the initial charge sheet was returned. According to the sources, the District Investigation Officer (South) has convened a meeting to review the matter. The prosecution said the report did not include the findings of the judicial commission that investigated the fire. It also failed to examine why the building's emer-

gency exits were locked, who blocked evacuation routes, and how additional shops had allegedly been constructed by subdividing commercial units. The sources added that investigators should have included officials from the Sindh Building Control Authority, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and the fire brigade in the inquiry, but did not do so. According to the prosecution, the four-page charge sheet names six people as suspects, including an 11-year-old boy. The accused include Tanveer Pasta, Huzaifa, Ammar Ismail, Amin, Muhammad Ramzan and Naimatullah. More than 60 witnesses have also been listed in the report. Prosecution sources said statements from four witnesses, including 11-year-old Huzaifa, had already been recorded before the court. Huzaifa allegedly admitted during his testimony to playing with matchsticks. The charge sheet identifies Tanveer Pasta as president of the market's union, Ammar Ismail as vice president, Amin as general secretary. Muhammad Ramzan as joint secretary, and Naimatullah as the owner of the shop where the fire was started.

US says it supports Pakistan's right to defend itself against 'terrorist attacks'

ANI

WASHINGTON: The US State Department said on Thursday that Washington "supports Pakistan's right to defend itself against terrorist attacks" as an intermittent conflict between Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan continues.

"The Pakistani people have suffered greatly at the hands of terrorists," the State Department added.

Former allies Afghanistan and Pakistan fought their worst battle in years in February. Pakistan killed 29 terrorists on Sunday in operations carried out on the border with Afghanistan. Afghanistan's Taliban said later in the week they launched airstrikes into Pakistani territory, while Islamabad said its forces had intercepted and shot down four rudimentary drones in the



southern resource-rich province of Balochistan. Pakistan is nuclear-armed and its military capabilities are vastly superior to Afghanistan's. However, the Afghan Taliban, who govern Afghanistan, are adept at guerrilla warfare, hardened by decades of fighting US-led forces, before returning to power in

2021 when Washington withdrew.

Pakistan is a major non-NATO ally of Washington. Ties between Washington and Islamabad have improved since President Donald Trump returned to the White House.

Pakistan has also been a mediator in attempts to resolve the US-Israeli war with Iran. Washington considers the Afghan Taliban to be a terrorist group. The US explicitly categorized the Afghan Taliban as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" group.

Islamabad accuses Afghanistan of harboring militants that it blames for plotting attacks in Pakistan. Washington continues to press the Taliban to stop harbouring and sponsoring militant outfits, acknowledging that Pakistan has suffered heavily from these cross-border threats.

LHC chief justice nominates 11 lawyers for 10 vacant Lahore High Court judgeships

ANI

LAHORE: Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court (LHC) Aalia Neelum has forwarded the names of 11 senior lawyers to the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) for consideration against 10 vacant judgeships at the high court. According to sources, the Judicial Commission had asked all its members, including the LHC Chief Justice, to submit nominations for the vacant positions by July 4 as part of the appointment process. The Chief Justice is said to have recommended lawyers with strong professional credentials, integrity and reputations for ethical conduct. The nominees include Islamabad Prosecutor General Ghulam Sarwar Nahang, Punjab Prosecutor General Syed Farhad Ali Shah, Advocate General Punjab Amjad Pervaiz, Deputy Attorney General Asad Bajwa, senior advocate Munawar Dogal, and senior advocate Shireen Imran. The remaining nominees are senior advocates Kashif Rajwana, Muhammad Ajmal, Usman G. Rashid Cheema, Khalid Ibn Aziz, and Aamir Ajam. The Judicial Commission of Pakistan will review the proposed names before preparing its final recommendations for judicial appointments.

World's next biggest massacre likely to happen in India: Top security official

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Security sources have warned of a possible biggest massacre in India, saying that growing religious extremism and intolerance could trigger violence on a scale that should not be ignored.

A top security official made these remarks during an important session on issues related to India, according to security sources. A senior security official told media influencers that India is committed to spreading instability throughout the



region, especially in Pakistan, to divert attention from its internal problems, security sources said.

India is a Hindutva-ridden failed state, yet it has formed a habit of

projecting itself as a hegemon, security official said.

Security sources say that the top security official said that the reasons behind the failure of the Indian state are rising intolerance and religious extremism. The unrealistic dream of 'Akhand Bharat' reflects India's expansionist designs, official told. Sources have said that media influencers were told that in the presence of a divided society, the slogan of India being a Shining India is just a hoax.



Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb, receiving the honorary shield from the president of FCCL after the post Federal budget seminar at Faisalabad Chamber of commerce and

DC Gujranwala Reviews Para Force Performance

BY : ANI Special Reporter:

GUJRANWALA-- Deputy Commissioner Gujranwala Naveed Ahmed visited Para Force City and Sadar stations to review operational performance and ongoing enforcement activities. He directed officers to intensify action against encroachments, profiteering, hoarding, and illegal LPG refilling while ensuring the availability of essential commodities at government-fixed prices. Officials briefed him on daily anti-encroach-



ment drives, market inspections, and the crackdown on illegal LPG refilling centres. The Deputy Commissioner also inspected official records and public facilities at the stations, emphasizing transparency, merit, and strict adherence to the law. He said protecting citizens’ lives and property, maintaining a safe business environment, and ensuring prompt resolution of public complaints remain the district administration’s top priorities.

