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Pakistan-China business, Conference concludes with \$1.4 billion investment agreements



ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China signed investment and business agreements worth approximately US\$1.4 billion at the conclusion of the two-day Pakistan-China Business Conference held in Islamabad, marking another significant step towards strengthening bilateral economic and industrial cooperation.

On the final day of the conference, participants signed 42 agreements valued at approximately US\$850 million, covering a wide range of sectors, including pharmaceuticals, medical devices, vaccine production, healthcare technology, and industrial manufacturing.

The conference, held on July 17-18th, brought together more than 250 Chinese companies and a large num-

ber of Pakistani businesses, creating a platform for business-to-business (B2B) engagements aimed at expanding trade, investment, technology transfer, and industrial collaboration.

One of the major highlights of the event was the signing of final investment agreements for local manufacturing of pharmaceutical products, medical equipment, and vaccines in Pakistan. These agreements are expected to promote technology transfer, strengthen Pakistan's healthcare industry, reduce dependence on imports, and create new employment opportunities.

The conference concluded with total investment commitments reaching US\$1.4 billion, reflecting the growing confidence of Chinese investors in Pakistan's economic potential and business environment. The partici-

ping Chinese companies held extensive business-to-business (B2B) meetings with their Pakistani counterparts, exploring opportunities for joint ventures, industrial partnerships, and long-term investment projects across multiple sectors. The discussions focused on enhancing industrial cooperation, improving supply chains, and increasing local production capacity.

Officials and business leaders described the conference as a milestone in Pakistan-China economic relations, noting that the agreements would contribute to industrial modernization, export promotion, and sustainable economic growth. The pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors emerged as major beneficiaries of the investment commitments. The agreements are expected to facilitate the

establishment of modern production facilities for medicines, vaccines, and medical equipment, enabling Pakistan to improve domestic manufacturing capabilities while expanding export opportunities to regional and international markets.

Industry representatives said collaboration with Chinese companies would introduce advanced manufacturing technologies, improve product quality, and strengthen research and development in Pakistan's healthcare sector. The participation of over 250 Chinese investor companies, underscored the strong interest of China's private sector in expanding its footprint in Pakistan. Throughout the conference, hundreds of B2B meetings resulted in numerous commercial partnerships and investment understandings between enterprises

Iran Condemns US Strike, Warns of Severe Retaliation



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Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation on Sunday denounced the United States for bombing the under-construction Darkhovin Nuclear Power Plant.

In a statement cited by Al Jazeera, the organisation stated, "The terrorist and criminal US regime, whose nature is nothing but bullying and lawlessness, carried out an aggressive and barbaric act in violation of international law."

It also called the nuclear facility "one of the symbols of the Iranian nation's dignity and scientific self-reliance." Earlier, the US said it had completed an eighth straight night of attacks against Iran after earlier announcing that two US military personnel were killed in Jordan and another was missing following an Iranian attack.

The US and Iran have intensified attacks since an interim ceasefire deal signed a month ago fell apart last week, raising the possibility of a return to all-out war.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a statement that the airstrikes began at 6pm on Saturday, at President Donald Trump's direction.

"The strikes are designed to further degrade Iran's ability to threaten commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and swiftly punish IRGC forces who launched attacks against American service members in Jordan last night," it said.

CENTCOM later said it had completed its wave of attacks, hitting Iranian military coastal surveillance and air defence facilities.

In regards to the deaths of the military personnel, US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth posted on X: "Their sacrifice only

stiffens our resolve". According to CENTCOM, the two deaths occurred on Friday and that a third US service member was missing in action. The announcement brought the number of US service members killed since the war began to 16, while more than 420 have been wounded.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard navy on Sunday said two ships navigating the Strait of Hormuz through what it described as a "hazardous route" encountered an "incident", while two others "were deterred from proceeding further along the unsafe path,"

IRNA News Agency reported. Although it did not specify what the incident was, the IRGC claimed the vessels disabled their navigation systems and ignored warnings, according to Al Jazeera. Ships carrying oil, gas, or fertiliser must obtain permission and use its designated passage, the IRGC added, warning that vessels entering other routes risk "accidents."

The commander of Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters Major-General Ali Abdullahi warned the US, saying that "any aggression or barbarism will be met with a decisive and devastating response" from the Islamic Republic's armed forces.

According to Al Jazeera, in a statement carried by Iranian state media, Abdullahi described the US as "the Great Satan" as well as "the criminal, treacherous, and deceitful army." The commander also pledged to strengthen unity between the armed forces, the Iranian public, and officials, vowing to "impose heavier costs" on the US than in previous wars, Al Jazeera reported.

Pakistan to host Iranian interior minister for high-level talks: sources



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ISLAMABAD: Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni is expected to visit Pakistan at the invitation of Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, according to sources. Sources said Momeni is scheduled to hold key meetings with Mohsin Naqvi and Pakistan's senior leadership during the

visit.

The discussions are expected to focus on bilateral relations, border cooperation, and other matters of mutual interest. A high-level Iranian delegation is also expected to accompany the interior minister, the sources added. Earlier, Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam, alleged that the United States had

resumed military action in violation of the terms of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The Iranian envoy said the reported move to take control of the Strait of Hormuz constituted a breach of the Islamabad MoU and violated international law. He urged the international community to condemn the US actions and ensure compliance with international legal principles.

Sarfraz Bugti reaffirms resolve to foil anti-Pakistan plots



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RAWALPINDI: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Saturday reaffirmed that the Pakistan Army and the people of Balochistan stand united and would defeat every conspiracy aimed at destabilising Pakistan.

Addressing more than 4,000 students from 18 cities participating in the ISPR Summer Camp, the Chief Minister said Pakistan was established to endure and no hostile design against the country would succeed. Emphasizing the close bond between the province and the federation, Bugti said Pakistan and Balochistan are inseparable, expressing confidence that the province would continue its journey towards lasting peace and stability. Referring to the security situation in Balochistan, he said terrorists had brutally martyred many brave residents of the province because they refused to support their agenda.

The terrorists had also targeted the Mangi Dam project, describing it as a vital source of water supply for the people of

Balochistan, he said.

The CM said terrorism and violence can never be justified under any circumstances and reiterated the government's resolve to eliminate the menace through the collective efforts of the security forces and the people. Regarding the recent attack on police, he said the force that went to provide reinforcement also came under attack. A judicial commission had been constituted and all facts would be brought before the nation, he said. Sarfraz Bugti said some political leaders spread misleading propaganda against the state during the Quetta sit-in despite Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claiming responsibility for the attack. Such narratives were part of an organized conspiracy to mislead the youth and weaken the state, he said. Referring to Pakistan's recent conflict with India, he said Pakistan, under the leadership of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, gave a strong response to Indian aggression. He said the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces during Marka-e-Haq, while terrorists fighting at India's behest witnessed the fate of their masterminds during the operation.

Bilawal vows to form govt in Azad Kashmir after PPP's victory in elections

ANI

KOTLI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has vowed to form the next government in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), saying his party is determined to secure victory in the upcoming elections.

Addressing a public rally in Kotli, Bilawal said he always felt "at home" whenever he visited the district, describing the relationship between the people of Kotli and the PPP as one that extends beyond politics and resembles a family bond. He said the party's elected representatives were part of the PPP family and that members had stood by one another through both celebrations and difficult times. Recalling the period when former prime minister Benazir Bhutto lived in exile, Bilawal said the party endured difficult circumstances, with its leadership spending time in London and other loca-



tions. Despite those challenges, he said, PPP workers remained loyal to the party. Bilawal also praised senior PPP leader Chaudhry Yasin for his loyalty, saying he had consistently stood

by both the party and the Bhutto family during difficult times. Expressing confidence in the party's prospects, Bilawal said the PPP would, "God willing," form the next government in Azad Kashmir and that he wanted the party to win all seats in Kotli. He urged party workers to ensure victory in the elections and said he expected even better results than those achieved in the previous polls. Bilawal also claimed that the PPP had been part of the Azad Kashmir government for the past six months and had performed successfully in the previous elections.

Reaffirming the party's commitment to the Kashmir cause, Bilawal said the PPP's relationship with the people of Kashmir spanned three generations.

He added that the party had consistently advocated for the Kashmir issue on international forums and would continue to raise the voice of the Kashmiri people.

Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand to Visit Pakistan

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ISLAMABAD: Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand will undertake an official visit to Pakistan tomorrow (Monday).

She is undertaking this visit at the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar. According to Foreign Office, it is her first visit to Pakistan following her assumption of office.

During the visit, Ishaq Dar and Anita Anand will hold bilateral talks covering the entire spectrum of Pakistan relations. The discussions will focus on strengthening cooperation in trade and investment, education, and people-to-people exchanges. They will also exchange views on regional and global developments of mutual interest. The Canadian foreign minister will also call on the leadership of Pakistan. Pakistan and Canada maintain cordial bilateral relations anchored in close people-to-people ties enriched by the vibrant Pakistani diaspora in Canada. This visit underscores the shared commitment of both countries to expand mutual cooperation. In a statement, the Canadian government described Minister Anand's visit as a significant milestone in Canada-Pakistan relations.

DG ISPR Engages Students on National Security

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RAWALPINDI: Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, held a special interactive session with participants of the ISPR Summer Camp 2026, focusing on Pakistan's security environment and emerging challenges. Addressing the students, the DG ISPR provided an overview of the country's internal and external security dynamics, counter-terrorism efforts, and the evolving threats confronting Pakistan. He also discussed the measures being taken to safeguard national stability and strengthen security institutions. The



students described the session as informative and insightful, saying it enhanced their understanding of the complex security issues facing the country.

They said that the briefing shed light on various factors contributing to instability, including the activities of Fitna al-Hindustan and Fitna al-

Khwarij, particularly in Balochistan.

The participants appreciated the opportunity to engage directly with the military's spokesperson and gain a deeper perspective on national security affairs.

The students emphasized that, in the current era, awareness about misinformation and propaganda is essential as both spread rapidly. They reaffirmed their resolve that the entire nation stands shoulder to shoulder with the Pakistan Armed Forces in fight against terrorism. The ISPR Summer Camp is an important initiative to promote national awareness among young people and help develop their abilities.



On directions of Prime Minister, Chairman NDMA reviews on-ground monsoon preparedness plan along with GBDMA team

Pakistan to continue its principled political, diplomatic support for Kashmiri: Ayaz

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Saturday said the day symbolizes the Kashmiri people's deep-rooted bond with Pakistan, reflecting their shared history, religion, culture and civilization, as well as their unwavering commitment to achieving their internationally recognized right to self-determination.

In his message on the occasion of 'Accession to Pakistan Day, he said that the Pakistani nation will always stand shoulder to shoulder with its Kashmiri brothers and sisters in their just struggle and will continue to extend wholehearted support to their legitimate aspirations.

Ayaz Sadiq said that on July 19, 1947, through a resolution passed at the historic session of the All-Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in Srinagar, the resolve to accede to Pakistan was formally expressed, and it is in commemoration of this momentous occasion that 'Accession to Pakistan Day' is observed every year.

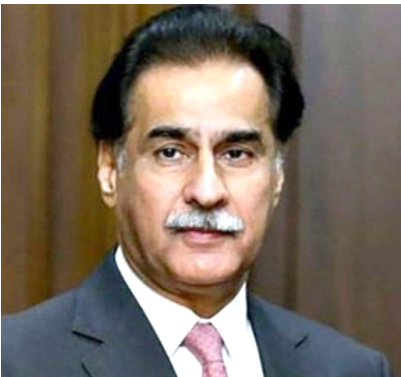
He said that this historic resolution was a true reflection of the collective sentiments of the Muslims of the subcontinent, the Two-Nation Theory, and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people, and it came to occupy the status of a landmark milestone in the history of the Kashmiri cause.

Ayaz Sadiq said that the dispute of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir is a longstanding issue inextricably linked to lasting peace and stability in South Asia, whose just and durable resolution in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people is an absolute necessity.

He said that the international community must take effective cognizance of the grave human rights violations in IIOJK and play its due role in ensuring that the Kashmiri people are accorded their fundamental right to self-determination.

Ayaz Sadiq said that the Parliament of Pakistan has always stood united in its support for the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination.

In this context, the Parliament has



passed several unanimous resolutions against human rights violations in IIOJK, drawing the attention of the international community to this longstanding dispute, and will continue to raise the Kashmiri people's voice effectively on every national, regional and international forum. He said that the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir is playing an active role in highlighting the Kashmir issue effectively at national and interna-

tional levels and conveying the voice of the Kashmiri people to the global community.

Ayaz Sadiq reiterated the resolve that Pakistan will continue its political, diplomatic, and moral support for the Kashmiri people at every level. He said that the sacrifices rendered by the Kashmiri people for freedom, justice, and the right to self-determination will never go in vain.

On this occasion, Deputy Speaker National Assembly, Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah said that 'Accession to Pakistan Day' is a symbol of the strong historical bonds, mutual trust and shared values between the Kashmiri people and the Pakistani nation.

He said that the Kashmiri people have rendered unparalleled sacrifices for freedom and the right to self-determination over the past several decades, and the entire nation salutes them.

He said that the Parliament of Pakistan reaffirms its unwavering solidarity with the Kashmiri people and will continue its political, diplomatic and moral support until the attainment of their just rights.