Pakistan-Kenya Bilateral Trade Surpasses US\$1 Billion for the First Time

Pakistan’s exports to Kenya reach a record US\$434.7 million in FY2025-26 as trade ties continue to strengthen

BY: Asghar Ali Mubarak/ANI

ISLAMABAD/NAIROBI-- Pakistan and Kenya have achieved a major milestone in their bilateral economic relations, with two-way trade surpassing the US\$1 billion mark for the first time. According to the Pakistan High Commission in Nairobi, bilateral trade reached US\$1.023 billion during fiscal year 2025-26, while Pakistan’s exports to Kenya climbed to a record US\$434.7 million. The High Commission said the growth reflects expanding economic cooperation and sustained efforts by its Commercial Wing to promote Pakistani exports through close engagement with Kenyan government institutions, chambers of commerce, trade organizations, and the private sector. According to the High Commission, key initiatives over



the past two years included facilitating Kenyan business delegations to major trade exhibitions organized by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), securing a reduction in Kenya’s

customs valuation on Pakistani rice from US\$615 to US\$450, supporting the registration of more than 35 Pakistani pharmaceutical companies with Kenya’s Pharmacy and Poisons Board, and holding the first in-person meeting of the Pakistan-Kenya Joint Trade Committee (JTC). The High Commission also said progress is being made on negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the East African Community (EAC), while efforts continue to protect Pakistan’s interests in the Basmati Rice Geographical Indication (GI) case. The High Commission reaffirmed its commitment to further expanding Pakistan’s exports, diversifying the country’s export base, and strengthening trade and investment cooperation with Kenya and the wider East African region.

Traders Protest Over Electricity and Water Crisis in Jinnah Garden, Block Road by Burning Tires

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- The Traders Association of Jinnah Garden staged a strong protest against what they described as excessive electricity charges and the ongoing water crisis, blocking a major road by burning tires and holding a sit-in. The protesters alleged that the society’s management has imposed arbitrary electricity tariffs, charging commercial consumers Rs. 150 per unit and residential consumers Rs. 46.31 per unit. They claimed these rates violate the relevant regulations and place an unfair financial burden on traders and residents. The traders further accused the management of failing to address



the community’s basic issues and alleged that the inflated electricity charges have become a means of unjustified revenue collection. They appealed to the relevant authorities to take immediate notice

of the matter, initiate action against those responsible, and protect the traders and residents of Jinnah Garden from what they described as the society management’s unjust practices.

HEC reviews key policy reforms to strengthen Pakistan’s Higher Education sector

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The 47th meeting of the Commission, the apex governing body of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), was held at the HEC Secretariat. The meeting, chaired by Prof. Dr Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, Chairman HEC, deliberated on a wide range of strategic policy matters aimed at strengthening the quality, relevance, governance, and future-readiness of Pakistan’s higher education sector. The Commission held wide-ranging discussions

on a number of strategic policy matters concerning the future direction of Pakistan’s higher education sector. Deliberations covered initiatives aimed at strengthening quality assurance frameworks, enhancing graduate competencies, modernizing academic standards, and promoting institutional effectiveness through evidence-based policy interventions. Among other matters, the Commission deliberated on issues relating to the implementation of Outcome Based Education across Higher Education Institutions, development of standardized Programme Learning Outcomes.



Balochistan Governor Jafar Khan Mandokhel and Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gilo are offering Fateha on the death of Chaudhry Shabbiriat. (Photo DGPR)

FUUAIST, Financial University Moscow, CAPES to hold Pakistan-Russia international student research conference

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Department of International Relations, Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (FUUAIST), Islamabad, the Faculty of Social Sciences, Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation and the Consortium of Asia Pacific and Eurasian Studies (CAPES) will jointly organize the Pakistan-Russia International Student Research Conference 2025-2026 on 6 July as an online conference. The conference is the final event of a six-month joint research project that brought together students and faculty members from Pakistan and Russia. It is the first conference of its kind jointly organized by Pakistan and Russia under this initiative. During the conference, nine international student research teams will present the results of their joint research under the supervision of their faculty mentors from both universities. The presenta-

tions will cover topics including Pakistan-Russia relations, media, artificial intelligence, climate security, culture, trade and socio-economic development. The research papers presenting at the conference will be reviewed and later published in an edited book as an outcome of this collaborative research initiative. Speaking ahead of the conference, Dr Faisal Javaid, Head of the Department of IR, FUUAIST Islamabad, said that international academic collaboration is one of the department’s key priorities. He said such initiatives provide students and faculty with valuable opportunities to work with international research partners, exchange ideas and contribute to the global academic community. Dr Daria Osinina, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Financial University, said the conference reflects the growing academic partnership between Pakistan and Russia and provides students with a valuable platform for international research collaboration.

Govt departments can’t prune or cut trees without PHA approval, LHC told ANI

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) was informed on Friday that standard operating procedures (SOPs) have been introduced to protect trees and prevent their unnecessary pruning and cutting. Justice Shahid Karim heard the petitions relating to smog control. During the proceedings, counsel for the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA), Barrister Maryam Hayat, submitted a compliance report on the court’s earlier directions. She informed the court that the PHA had issued SOPs for the Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) regarding the pruning and cutting of trees. Similar guidelines have also been provided to the Irrigation Department to ensure the protection of trees during canal and drain cleaning operations. The court was further informed that, under the new mechanism, no government department would be allowed to prune or cut trees without obtaining prior approval from the PHA.