Gilani reaffirms Pakistan's unwavering support for Kashmiris' right to self-determination

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ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan symbolises the enduring bond between the people of Pakistan and Jammu and Kashmir and reflects the Kashmiri people's steadfast commitment to their internationally recognised right to self-determination. In his message on the occasion of Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan, the Senate chairman said the Jammu and Kashmir dispute remained an internationally recognised issue and that its peaceful and lasting resolution, in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people, was essential for sustainable peace and stability in South Asia. He urged the international community to take meaningful notice of the human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and support efforts to ensure the realisation of the Kashmiri people's legitimate rights. Gilani reaffirmed that Pakistan's Parliament had consistently stood with the people of Jammu and Kashmir and would continue to raise their voice at national, regional and international parliamentary forums. He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering political, diplomatic and moral support for the just cause of the Kashmiri people, emphasising that their sacrifices for freedom, justice and dignity would never be forgotten.

Railways emerging as symbol of reform, modernisation: Abbasi

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ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi Sunday that Pakistan Railways was emerging as a symbol of reform, innovation and improved public service delivery under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. In a post on X, the minister said the government's unwavering focus on performance, transparency and public welfare had paved the way for transforming Pakistan Railways into a modern institution, ensuring that every citizen benefits from improved rail services. He said a new chapter of modernisation and public service was being written under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, adding that comprehensive reforms were aimed at making the railway system more efficient, reliable and passenger-friendly. Hanif Abbasi also thanked Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for her strong support in improving railway infrastructure and services across the province. He said that under the Punjab government's "Suthra Punjab" campaign, cleanliness standards at railway stations were being significantly enhanced while better facilities were being provided to passengers. The minister said that with the cooperation of the Punjab government, eight of the province's busiest railway corridors were being revived through the introduction of modern multiple units.

Pakistan Advances Breakthrough HDV Therapy After Health Conference

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has taken a major step toward improving access to treatment for Hepatitis Delta (HDV), following the Pakistan-China B2B Health Conference, where efforts led by Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Syed Mustafa Kamal, advanced plans to introduce a breakthrough therapy for patients in Pakistan through the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) pathway.

The therapy previously received Breakthrough Therapy Designation from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of Hepatitis Delta, reflecting its potential to address a serious disease with significant unmet medical need.

For the past seven months, Federal Minister Syed Mustafa Kamal has been closely working with leading hepatologist Prof. Dr Saeed Hamid and Pakistan's clini-



cal research expert Syed Munawar Ali to address the growing burden of Hepatitis Delta in Pakistan and to accelerate access to innovative treatment options.

Speaking on the importance of the initiative, Minister Mustafa Kamal emphasized that Hepatitis Delta remains one of the most serious forms of viral hepatitis. He warned that without timely intervention, the disease could continue to spread and place

individuals with weakened immune systems at particularly high risk of severe liver complications.

As a result of the Minister's continued engagement and follow-up, the Chief Executive Officer of the Chinese biotechnology company developing the therapy visited Pakistan during the B2B Health Conference. Discussions with DRAP Chief Executive Officer Dr Obaid Ullah Malik focused on facilitating the Phase III clinical development program in Pakistan through an accelerated regulatory pathway while simultaneously advancing the legal and scientific review required for Emergency Use Authorization. These efforts are being undertaken in close collaboration with LCI Pharma, led by Chief Executive Officer Mr Atif Siddiqui, to support the regulatory process and help make the treatment available to Pakistani patients at the earliest possible opportunity. Health experts estimate that Pakistan may have more than one million suspected Hepatitis Delta patients,

many of whom remain undiagnosed. The initiative is expected to significantly strengthen Pakistan's response to this life-threatening disease by improving access to innovative therapies and expanding clinical research capacity. The breakthrough medicine has already undergone Phase II clinical evaluation in China, the United States, Mongolia, and Pakistan, where it demonstrated a favorable safety profile during clinical development. Pakistan's participation in the clinical program highlights the country's growing contribution to international medical research and its commitment to bring advanced treatments to patients. The Ministry of National Health Services, DRAP, clinical researchers, and industry partners reaffirmed their shared commitment to completing the remaining regulatory requirements as quickly as possible while ensuring that all scientific, safety, and legal standards are fully met before the therapy becomes available to patients in Pakistan.

LOLC Microfinance Bank Inaugurates New Head Office in Islamabad to Boost Financial Inclusion



BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- LOLC Microfinance Bank Pakistan has inaugurated its new Head Office in Islamabad, marking a significant step in its expansion strategy and reaffirming its commitment to promoting financial inclusion and supporting micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) across

the country. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Sri Lankan High Commissioner Admiral (Retd.) Fred Seneviratne, Chairman Krishan Thilakarathne, Board members, senior management, and employees. CEO Farooq Rashid said the new office reflects the Bank's growth and commitment to expanding access to responsible financial services.

Addressing the ceremony, Chairman Krishan Thilakarathne emphasized Pakistan's strategic importance in the LOLC Group's global operations, while the Sri Lankan High Commissioner said the investment would strengthen Pakistan-Sri Lanka economic ties and contribute to entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and sustainable economic development.

Political, Social and Religious Figures Attend First Death Anniversary Prayer Gathering of Former PRO Director Hamid Javed Awan



BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- Former Director of the Public Relations Department, Rawalpindi Division, Hamid Javed Awan, was remembered at a dignified prayer gathering held at Faizan-e-Madina Mosque in Islamabad on the occasion of his first death anniversary. Family members, relatives, friends, and a large number of political, social, religious and public figures attended the event.

Addressing the gathering, Haji Waqar-ul-Madina Attari, Member of the Central Shura of Dawat-e-Islami, highlighted the temporary nature of worldly life, the importance of preparing for the Hereafter, righteous deeds, and the virtues of offering prayers for the deceased. He also

praised Dawat-e-Islami for its religious, educational and welfare services, and offered special prayers for the elevation of the late Hamid Javed Awan's ranks and patience for his family.

Former Punjab Minister for Health and Population Welfare Dr. Jamal Nasir paid rich tribute to the late Hamid Javed Awan, describing him as a sincere, honest, humble and compassionate individual who devoted his life to serving humanity. He said the late Awan's exemplary character, integrity and kindness would always be remembered by those who knew him.

Dr. Jamal Nasir also appreciated the religious, educational and reformative services of Faizan-e-Madina and Dawat-e-Islami, saying the insti-

tution has been playing a vital role in spreading the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah, promoting moral values among the youth, and fostering peace and harmony in society.

Among those present were the late Hamid Javed Awan's son Uzair Hamid Awan, his brothers Rashid Awan and Khalid Javed Awan, relatives, friends and other distinguished guests, who paid tribute to his life and legacy. Participants remembered him as a kind-hearted, courteous and noble person whose dedication to humanity and exemplary conduct earned him lasting respect.

The gathering concluded with collective prayers for the deceased and all departed souls, followed by the distribution of Langar among the participants.

Aging Water Pipelines in Murree Causing Water Waste, Residents Seek Immediate Repairs

BY: FT Correspondent:

MURREE--- Residents have raised concerns over the deteriorating condition of water supply pipelines in Murree, saying leakages at several locations are resulting in the

continuous wastage of water.

They said the pipeline along View Fourth Road remains exposed to heavy traffic instead of being laid underground, increasing the risk of damage, road deterioration, and possible landslides.

Residents urged the Managing Director WASA and other relevant authorities to immediately repair leaking pipelines and relocate exposed sections underground to prevent water loss and ensure a reliable water supply.

NDMA issues nationwide flood and landslide alert for July 18 to 23

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued nationwide alerts for flash floods, urban flooding and landslides from July 18 to 23 in several parts of the country, including Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Islamabad and north eastern Balochistan.

Authority urges citizens to avoid unnecessary travel and take precautionary measures, according to an advisory issued by its National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) on Saturday.

The NEOC said the prevailing weather conditions are in line with its earlier forecast and it is continuously monitoring potential hazards while ensuring the timely dissemination of information to all relevant authorities. Heavy rainfall may trigger flash floods in local streams, seasonal waterways and mountainous regions. Medium to high level flooding is expected in rivers and streams across Gilgit Baltistan.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, upper and central districts face the risk of flash floods and surging flows in hill torrents and seasonal streams.

The NDMA has also issued a landslide alert for Azad Jammu and



Kashmir from July 19 to 24.

Continuous rainfall may trigger landslides in Neelum, Haveli, Poonch, Muzaffarabad and Bagh districts. Moderate risks also exist in the hilly areas of Kotli, Sudhnoti, Mirpur and Bhimber. Roads in Muzaffarabad, Bagh, Kahuta and Bhimber may be affected by falling debris and landslides, disrupting traffic movement. The authority warned that water levels may rise significantly in the Neelum, Jhelum and Poonch rivers and their tributaries in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Separately, NDMA has issued flood alerts for Punjab and north eastern Balochistan from July 17 to 23. Heavy rains may cause flash floods in seasonal streams and hill torrents across both regions. Seasonal waterways in Sialkot, Narowal, Gujrat, Dera Ghazi Khan,

Rajanpur, Murree and Galliyat are likely to experience high flows. In Balochistan, Zhob, Sherani, Musakhel, Loralai, Harnai, Sibi, Kohlu and Jaffarabad districts may also be affected. The NDMA warned of rising water levels in the Chenab and Ravi rivers and their tributaries, advising residents living in low lying areas to remain vigilant.

Urban flood alerts have also been issued for July 18 to 23 in Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Lahore, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sialkot, Narowal, Hafizabad and Sheikhupura due to the forecast of heavy rainfall.

Low lying areas in Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan and Charsadda may also face inundation.

The NDMA has directed all relevant authorities to keep emergency machinery and rescue teams on high alert and ensure preparedness for any emergency situation.

Citizens have been advised to avoid unnecessary travel, stay away from rivers, seasonal streams, flooded roads and vulnerable mountain slopes. Tourists are urged to exercise extreme caution when travelling through landslide prone areas.

The NDMA has urged the public to use the Pak NDMA Disaster Alert App for timely weather updates and safety advisories.

FIA secures 17-Year Jail terms for five in Rs104.75 miln IESCO bribery case

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has secured 17-year rigorous imprisonment for five convicted officials in the Rs104.75 million IESCO bribery case, with a special court also ordering confiscation of the recovered amount in favour of the national exchequer. An FIA official told APP on Sunday that the case originated from a successful raid conducted by the FIA Anti-Corruption Circle Islamabad on August 30, 2024, during which three IESCO Divisional Accounts Officers and two audit officers were

arrested red-handed.

The official said Rs104.75 million was recovered from the accused, which was allegedly being paid as a bribe to external audit officers in return for preparing favourable audit reports covering the period from 2019 to 2024.

Following the raid, FIR No. 153/2024 was registered under Sections 161, 162, 163 and 109 of the Pakistan Penal Code, along with Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947. On July 17, 2026, Special Judge Central Rawalpindi Abdul Rehman Muhammad Arif, after concluding the trial, sentenced Zeeshan Ali

Akbar, Nazar Hussain, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Jahangir Ahmed and Saqib Zaheer to 17 years' rigorous imprisonment each. The court also ordered that the recovered Rs104.75 million be confiscated and deposited into the Government of Pakistan's treasury. The official said the conviction was made possible through the professional investigation and effective prosecution carried out by the FIA team.

Assistant Director Zohaib Niazi, who investigated the case, and Assistant Director Salahuddin, who represented the prosecution, played a pivotal role in securing the landmark conviction.

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Opinion

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The Rising Cost of Electricity: Why the Public Can No Longer Stay Silent

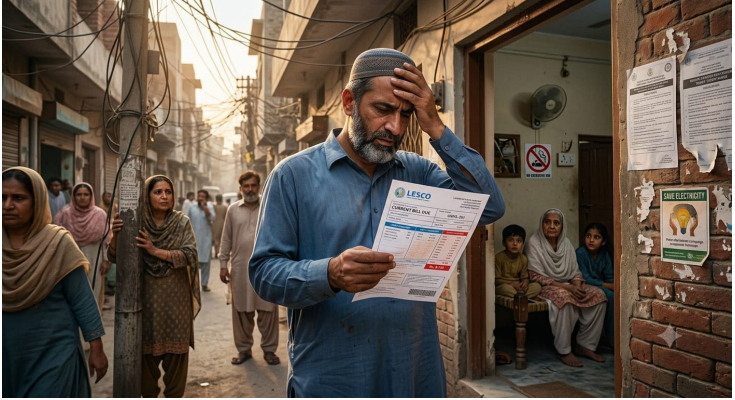


Written By:
Ms Hurish Shah
Published By:
ANI News Agency

Electricity has become one of the most pressing concerns for households across Pakistan. For millions of families, it is no longer just another monthly expense but a growing financial burden. Many consumers believe that even a slight increase in electricity consumption can result in a significantly higher bill, placing additional pressure on already strained household budgets. This concern has intensified the national debate over affordability, transparency, and fairness in Pakistan's electricity billing system.

One of the biggest concerns raised by consumers is the perceived sharp increase in bills when electricity usage crosses certain consumption thresholds. A question repeatedly raised by ordinary citizens is: if a household uses 199 units of electricity and receives a bill of around Rs. 3,500, but consuming just two additional units—201 units—results in a bill of approximately Rs. 9,000, where is the fairness in such a system? While the exact amount of an electricity bill depends on the applicable tariff, taxes, fuel price adjustments, and consumer category, the widespread perception of such a steep increase has become a major source of public frustration. Consumers argue that a minor increase in electricity consumption should not result in what appears to be a disproportionately large jump in the total bill.