Chairman Senate Yousaf Raza Gilani Attends Condolence Ceremony in Tehran

BY: ANI Correspondent:

TEHRAN----Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani attended the condolence ceremony of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Tehran on Friday. On the occasion, he conveyed heartfelt condolences on behalf of the Parliament, Government, and people of Pakistan to Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian and the Iranian leadership. Gilani said Pakistan shares the grief of the brotherly people of Iran. He paid tribute to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei’s religious, intellectual, and scholarly contributions, saying the late leader played a significant role in promoting the unity of the Muslim Ummah, advancing Islamic values, and guiding the Muslim world. He added that his services and legacy would always be remembered with respect.



Chairman Senate Gilani and Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi also offered prayers for the departed soul and prayed for patience and strength for the people of Iran. One important point: if this is an

official press release, use the exact terminology provided by the issuing office. If you’re producing an independent news report, avoid using the honorific “Martyr” in the narrative unless it’s clearly attributed to the source.

NA Commerce Committee Recommends Copyright and Insurance Bills for Passage



BY : Hurish shah:

ISLAMABAD--- The National Assembly Standing Committee on Commerce, chaired by Muhammad Jawed Hanif Khan, recommended the Copyright (Amendment) Bill, 2026 and the Insurance Bill, 2026 for passage by the National Assembly after detailed deliberations at a meeting held at Parliament House. The committee reviewed the proposed Copyright (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and was informed that provisions relating to the use of literary works for educational purposes were

adequately covered under the proposed law. It also examined the Insurance Bill, 2026, which aims to modernize Pakistan’s insurance laws, strengthen the regulatory powers of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), enhance consumer protection, and introduce an updated regulatory framework for the insurance sector. The committee deferred consideration of the Trade Organizations (Third Amendment) Bill, 2026 due to the absence of the mover. Members also received a briefing from the Secretary, Ministry of

Commerce, on the impact of regional conflicts in Afghanistan, Iran, and the Middle East on Pakistan’s international trade. The ministry informed the committee that the government is taking measures, including diversifying shipping routes, enhancing air cargo operations, and facilitating trade through alternative corridors, to minimize disruptions and ensure continuity of trade. The meeting was attended by committee members, senior officials from the Ministries of Commerce and Law & Justice, the SECP, and the National Assembly Secretariat.

Pakistan Peoples Party is a Party of Sacrifice, Democratic Struggle and Dedicated Workers; Its Mission of Public Service Continues Under Bilawal Bhutto Zardari’s Leadership, Sumblina Hassan

BY: Hurish Shah:

UK/ISLAMABAD--- Former Secretary to Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and In-Charge RCC UK, Bilawal House, Sumblina Hassan has said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) is not merely a political party but a symbol of sacrifice, democratic struggle, and public service. In a statement, she paid tribute to the party’s dedicated workers and office-bearers, saying they have remained steadfast through every challenging period and have always upheld the PPP’s flag with commitment and courage. She said the unwavering loyalty of PPP workers to the party’s ideology and leadership has been the foundation of its strength. Thousands of party workers, along with Shaheed



Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, made immense sacrifices for democracy

and the rights of the people, leaving behind a legacy that continues to inspire future generations. Sumblina Hassan said PPP workers endured imprisonment, persecution, and political hardships during periods of dictatorship but never abandoned their commitment to democratic values and the party’s ideals. She appreciated the efforts of party office-bearers and workers for continuously serving the public and promoting the party’s vision across the country, describing them as the real strength of the PPP. She expressed confidence that under the leadership of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, the party would continue its mission of strengthening democracy, protecting public rights, and serving the people of Pakistan.

NPC President Abdul Razak Sial Stresses Need for Digital Skills in Modern Journalism



BY: Hurish Shah

ISLAMABAD--- National Press Club (NPC) Islamabad is holding a month-long Digital Media and Mobile Journalism (MOJO) training programme under the leadership of NPC President Abdul Razak Sial, with renowned media trainer Atif Khan providing hands-on training to journalists in modern digital reporting. The workshop offers practical instruction in mobile journalism, artificial intelligence (AI), HD video production, professional audio recording, video editing, search engine optimization (SEO), social media management, YouTube con-

tent creation, digital branding, freelancing, and multi-format news filing. Addressing the participants, Abdul Razak Sial said journalism is rapidly undergoing digital transformation, with AI, mobile journalism, social media, and digital platforms becoming essential tools for media professionals. He said the programme aims to equip journalists with the latest skills, enabling them to enhance their professional capabilities and benefit from emerging opportunities in digital media, freelancing, and online content creation. Lead trainer Atif Khan said the course focuses on practical learning

rather than theory, helping participants master smartphone-based reporting, AI-assisted journalism, and digital storytelling to meet the evolving demands of the media industry. NPC Secretary Dr. Furqan Rao said the Press Club would continue organizing similar training programmes to strengthen the professional capacity of journalists and prepare them for the changing landscape of global media. The workshop also includes live reporting assignments, fact verification, and practical exercises designed to enable participants to produce print, digital, and video content efficiently using smartphones.

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Executive Editor: Naseem Hassan Awan, Joint Editor: Hurish Shah
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Opinion

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The world needs more, not fewer, risk-taking tech entrepreneurs

ARNAB NEIL SENGUPTA

Up until the dawn of modern telecommunication, messages were usually delivered by human envoys. During a war, for example, a messenger would be sent from one camp to another and, if found to be bearing unfriendly news, he often ended up as a casualty himself, a victim typically of beheading until the advent of the gun.