For low- and middle-income families already struggling with inflation, rising food prices, expensive fuel, and increasing education and healthcare costs, electricity bills have become one of the most difficult monthly expenses to manage. Many households now plan their daily routines around reducing electricity consumption, often sacrificing comfort during Pakistan's



intense summer months simply to avoid higher bills.

The challenge extends beyond ordinary households. Small businesses, shopkeepers, manufacturers, and home-based enterprises also face rising operational costs due to expensive electricity. Higher production costs eventually translate into increased prices for goods and services, further fueling inflation and reducing the competitiveness of local businesses.

The issue is not merely about electricity tariffs; it is equally about transparency and public trust. Consumers often find electricity bills difficult to understand because they include multiple taxes, surcharges, duties, and fuel price adjustments. Many people struggle to determine how their final bill has been calculated. A simpler and more transparent billing system would help consumers understand their charges and improve confidence in the electricity sector.

Pakistan's energy sector continues to face longstanding structural challenges, including circular debt, transmission losses, electricity theft, outdated infrastructure, and dependence on imported fuel. These issues cannot be solved simply by increasing the financial burden on consumers. Sustainable reforms require improving governance, reducing technical and commercial losses, modernizing transmission networks, expanding domestic and renewable energy sources, and ensuring greater accountability throughout the power sector.

Protecting vulnerable consumers must remain a priority. Targeted subsidies for deserving low-income households, transparent tariff policies, investment in renewable energy, improved efficiency, and stronger regulatory oversight can all contribute to building a more balanced and sustainable electricity system. At the same time, consumers should be provided with clear and timely information regarding tariff changes and billing mechanisms to reduce confusion and misinformation.

Affordable electricity is not merely an economic issue—it is essential for national development, industrial growth, investment, education, healthcare, and the overall quality of life. A reliable and fairly priced energy system strengthens economic productivity while easing the financial burden on citizens.

The growing public concern over electricity bills should serve as a reminder that energy policies must remain people-centered. Citizens deserve a billing system that is transparent, predictable, and fair. Pakistan has both the resources and the potential to build a modern, efficient, and sustainable energy sector. Achieving that goal, however, requires transparent policymaking, institutional reforms, responsible governance, and a commitment to protecting the public interest. As electricity remains the backbone of economic activity and everyday life, ensuring fairness, affordability, and accountability in the power sector is no longer just an option—it is a national necessity.

Balochistan: Pak Army's 'Operation Shaaban' against terrorists continues.....

BY:Asghar Ali Mubarak :

'Operation Shaaban' is a joint military operation of the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps (FC), and Balochistan Police against terrorism in Balochistan.

The main objective of 'Operation Shaaban' is to destroy the networks of Fitna-ul-Kharaj (TTP) active in the northern districts and Fitna-ul-Hindustan (separatist group/BLA) active in southern Balochistan. According to official accounts, the operation was launched in response to a deadly terrorist attack on the Mangi Dam police station near Ziarat in July 2026.

The primary objectives of the operation are to eliminate the dual threat. During 'Operation Shaaban' and other Intelligence-Based Operations (IBOs), major terrorist networks are being targeted, which, according to the Pakistani state and security agencies, have been divided into the following headings and categories: Fitna-ul-Khawarij, the former Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan network, is mostly active in the districts bordering northern Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This network was involved in the attack on the Mangi Dam police station near Ziarat in early July 2026, in which nine policemen were martyred. 'Operation Shaaban' was launched soon after this attack.

The group uses Afghan territory and safe havens there to attack Pakistani security institutions. Dozens of terrorists from this network have been killed in air and ground operations during the operation so far.

Fitna-ul-Hindustan, Balochistan Liberation Army - BLA, and other separatist group networks are mostly active in southern and coastal Balochistan, such as Makran, Kharan, Gwadar, and Mastung. According to security sources, this network is responsible for spreading chaos in Pakistan through Indian proxies and foreign funding. Their main targets are development projects, especially CPEC, non-local workers, innocent civilians, and law enforcement agencies. On 11 July 2026, several terrorists of this network were killed in action near the N-25 crossing. As part of the long-term military strategy of the security forces, the following elements of these two networks are being uprooted, which provide shelter or logistical support to these terrorists in convenient towns and villages. Their secret arms depots and communication centers are established in difficult mountainous areas, from where M4 rifles and modern war materials are being exported. The military operation in Balochistan is aimed at dismantling terrorist networks across the province. The campaign, codenamed Operation Shaban, is being jointly conducted by the army, Frontier Corps and Balochistan Police. Operation Shaban was launched in response to a terrorist attack in the Mangi Dam area, in which 27 policemen were killed. The



operation involves ground forces as well as airstrikes targeting militants in the rugged mountainous terrain of the province. Since its launch, security forces have killed around 123 militants belonging to various extremist groups across the province. Terrorist attacks have increased sharply across Balochistan in recent months. Militants from the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which is allied with the Afghan Taliban, and the outlawed Balochistan Liberation Army have increasingly targeted state forces, foreign-invested projects and infrastructure in the mineral-rich region. Earlier this month, a meeting of the country's top civil and military leadership, led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief General Asim Munir, was held in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan, to review the deteriorating security situation. The prime minister, who chaired the meeting, said one thing is certain: it is a mutual and sole decision of the civil and military leadership that we must collectively eliminate terrorism. Security sources said Operation Shaaban is designed as a sustained military campaign to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism, eliminate safe havens of militants and restore the writ of the state across Balochistan. Operation Shaaban is being carried out on two different geographical fronts, marking an unprecedented scale of simultaneous operations for the province. The operation is targeting TTP elements and their hideouts in the northern districts of the province, including Ziarat and its surroundings. Pakistan has repeatedly accused the TTP of using Afghan sanctuaries as launch pads for cross-border attacks. Pakistan maintains that the group enjoys safe havens and logistical support inside Afghanistan, which has enabled it to expand its operations in Balochistan. In southern Balochistan, particularly in the districts of Lasbela and Khuzdar, the military campaign has focused on the BLA and its affiliated separatist groups. These areas have witnessed repeated high-profile attacks due to their strategic location near critical infrastructure and trade routes. Importantly, the growing convergence of operations between the TTP and Baloch militants reflects a changing and highly complex threat environment. By expanding into Balochistan alongside local militants, the TTP has exacerbated provincial insecurity. This development seems to have forced Pakistani authorities to design a much more comprehensive security response to address this challenge. Undoubtedly, Operation Shaaban is an indication that the

threat posed by these groups has reached a point where significant action is deemed necessary. Coordinated ground attacks, aerial surveillance, and intelligence-led targeting are being employed on a large scale to systematically degrade terrorist networks. It is likely that the operation will remain in an intensive phase for the foreseeable future. The scale of the operation also reflects what the federal government sees as a sign of normalization and stability in Balochistan. While military action is necessary to restore the writ of the state and destroy the terrorist infrastructure, long-term stability in the province can only be achieved when security measures are complemented by long-term administrative, developmental, and political measures. Mobilizing operations are going to play a crucial role in securing the immediately challenging situation, but these efforts should be geared towards strengthening local institutions and presenting a more inclusive path for the province, along with socio-economic development. While those who resort to violence and challenge the integrity of the state must be dealt with firmly, the government must ensure that the doors of reconciliation remain open to those who are willing to work within the constitutional framework. Furthermore, efforts should continue in this regard for a viable political process, involving political leaders and other stakeholders at all levels. Operation Shaaban will have significant implications not only for Balochistan but also for the overall internal stability of Pakistan. If the operation helps restore security and creates space for development and dialogue, it could prove to be a significant step towards normalizing the situation in one of the most strategically important regions of the country. The long-term campaign was launched after terrorists targeted security forces and key development and economic projects in the province.