In the age of the internet, the practice of shooting the messenger is taking on a new form: blaming the news media or a tech entrepreneur for disseminating unwanted information about a favored cause, ideology, personality or organization, and even bringing criminal charges against them. This is becoming a common occurrence just when the world needs more, not fewer, tech innovators and entrepreneurs. The arrest of Telegram founder Pavel Durov, all of 39 years old, in France is a case in point. Last week, he was released on a bail of €5 million (\$5.5 million) after four days of detention in France, but he is banned from leaving the country and likely faces a lengthy trial there. The Paris Public Prosecutor's Office

announced that he faces 12 charges, including illegal transactions, child sexual abuse, fraud and refusal to cooperate with authorities.

It is not just young Durov, unschooled in geopolitical skullduggery, who has received a rude awakening. With troubling frequency, the chief executives of tech companies are finding themselves in the crosshairs of attacks from both the left and the right, facing allegations that range from colluding with the White House to kowtowing to leaders of America's adversaries. They are being accused, as in the case of the Dubai-based Telegram, of being simultaneously at the Kremlin's beck and call and acting as a tool of the Kremlin's sworn enemy, the Ukrainian government. Even though, as a recent media report noted: "In Russia, Telegram channels widely cover subjects that are otherwise strictly censored in state media. That includes everything from front-line reports of the conflict in Ukraine to trials of Kremlin critics and manifestos dispatched from political prisoners." For his part, Elon Musk, practically from his first day as the owner of X, has drawn flak from an array of critics, most of them ideological allies of the

previous management, whom he accused of stifling free speech and engaging in censorship. Since then, the circle of Musk's political enemies on both sides of the Atlantic has only expanded, particularly after his declaration in May 2022 via X that while in the past he had voted Democratic, in the future he could no longer support the party and would vote Republican instead. These days, almost no major American or European newsroom is complete without at least one full-time reporter assigned to the Elon Musk beat, which involves doing serial hatchet jobs on the CEO of Tesla, SpaceX and X but failing to make a dent in his net worth.

In April this year, the US House of Representatives passed legislation that would ban TikTok in the US if the popular social media platform's China-based owner did not sell its stake within a year. Shou Zi Chew, the TikTok CEO who has been grilled by US legislators twice since March 2023, has vowed to "continue to do all we can, including exercising our legal rights, to protect" the platform. During the second congressional hearing held earlier this year, which focused on the safety of

children on social media platforms, Shou was not the only big-tech baron in the line of fire. There was also Meta's Mark Zuckerberg, Snap's Evan Spiegel, X's Linda Yaccarino and Discord's Jason Citron, with Zuckerberg taking the most heat. For all the bipartisan rebuke the chief executives received, both Republican and Democratic lawmakers understand the necessity to explore ways of dealing with media companies that would not result in a total ban or threaten free speech. They also understand the importance of attracting abrasive tech geniuses with a libertarian streak like Musk and offering them tacit guarantees of freedom from law-enforcement harassment, including arrest. After all, it is not just the threat of new products that keeps America's capitalist engine in motion: the role played by foreign-born scientists and engineers who grow into American entrepreneurs and senior management can hardly be overstated.

The picture is somewhat different on the other side of the Atlantic. Admittedly, European countries are not unabashedly hostile to entrepreneurship and libertarianism, or else French President Emmanuel Macron

would not have bothered to state in a tweet in the context of Durov's arrest that "France is deeply committed to freedom of expression and communication, to innovation, and to the spirit of entrepreneurship." According to Statista, across Europe, the share of the adult population involved in the early stage of a startup varies between 14 percent in Latvia and 2.6 percent in Poland. In 2023, 10.8 percent of France's adult population was involved in a business startup, either as nascent entrepreneurs or as owner-managers of new firms.

Historically, Europe has been a global leader in technology and entrepreneurship. "Today, however, Europe as a whole lags not only the US but also China in high-impact entrepreneurship. And many large European countries, such as France, Spain, Italy and Germany, have a deficit of super-entrepreneurs," the City Journal, a publication of the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, said in 2022, referring to the nearly 2,500 individuals in the world who have built up billion-dollar fortunes by creating new firms or growing small businesses into large, successful ventures.

—Arab News

Daesh's global threat endures

DALIA AL-AQIDI

The persistent threat posed by Daesh is a stark reminder that terrorism remains a major concern worldwide. Even though significant efforts have been made to weaken it, the group has shown a troubling ability to adapt and continue its operations. This threat extends beyond the Middle East and poses a danger to the global community. As a result, it is crucial to maintain strong security measures, especially regarding America's borders, to prevent terrorists from entering the country. Recent events have brought the threat of the terrorist group back into focus. The CIA last month helped to stop a plot to attack a Taylor Swift concert in Vienna. According to CIA Deputy Director David Cohen, suspects linked to Daesh were planning to kill "tens of thousands" of concertgoers. This plot was in its advanced stages and could have resulted in a horrific mass-casualty event. However, thanks to the intelligence shared by the CIA, Austrian authorities were able to arrest the suspects and prevent a tragedy. This plot was a sobering reminder that Daesh and its followers are still capable of causing great harm.

Unfortunately, this was not an isolated case. So far this year, Daesh has claimed responsibility for multiple attacks in Türkiye, Iran and Russia, with affiliates also involved in violent incidents in Germany and other countries. The US Central Command reported that the terrorist group was responsible for 153 attacks in Iraq and Syria in the first half of 2024, indicating that the group's violent activities are far from over.

The danger extends to other regions as well. Daesh-Khorasan, a branch of the original group, has shown its ability to carry out attacks both within Afghanistan and outside its borders. The deadly terrorist attacks in Kerman, Iran, on Jan. 3 and in Moscow on March 22, which killed hundreds, highlight the global reach of Daesh's extremist ideology.