Air and ground operations: Forces are targeting terrorist hideouts in difficult and mountainous areas through coordinated operations by helicopter gunships and ground forces. M4 rifles, rocket launchers, and other advanced communication equipment have been recovered from the terrorist hideouts during the operations. A total of 129 terrorists have been eliminated so far under Operation Shaaban and other Intelligence-Based Operations (IBOs) that began on July 5. Security sources say that this military campaign will continue uninterrupted until complete peace and order is restored in Balochistan and the last terrorist is eliminated.

Condemnable Remarks About Pak Army Martyrs Draw Strong Reactions



Written By: Abdul Basit Alvi
Published By: ANI News Agency

Maulana Fazlur Rehman, chief of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), sparked widespread controversy after remarks made during a political gathering were widely interpreted as comparing the sacrifices of Pakistan's martyrs to a monthly salary. The comments triggered nationwide backlash, with many Pakistanis viewing them as disrespectful to those who sacrificed their lives for the country's sovereignty and security. The controversy expanded beyond politics into a broader debate over patriotism, sacrifice, honor, and the nation's responsibility to remember its fallen soldiers. Leaders from rival parties, including the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), condemned the remarks, stressing that martyrdom represents devotion, duty, and an unbreakable bond with the nation rather than financial compensation. Intellectuals, retired bureaucrats, academics, and artists also criticized the statement, arguing that it offended the collective memory of the nation, hurt the families of martyrs from the wars of 1948, 1965, 1971, and the fight against terrorism, and undermined the moral and national significance of their sacrifices. Critics further argued that soldiers embrace martyrdom out of duty, faith, honor, and love for their country, not for money, and that reducing their sacrifice to a salary ignored both its cultural and religious importance, particularly as martyrs hold a revered status in Islam.

The remarks drew condemnation from political and social circles as well as ordinary citizens across villages, towns, and cities, who expressed their anger through protests, social media campaigns, and public discussions. Many viewed the statement as an insult to the nation's heroes, a violation of the respect owed to martyrs and their families, and a breach of the trust expected from public leaders. The widespread reaction was portrayed as a collective defense of Pakistan's

national identity, which is closely associated with sacrifice and the honor of those who gave their lives for the country. Public sentiment emphasized that martyrs should remain above political rhetoric and that any attempt to diminish their legacy would face strong resistance. The public has deep appreciation for the Pakistan Army, crediting its personnel with defending the country's borders, combating terrorism, maintaining internal security, and assisting citizens during natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes. The respect enjoyed by the armed forces stems from decades of sacrifice and service, and that the people's gratitude toward the army is inseparable from their reverence for the martyrs whose sacrifices are regarded as the foundation of Pakistan's peace, security, and freedom.

The nation is acutely aware that the Pakistan Army has ensured our peace by giving their very blood, and this fundamental truth has been the bedrock of the civil-military relationship throughout the country's history. Every inch of Pakistani soil is soaked with the sweat and blood of its soldiers, who have fought valiantly to repel invaders, crush insurgencies, and maintain law and order in the face of overwhelming odds. The war against terrorism, which spanned over two decades, was a particularly brutal chapter in this history, where the army bore the brunt of the enemy's fury, losing thousands of its personnel in the process. These brave individuals did not fight for a paycheck; they fought for an idea, an idea of Pakistan as a peaceful, stable, and prosperous nation where future generations could live without fear. Their sacrifices have created a buffer of safety that allows the rest of the nation to sleep peacefully at night, to pursue their livelihoods, to educate their children, and to dream of a better future. To attempt to reduce this colossal contribution to a mere economic transaction is not only factually incorrect but also incredibly disrespectful to the memory of the fallen and the enduring grief of their families. The people of Pakistan understand this reality with absolute clarity, and they have forcefully rejected the Maulana's narrative, deeming it a deliberate attempt to sow discord and undermine the morale of the armed forces. This rejection is a testament to the

national maturity and the collective wisdom of the populace, who refuse to be swayed by divisive rhetoric and remain steadfast in their support for their defenders.

Given the gravity of the offense, the nation has strongly rejected the remarks and issued a resounding call for immediate apologies from the elements who have so carelessly hurt the families of the martyrs and the sentiments of the entire nation. The demand for an apology is not rooted in a desire for political vengeance but in the simple and just expectation that those in positions of influence should adhere to a certain standard of decency and respect. An apology is seen as the minimum possible reparation that can be offered to mend the emotional damage that has been inflicted, and it would serve as a public acknowledgment that the remarks were a grave error in judgment. The people believe that a sincere and unconditional apology would go a long way in restoring some measure of trust and in reaffirming the national consensus that the martyrs are sacred. The outrage has been so overwhelming that the Maulana's own political allies have found themselves in a difficult position, forced to either defend the indefensible or to distance themselves from the controversy to protect their own political futures. This isolation further underscores the strength of the public sentiment, which has effectively cornered the JUI-F chief and forced the nation to confront the broader issue of how the sacrifices of its heroes are discussed in public discourse. The controversy has thus served as a critical moment of national introspection, a reminder that the language of politics must be tempered with the language of respect, especially when it concerns those who have given their lives for the country. Ultimately, the entire episode has reaffirmed the unshakable and durable bond between the people of Pakistan and their armed forces, a bond that is built on a foundation of mutual sacrifice, unwavering respect, and a shared vision for a secure and sovereign Pakistan. The collective voice of the nation, speaking in a thunderous chorus of unity, has defended the honor of its martyrs and has sent a powerful and enduring message that their sacrifices will never be forgotten, nor will they ever be trivialized by any political expediency or rhetorical misstep.

The Way Forward for Balochistan: Trust in Local Leadership, Good Governance, and National Commitment



Written By: Ch. Shabbir Balochistani
Published By: ANI News Agency

Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province by area, is endowed with immense natural resources and occupies a strategically vital geopolitical position. Yet, despite its enormous potential, the province has remained trapped in a cycle of insecurity, underdevelopment, weak governance, and a persistent sense of deprivation for decades. Successive governments have introduced various initiatives to restore peace, but experience has shown that security measures alone cannot deliver a lasting solution. Sustainable peace can only be achieved by restoring public confidence, strengthening democratic participation, and placing the people of Balochistan at the centre of national policymaking.

The challenges facing Balochistan extend far beyond law and order. They encompass political representation, economic justice, institutional effectiveness, and public trust. When citizens see that their natural resources are being utilised for their welfare, that their voices are genuinely heard, and that their elected representatives play a meaningful role in decision-making, the trust deficit between the state and the people begins to diminish.

The federal government must move beyond viewing Balochistan solely through the lens of security or administration. Instead, it should recognise the province as a cornerstone of Pakistan's national unity and long-term economic prosperity. To achieve this objective, the Prime Minister should establish a permanent National Consultative Council on Balochistan, comprising parliamentarians from both the treasury and opposition benches, senators, tribal elders, academics, economists, youth representatives, business leaders, and members of civil society from across the province. Such a forum would provide direct feedback from the ground while formulating practical policy recommendations to address Balochistan's longstanding challenges.

Experience also suggests that policymaking has often fallen short when provincial affairs were managed without sufficient understanding of Balochistan's unique historical, tribal, cultural, and social realities. This observation is not

intended to question the competence of leaders from other provinces; rather, it reflects the universal principle that local challenges are best understood by those with first-hand knowledge of local conditions. Greater reliance on Balochistan's own political leadership is therefore essential for rebuilding confidence, strengthening institutions, and ensuring effective governance.

Political consultation must also extend across party lines. Balochistan's challenges are not the concern of any single political party but a national responsibility requiring collective wisdom, bipartisan cooperation, and continuous dialogue.

The provincial government likewise has a critical role to play. Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has demonstrated political energy and a willingness to address complex issues. However, no administration can succeed through individual leadership alone. Effective governance requires competent institutions, professional management, transparency, and evidence-based policymaking. The provincial government should establish an independent policy think tank comprising retired senior civil servants, economists, educationists, technology experts, industrialists, young professionals, and civil society representatives. Such an institution could provide continuous strategic guidance on governance reforms, education, healthcare, mineral development, agriculture, water management, investment promotion, digital governance, and public administration.

The provincial government's overseas employment initiative was a positive step towards creating opportunities for young people. However, weak institutional capacity, governance shortcomings, and implementation gaps prevented many deserving youth from fully benefiting from the programme. By introducing merit-based recruitment, transparent digital systems, internationally recognised vocational training, and direct partnerships with overseas employers, the initiative could become a transformative source of employment and hope for Balochistan's younger generation. Gainful employment remains one of the strongest safeguards against frustration, alienation, and instability.

Likewise, major development projects—including CPEC, Reko Diq, Gwadar Port, the mining sector, fisheries, agriculture, livestock, renewable energy, and tourism—must prioritise local employment,

entrepreneurship, skills development, and community participation. Development funds should be allocated transparently according to public need rather than political expediency or personal preferences. Good governance is ultimately measured by whether the benefits of development reach ordinary citizens instead of remaining concentrated among a privileged few.

Equally important is improving access to education, healthcare, clean drinking water, digital connectivity, and quality public services in remote districts. Investments in human development are just as vital as investments in physical infrastructure. A well-educated, healthy, and skilled population is the strongest foundation for long-term peace and economic growth.

Today, Balochistan requires far more than roads and infrastructure. It needs justice, quality education, accessible healthcare, employment opportunities, institutional accountability, responsive governance, and equal opportunities for every citizen. If the federal and provincial governments jointly empower local leadership, expand opportunities for youth, encourage political dialogue, ensure equitable distribution of resources, and make public participation a central principle of governance, Balochistan can emerge not only as a peaceful province but also as one of the principal drivers of Pakistan's economic future.

The solutions to Balochistan's challenges will not be found solely in policy discussions held in Islamabad. They lie in listening to the voices of the people of Quetta, Gwadar, Khuzdar, Zhob, Turbat, Loralai, Nasirabad, and every district across the province. When decisions are shaped by public trust, when the federation genuinely prioritises Balochistan, and when the province's resources contribute directly to the prosperity of its own people, the foundations of lasting peace, sustainable development, and national cohesion will become significantly stronger.

Balochistan cannot be understood from a distance. It must be understood by engaging with its people, respecting their aspirations, and making them equal partners in Pakistan's future. Building trust, strengthening democratic institutions, ensuring transparent governance, and maintaining a sustained national commitment are not merely policy choices—they are essential prerequisites for a peaceful, prosperous, and united Pakistan.

12 Pakistan–Saudi B2B Agreements Signed at Saudi Company Formation and Business Expansion Summit 2026

BY: Naseem Hassan/ANI

ISLAMABAD--- The Saudi Company Formation and Business Expansion Summit 2026, organized by Saudi-based Al Raee Group, concluded in Islamabad with the signing of 12 Business-to-Business (B2B) agreements between Al Raee Group and leading Pakistani companies to facilitate their expansion into Saudi Arabia.

Speaking at the closing session, Al Raee Group Chairman Bilal M. Zubair announced a business facilitation package under Saudi Vision 2030, stating that eligible Pakistani private limited companies and partnership firms with at least one year of operations are exempt from major minimum capital requirements for company registration in Saudi Arabia.

He said Pakistani businesses can establish operations in the Kingdom by submitting a Certificate of Incorporation and an Audited Financial Report. Al Raee Group will provide one-window legal and administrative support, including obtaining the Ministry of Investment (MISA) license, corporate bank



account opening, and assistance for 100% foreign ownership.

The summit's inaugural session was attended by Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasir as the chief guest. Representatives from the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), and executives

from leading multinational companies also participated.

Participants praised the initiative as a significant step toward strengthening commercial ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, saying it would simplify the process for Pakistani businesses seeking investment and expansion opportunities in the Kingdom.

Balochistan Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani Expresses Condolences on the Passing of Mir Changez Khan Kurd

BY: ANI Correspondent:

QUETTA: Balochistan Minister for Education and Provincial President of the PML-N Women Wing, Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the passing of Mir Changez Khan Kurd, father of Mir Chakar Khan Kurd and father-in-law of former Federal



Minister Zubaida Jalal.

In her condolence message, Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul, his elevated ranks in the hereafter, and a place in Jannat-ul-Firdous. She extended her heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family, particularly to Zubaida Jalal, and prayed that Almighty Allah grant them patience and strength to bear this irreparable loss.

Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand to Visit Pakistan on July 20

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD-- At the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Anita Anand will pay an official visit to Pakistan on 20 July 2026. The visit will be her first to Pakistan since assuming office.

During the visit, Senator Ishaq Dar and Minister Anand will hold bilateral talks covering the full spectrum of Pakistan–Canada relations. The discussions will focus on enhancing cooperation in trade and investment, education, and people-to-people exchanges, while also reviewing regional and global developments of mutual interest.