Robert Wood, the US alternative representative for special political affairs, last month spoke about these concerns at the UN Security Council. He pointed out that the threat from Daesh is also spreading across Africa, where instability and weak governments make it easier for terrorist groups to operate. The situation in Africa is particularly worrying. Regions like the Sahel and West, Central and Southern Africa are becoming more unstable, allow-

ing Daesh and Al-Qaeda affiliates to gain strength. "We continue to provide our African partners essential assistance in degrading the capabilities of and countering ISIS and Al-Qaeda affiliates, in a manner consistent with international law," Wood said, using another term for Daesh. He emphasized that vigorous law enforcement and security measures are vital to stopping terrorism and violent extremism.

The situation is even more complex because of the ongoing instability in several parts of Africa, where governments struggle to maintain control. The Sahel region, in particular, has seen a surge in violent extremism, with Daesh and Al-Qaeda affiliates gaining significant ground. The porous borders in these regions make it easier for terrorist groups to move weapons, fighters and supplies, further complicating efforts to combat them. Therefore, Washington and its allies must continue to support these regions, not only through military aid but also by helping to strengthen governance and economic stability.

The global fight against terrorism is not just about military action, it requires addressing the root causes of extremism, such as poverty, corruption and social inequality. Without addressing these deeper issues, terrorist groups like Daesh will continue to find new recruits and maintain their influence.

Despite these efforts, the battle against Daesh is far from over. The group still has about 2,500 fighters in Iraq and Syria and it continues to operate through cells and affiliate organizations in West and North Africa. Daesh also has a troubling ability to recruit members all around the world, particularly in Europe. The group often targets immigrants or the children of immigrants who feel marginalized, exploiting their grievances to draw them into its ranks. These recruits are usually found in crowded urban areas with high unemployment rates, making them vulnerable to extremist influence. The number of former Daesh fighters and sympathizers living in Europe and the US is unknown, adding another layer of complexity to the fight against terrorism. In America, there are growing concerns that Daesh operatives could exploit weaknesses in the immigration system to enter the country. FBI Director Christopher Wray in June warned the US Senate that "dangerous persons" could be among those crossing the country's southern border.

—Arab News



Netanyahu wants a fait accompli in the West Bank ... What are we doing about it?

EYAD ABU SHAKRA

The closed rooms where the region's crises are negotiated have been brimming with both announced and secret meetings. With them has emerged a flurry of news reports in the media and endless rumors and positions on social media platforms. All of this is happening while decisions on the fate of the Arab region are made abroad. Even if we actually wanted to take adequate positions in response to the crime of redrawing maps with blood, it is clear that the Arabs do not have the capability, the international community does not have the will and the Americans have no intention of dealing with this crime.

On the other hand, I am no longer confident that the "crisis" we hear Benjamin Netanyahu's government is "suffering" from is real. Nor am I confident about the so-called confusion of the Iranian leadership, which seems to have abandoned the idea of removing Israel within seven minutes. Rather, what recent days have shown makes one wish that Israel was indeed suffering from a crisis and that Iran was confused. In the past few days, Netanyahu's government has begun the second phase of its semi-explicit plan to exterminate the Palestinians as a people, root them out of their land and do away with their cause by attacking Tulkarm and Jenin. Of course, the same old pretext is always available: "terrorist" cells affiliated with Iran have been established around the two cities, especially in their camps. Meanwhile, nothing in the US takes precedence over November's presidential election. Not only that, but it seems that all the world's concerns are timed and synchronized to the schedule of the American elections. Even the major global powers, which have a greater capacity to change things than us Arabs, foremost among them Russia and China, are watching to see which way the winds will blow in the race to the White House between two candidates and parties that differ radically on almost every issue ... except total support for Israel. After Tel Aviv, Moscow may have the strongest influence — albeit indirectly — on this electoral battle, especially in light of the contrast between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris' views on the greatest global threat to American unipolarity.

Trump has, on several occasions, downplayed the threat posed by Russia — even after Ukraine. He has also hinted at his "personal" ability to deal with Vladimir Putin. Meanwhile, he and the Republican

leadership have taken a tough stance on the Chinese threat first and the Iranian threat second. Moreover, several international political figures have emphasized, for some time, Putin's support for far-right policies in most Western democracies, which he is betting on to create internal disruptions. His opponent, Harris, the Democratic candidate, as well as being the partner and heir to Democratic policies by virtue of being Joe Biden's vice president for the past four years, has been somewhat gray in her views. Analysts broadly agree that Biden's presidency has essentially been a continuation of Barack Obama's term, during which Biden served as vice president for eight years.

Thus, Harris does not have any particular personal feelings about the ambitions of either Russia or China. Nonetheless, Obama's reading of the Middle East's political map may have become an institutional Democratic Party approach to the region. Both the Iranian and Israeli governments are well aware of this. Today, Netanyahu is escalating in order to kill several birds with one stone. First, he is furthering an expansionist messianic project under the pretext of needing the support of the unhinged extremists in his government. Second, he is trying to draw Tehran into a battle that it will either lose on the ground or that will destroy its political credibility. Third, he is dragging the Democrats into a regional war against Iran, which he believes the American public is in no mood for, thereby heightening the chances of a Trump victory.

As for Tehran, it wants to avoid such a war, which would expose the tenuous nature of its commitment to the Arab political organization that it has created, invested in and used. It also has no interest in taking a leap into the unknown and facilitating a Trump victory. Indeed, past experiences have shown the former president to be far more amenable to the proposals of the Israeli extreme right than the Obama-Biden school. Meanwhile, the Israeli war machine is rushing to impose a fait accompli in the West Bank, after having destroyed Gaza and displaced its people. It is likely betting on a Republican victory in November that would free its hand completely. On the Palestinian side, bitter experiences and the latest situation currently unfolding in Gaza do not seem to have led to more rational and realistic assessments and priorities, foremost among them the need to unify stances and stop gambling on the basis of false assumptions.