Minister Anand is also scheduled to call on Pakistan's leadership during her stay. Pakistan and Canada enjoy cordial bilateral relations, supported by strong people-to-people links and a vibrant Pakistani diaspora in Canada. The visit reflects the shared commitment of both countries to further strengthen bilateral cooperation.

GEON Raises Concerns Over Political Tensions Ahead of AJK Elections

BY: ANI Correspondent:

MUZAFFARABAD--- The Global Election Observer Network (GEON) has expressed concern over rising political tensions, ongoing protests in Rawalakot, and election-related violence ahead of the July 27 Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly elections, warning that these factors could affect the smooth conduct of the polls.

In its latest assessment, GEON reported that the AJK electorate has grown to 3.8 million voters, an

increase of over 583,000 since the 2021 elections. However, it noted that continued protests by the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) against the 12 refugee constituencies have created uncertainty in parts of Poonch Division.

The observer mission also highlighted campaign disruptions and violent incidents, including the killing of a security guard accompanying former AJK Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas, and called for enhanced security to ensure the safety of candidates and

voters.

According to GEON, the electoral contest is shaping into a close race between the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), while the 12 refugee constituencies, with more than 438,000 voters, are likely to play a decisive role in determining the next government. GEON said its observers will remain deployed throughout polling and vote counting before issuing a final assessment of the elections' transparency and credibility.

China-Pakistan Expand Microbial Research Partnership

APP- BEIJING: Representatives from the College of Life Sciences, Shihezi University and the University of Haripur recently held a symposium on microbiomics, unveiling plans for joint frontier academic exploration.

Professor Syeda Asma Bano from the University of Haripur shared her team's latest breakthroughs in molecular plant pathology, biocontrol, and beneficial microbes targeting soil-borne crop diseases. Professor Sun Yanfei from Shihezi University exchanged insights on plant-microbe interaction mechanisms and rhizobacteria functional analysis. The two sides



agreed to leverage their respective strengths in arid-region microbiology and molecular biology to advance

practical cooperation. Planned initiatives include applying for joint international research grants.



Islamabad:Pakistan Awami Quwat Party Chairman Khakan Waheed Khawaja presents the party flag to political and social leaders on the occasion of their joining the Pakistan Awami Quwat Party.

Chairman Senate Gilani Meets Boxer Amir Khan, Discusses Youth, Sports and Public Service

BY: Hurish Shah :

ISLAMABAD--- Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani met world-renowned British-Pakistani boxer Amir Khan at his official residence in Islamabad, where they discussed youth engagement, sports promotion, overseas Pakistanis, Pakistan's global image, and the country's political situation.

Gilani praised Amir Khan's international achievements, saying his success has brought pride to Pakistan and highlighted the importance of sports in promoting discipline, resilience, teamwork, and positive values among young people. He also commended the contributions of overseas Pakistanis in strengthening Pakistan's image worldwide and recalled his longstanding support



for sports during his tenure in various federal ministries.

Amir Khan thanked the Chairman Senate for the warm reception, reaffirming his commitment to youth welfare, sports development, and promoting a positive image of Pakistan internationally.

During the meeting, attended by Ali Syed and members of Amir Khan's family, the boxer revealed plans to establish a boxing academy and sports complex in Karachi in collaboration with the Pakistan Peoples Party. He also expressed his intention to enter active politics to serve the people. Chairman Senate welcomed the move, saying the participation of accomplished young individuals in politics would contribute to Pakistan's progress and prosperity.

Chief Justice Alia Neelam Inaugurates Ladies Bar Room, Other Projects in Mandi Bahauddin

BY: FT Correspondent:

MANDI BAHAUDDIN--- Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court, Justice Alia Neelam, visited Mandi Bahauddin to inaugurate the newly constructed Ladies Bar Room and several other development projects at the District Courts.

Upon her arrival, District Attorney Chaudhry Ijaz Ahmed Bosal warmly welcomed the Chief Justice and presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

The ceremony was attended by District and Sessions Judge Aamir Saleem Rana, Additional Sessions Judges, Senior Civil Judges, Civil Judges, Deputy District Attorney Naveed Ahmed Goraiya, Assistant District Attorneys Tahir Ijaz Taran and Sarfaraz Ahmed Khan, women lawyers, and other judicial officers and court staff. During the visit, Chief Justice Alia Neelam appreciated the services and professional



performance of District Attorney Chaudhry Ijaz Ahmed Bosal, while emphasizing the importance of improving judicial infrastructure and providing better facilities for legal professionals.

PIHRO Appoints Shakeel Ahmed Abbasi as Coordinator for Overseas Affairs

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- Pakistan International Human Rights Organisation (PIHRO) has appointed Shakeel Ahmed Abbasi as Coordinator for Overseas Affairs. In his new role, he will strengthen PIHRO's engagement with overseas Pakistani communities, international organizations, and global human rights stakeholders.

PIHRO Chairman Habib Malik Orakzai expressed confidence that Mr. Abbasi's leadership and commitment would enhance the organization's international outreach and further its mission of promoting human rights, peace, equality, and justice. The organization congratulated Mr. Abbasi and wished him success in his new responsibilities.



APHC, Liberation Cell Hold Roundtable Conference to Mark Accession to Pakistan Day

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- The All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) and the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell organized a roundtable conference in Islamabad to mark Accession to Pakistan Day, reaffirming the Kashmiris' commitment to their right to self-determination and their historical ties with Pakistan.

Former AJK President Sardar Masood Ahmad Khan attended as chief guest, while former APHC Convener Mahmood Ahmad Saghar presided over the event. Addressing the conference, Saghar said the July 19, 1947 Accession to Pakistan Resolution reflected the historical, ideological, religious, cultural, and geographical links between Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan, and urged the international community to implement UN resolutions on



Kashmir.

The conference was attended by Hurriyat leaders, political and social figures, lawyers, journalists, intellectuals, and activists. Participants also paid tribute to the

martyrs of the Kashmir freedom movement, offered prayers for departed leaders and activists, and reaffirmed their commitment to the Kashmiris' right to self-determination.

DPO Dr. Ammara Shirazi Conducts Surprise Inspection of Joharabad City Police Station

By ANI Correspondent

SARGODHA: District Police Officer (DPO) Khushab Dr. Ammara Shirazi conducted a surprise inspection of City Police Station Joharabad to review its overall performance and administrative affairs.

She inspected the front desk, police records, lock-up, and other operational sections, besides reviewing the condition of detainees and the facilities



ties being provided to them.

The DPO directed officers to expedite the disposal of pending applications, investigation cases, and challans to ensure timely justice. She also instructed police officials to treat visitors with courtesy and resolve their complaints promptly, reiterating that the protection of citizens' lives and property remains the top priority of Khushab Police.