—Arab News

World court's opinion on Israeli occupation hardly a surprise

YOSSI MEKELBERG

One possible reason July's advisory opinion by the UN's top court, which stated that the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories goes against international law, did not attract much international attention is that most observers felt this was no more than stating the very obvious. However, as the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem is currently entrenching at a faster pace, the prospect of an Israeli military presence in Gaza for years to come has become very real. And because some extreme elements at the heart of Israel's government are advocating building settlements in the Gaza Strip, stating and amplifying the obvious is more important than ever. Adding to the significance of this advisory opinion is that it marked the first time that this court had delivered a position on the legality of the 57-year occupation, let alone it being crystal clear about its unlawfulness.

Although this advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice is not legally binding, it carries significant moral and political weight and, given the political resolve, could be translated into a binding resolution by the UN Security Council. The long and learned legal document could also serve as a guide for the behavior of individual countries, international organizations and businesses that clarifies how they should engage with the occupation, the settlements, the settlers and those who sustain them.

What links the political and legal aspects of this document is that it was the UN General Assembly that requested that the court give its view on Israel's policies and practices toward the Occupied Territories and on the legal status of the occupation, including East Jerusalem. It is now for the UNGA and its member states to decide how they will translate this view of the court into a meaningful resolution and policies that will end the occupation and lead to an

end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the right of self-determination for both peoples and their living in peace and security side by side. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's response to the ruling reflected an utter disregard for international law and deliberate obliviousness to the international isolation he is leading his country into. Beyond calling the court's depiction of the occupation as illegal "absurd" and a "decision of lies," he went on to say: "The Jewish people are not occupiers in their own land — not in our eternal capital Jerusalem, nor in our ancestral heritage of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank)." This is a denial of both the fact that these territories were acquired by military force and that, as per international humanitarian law, any occupation should be a temporary one, let alone that the Zionist movement accepted the partition of Mandatory Palestine, which facilitated the establishment of Israel and the international recognition it enjoys within its pre-June 1967 borders. It is the behavior — or, more accurately, the misbehavior — of Israel in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza that has brought on this decision. Under international law, the occupying power should not change the conditions that led to its acquiring sovereignty over the occupied territory and it is obliged to respect the existing laws and institutions of the occupied territory within reason. This is all based on the assumption that an occupation is temporary, as it should be. An argument is made by the right in Israel that the Occupied Territories were not under the control of the Palestinians when they were occupied in 1967 and hence there was a necessity to establish governing structures and mechanisms. As valid as this argument is, these structures and mechanisms should only have been employed for a limited time, until the transfer of political power to the local population to exercise their right to self-determination, and not as a tool to oppress them and perpetuate Israeli control

Letters to the Editor

From waste to worth

Food waste is a silent crisis that deserves more attention than it currently receives. It's unsettling to witness how much food goes to waste in restaurants every day, particularly when so many in our country struggle with hunger and malnutrition. As someone who has seen the impact of poverty up close, I find it difficult to reconcile this reality with the staggering statistic that nearly 36 million tons of food are wasted annually in Pakistan. The environmental consequences are severe, from unnecessary greenhouse gas emissions to the depletion of valuable resources, all of which could be mitigated if we simply used what we already have more wisely. It's clear that food waste is not just a missed opportunity to feed those in need. It's a broader societal failure that reflects poorly on our priorities. While we often talk about inequality in many contexts, from education to healthcare, we rarely discuss how food waste is yet another form of inequality—one that underscores our disregard for the resources we waste and the people we fail to serve. That's why it's encouraging to see some businesses addressing food waste in practical ways by redistributing leftover food to those in need.

This simple yet effective approach takes place daily after 10:00 pm, which demonstrates how even small actions can have a significant impact. It highlights that tackling food waste doesn't require grand gestures but can start with thoughtful initiatives that provide immediate relief to the less fortunate. If more businesses and individuals adopted such practices, we could make meaningful progress in combating food waste while also addressing hunger in our communities. Before we can solve broader societal issues, we must first confront the everyday injustices right in front of us.

BATOOL MUFTI
Islamabad

Toxic air threat

Air pollution in the country has reached toxic levels and poses an outright threat to people's lives. According to the Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) Annual Update for 2024, virtually the entire population of Pakistan breathes air that doesn't meet its own national air quality standards. The fine particulate matter (PM2.5) standard is set at 15 micrograms per cubic meter in Pakistan, but our actual PM2.5 concentration is estimated to be around 40 µg/m³. Due to these high levels of

air pollution, the AQLI report claims that if Pakistan could simply meet its own air standards, it could raise people's life expectancy by 2.3 years. Meeting the WHO air pollution guidelines would result in an even greater rise in life expectancy by 3.3 years. It is a critical situation requiring careful action, as our air is so polluted that it is actually shortening the lives of the people. In Pakistan, air pollution is now a greater threat to life than drinking and even diseases like HIV/AIDS. Given that we all breathe the same air, there is simply no way to escape this problem regardless of class or socioeconomic status. As such, the poorest people in more developed countries often have more breathable air than the richest Pakistanis.

This issue is not unique to Pakistan. Nations like India and Pakistan in South Asia face similar problems. The use of substandard fuels such as wood, the burning of agricultural and other waste, and the lack of enforcement of fuel standards must be addressed at the local level by individual countries. Accelerating the use of emissions-free renewable energy will also be crucial. Failure to take such steps will only cost the people of Pakistan and the region overall years of life they could have otherwise enjoyed.

MUNAWAR SIDDIQUI

Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Aamir Shehzad Agree to Form ICCI-CDA Liaison Committee for Business Issues

BY: Hurish Shah:

ISLAMABAD--- The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the CDA Officers Association have agreed to establish a joint liaison committee to ensure the timely resolution of business community issues and strengthen coordination between stakeholders.

The decision was made during a meeting at ICCI, where both sides agreed that the committee would hold regular meetings to address trade, taxation, urban management, regulatory affairs and civic service issues. The forum will work to identify challenges, develop consensus-based solutions and ensure prompt follow-up on matters affecting traders, industrialists and investors.

ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood said stronger coordination would improve governance, promote policy continuity and help resolve longstanding business concerns through regular institu-



tional dialogue. CDA Officers Association President Aamir Shehzad stressed the need for a formal coordination mechanism to address administrative and regulatory challenges and praised ICCI's role in representing the business community.

General Secretary Kamran Bakht and Chairman Riaz Khan highlighted the importance of stakeholder consultation for better governance, while ICCI Senior Vice

President Tahir Ayub and Vice President Irfan Chaudhry said the liaison committee would strengthen public-private partnership, improve transparency and enhance investor confidence in Islamabad.

Former ICCI President Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi also addressed the meeting, which was attended by ICCI executive members, senior business leaders and representatives of various Traders Welfare Associations.

Shah Ghulam Qadir Hands Over Grant Cheque as Sardar Muhammad Yousaf Secures Revival of Muzaffarabad Press Club Funding

BY: ANI Correspondent:

MUZAFFARABAD--- President of PML-N Azad Jammu and Kashmir Shah Ghulam Qadir handed over the first instalment cheque of the annual federal grant for the Central Press Club Muzaffarabad to President Sohail Mughal and Senior Vice President Naseer Anwar.

The annual grant has been restored after nearly seven years following sustained efforts by the Press Club administration. Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousaf played a key role in securing the approval, while a special committee led by Senior Vice President Naseer Anwar pursued the matter with the federal government.

The Press Club administration termed the restoration of the grant a



major achievement, thanking Sardar Muhammad Yousaf and Shah Ghulam Qadir for their support. It said the funding would help

strengthen the club's administrative functions, welfare initiatives and professional activities for the journalist community.

HEC Commission Reviews Reforms to Strengthen Higher Education

BY: Hurish Shah:

ISLAMABAD--- The 47th meeting of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Commission, chaired by Prof. Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, reviewed a series of key policy reforms aimed at improving the quality, governance, and future-readiness of Pakistan's higher education sector.

The Commission discussed measures to strengthen quality assurance, implement Outcome-Based Education (OBE), standardize

Programme Learning Outcomes, enhance graduate competency assessment, and modernize regulations for establishing new higher education institutions.

Members also considered initiatives to promote academic innovation, expand the internationalization of undergraduate education, and introduce a structured framework for recognizing liberal arts programmes while maintaining national quality standards.

Reaffirming its commitment to

excellence, the Commission emphasized evidence-based policymaking, strong quality assurance mechanisms, and balanced regulatory reforms to ensure Pakistan's higher education system remains aligned with national priorities and global developments.

The meeting was attended by HEC Executive Director Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq, senior representatives of federal and provincial governments, academia, and members of the HEC Commission.

Atif Ikram Sheikh Expresses Concern Over Rising Trade Deficit, Urges Export-Focused Reforms

BY: Hurish Shah

ISLAMABAD: President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Atif Ikram Sheikh, has expressed serious concern over Pakistan's widening trade deficit, calling for urgent reforms to strengthen exports and support the industrial sector.

He said exports stood at \$2.24 billion in June 2026, down 16.7% from May 2026 and 9.6% lower than June 2025. Meanwhile, imports surged to \$6.77 billion, rising 24.1% month-on-month and 26.3% year-on-year, pushing the monthly trade deficit to \$4.53 billion—an increase of 63.8% over May and 57.1% compared to June last year.

Atif Ikram Sheikh noted that dur-



ing FY2026, exports declined by 6%, while imports increased by 8.1% and the trade deficit widened by 22% compared to the previous fiscal year.

He attributed the decline in exports to high interest rates, expensive energy, heavy taxation and an uncompetitive business environment, saying these factors were hurting Pakistan's export competitiveness. He urged the government to introduce reforms in the energy sector, reduce financing costs, improve the tax system, ensure timely payment of exporters' refunds and promote import-substitution industries and value-added exports.

He added that expanding exports in the IT, agriculture value-addition and engineering sectors could help reduce the trade deficit, reaffirming that FPCCI would continue to work closely with the government to boost exports and achieve sustainable economic growth.

Kamran Sagheer Inspects Horticulture, Beautification Work at Jhika Gali

BY: ANI Correspondent:

MURREE---Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Kamran Sagheer visited Jhika Gali to inspect the flowers, plants and landscaping developed by the Murree Horticulture Agency.

During the visit, he reviewed the condition, cleanliness and maintenance of the green areas and received a briefing from officials on ongoing horticulture and beautification initiatives. Expressing satisfaction with the arrangements, he directed the authorities to ensure regular upkeep of flowers, plants and public green spaces.

Kamran Sagheer stressed that cleanliness, landscaping and environmental conservation are essential to providing a pleasant experience for both local and international tourists. He reaf-



firmed the district administration's commitment to preserving Murree's

natural beauty through coordinated efforts by all relevant departments.

NA Speaker attends funeral ceremony of Iranian Supreme Leader in Tehran

BY: Hurish Shah:

ISLAMABAD--- Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq along with Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif attended the funeral ceremony of the late Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, in Tehran. During the ceremony, the Speaker offered Fateha and prayed for the departed soul, expressing

deep respect and solemn remembrance.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq also met with the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, and the Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf. He conveyed heartfelt condolences on behalf of the National Assembly of Pakistan and the people of

Pakistan.

Paying rich tribute to the late Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Speaker acknowledged his distinguished services to the Islamic Republic of Iran and described his passing as a profound loss for the Iranian nation. He attended the ceremony at the invitation of the Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf.

Newly Appointed Assistant Commissioner Shazia Rehman Assumes Charge in Noorpur Thal

BY: ANI Correspondent:

SARGODHA--- Newly appointed Assistant Commissioner Shazia Rehman has formally assumed charge of her office in Tehsil Noorpur Thal and has officially begun performing her duties. Her appointment marks a new administrative development in the tehsil. Her predecessor, Dr. Haroon Ahmed Shiraz, has been transferred to Kabirwala.

Soon after taking charge, Assistant Commissioner Shazia Rehman chaired an introductory and administrative meeting with revenue officers, officials, and other relevant staff. The meeting reviewed revenue administration, public service delivery, effective implementation of government policies, office performance, and measures to ensure timely relief for the public.

Addressing the meeting, Assistant Commissioner Shazia Rehman stated that public service, transparency, merit, and the prompt resolution of public issues with professionalism and courtesy would remain



her top priorities. She directed all officers and staff to perform their duties with honesty, dedication, responsibility, and a strong spirit of teamwork so that citizens could receive the best possible government services.

During the meeting, the revenue staff gave the newly appointed Assistant Commissioner a comprehensive briefing on the tehsil's administrative and revenue affairs. The officials also assured her of their

full cooperation in carrying out her responsibilities effectively.

Meanwhile, members of the public and representatives of social organizations welcomed Shazia Rehman's appointment and expressed confidence that, under her leadership, the administrative system in Noorpur Thal would become more efficient, public issues would be resolved more effectively, and the delivery of government services would continue to improve.

RPO Sohail Akhtar Sukhera Hears 170 Public Complaints at Open Court in Faisalabad

BY: ANI Correspondent:

FAISALABAD---- In line with the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to ensure prompt and accessible justice, Regional Police Officer (RPO) Faisalabad Sohail Akhtar Sukhera held an open court (Khuli Kachehri) at the Regional Police Office to hear public complaints.

More than 170 complainants attended the session and presented their grievances directly to the RPO. Immediate relief was provided in 85 cases through on-the-spot orders, while the remaining applications were forwarded to the relevant officers for inquiry with directions to



submit reports within the prescribed timeframe.

Addressing the participants, RPO

Sukhera said protecting citizens' lives and property and ensuring timely justice remain the police's top priorities. He emphasized zero tolerance for public misconduct, unnecessary delays in registering criminal cases, or negligence in official duties.

He directed supervisory officers to conduct investigations strictly on merit, free from any pressure or influence, and ensure all pending complaints are resolved in accordance with the law. He added that the purpose of holding open courts is to provide direct access to senior police leadership, particularly for underprivileged citizens, ensure prompt grievance redressal, and strengthen public confidence in the police

Punjab Information Secretary Reviews Upgradation Projects at Alhamra Academy and Studios

BY: Special Reporter ANI

LAHORE --- Punjab Secretary Information & Culture, Syed Tahir Raza Hamdani, visited the Alhamra Academy of Performing Arts and Alhamra Studios to review ongoing renovation and upgradation projects. Accompanied by Executive Director Muhammad Nawaz Gondal, he inspected construction progress, infrastructure improvements, and project quality.

Officials briefed the Secretary on plans to modernize classrooms, rehearsal halls, studios, and technical facilities to international standards. Hamdani directed that all work be completed on schedule while ensuring transparency, quality, and accountability. He reaffirmed the Punjab Government's commitment to



strengthening cultural institutions and providing world-class facilities for artists, students, and researchers. Executive Director

Gondal described the project as a major investment in Pakistan's creative future and artistic excellence.

Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Leads Prominent AJK Political Figures into IPP

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- Former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, led a large group of prominent political leaders from across AJK in joining the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) during a launching ceremony held in Islamabad.

The event was attended by IPP President Abdul Aleem Khan, senior party leaders, and newly inducted members from AJK. Addressing a joint press conference after the ceremony, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas thanked Abdul Aleem Khan and the party leadership for their warm welcome and support.

He said he had been associated with the party since its inception and emphasized that the people of AJK hold the Pakistan Army in high regard, describing it as a guarantor of their security. He added that after previously joining the Pakistan Peoples Party and helping strengthen its parliamentary position in AJK, he had now decided to join IPP to better



serve the people. He said the people of AJK were frustrated with traditional political parties and deserved practical solutions to their longstanding problems.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Aleem Khan announced that the Islamabad-Murree Expressway would be extended to Muzaffarabad, while a modern highway would also connect Muzaffarabad with Mansehra, improving safe and effi-

cient travel for the people of AJK. He also urged young people to focus on education and hard work, calling them the nation's greatest asset.

The ceremony was attended by a large number of political leaders, local government representatives, and party workers from across Azad Kashmir, who formally joined the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party in the presence of the party's central leadership.