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PM Shehbaz, Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand Agree to Boost Trade, Investment Cooperation



BY: FT Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday met Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand, who is on an official visit to Pakistan, and discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral relations, particularly in trade, investment, agriculture, renewable energy, vaccine manufacturing, and the automobile sector.

The meeting, held at the Prime Minister House, was attended by Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq

Dar, Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain, Advisor to the Prime Minister Dr. Syed Tauqir Shah, and other senior officials.

Welcoming the Canadian Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister said Pakistan and Canada enjoy long-standing friendly relations and stressed the need to expand cooperation in key economic sectors. He conveyed his best wishes to Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, recalled their telephone conversation in April, and thanked Canada for supporting Pakistan's efforts for regional peace.

Foreign Minister Anita Anand thanked the Prime Minister for the warm hospitality and conveyed the good wishes of Prime Minister Mark Carney. She said her visit reflected Canada's commitment to expanding bilateral ties and exploring new opportunities in trade, agriculture, mining, energy, and the automobile industry.

She noted that the Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPPA) would help boost Canadian investors' confidence in Pakistan. Both sides also acknowledged the important role of the Pakistani-Canadian

community in strengthening relations between the two countries.

Pakistan and Canada agreed to exchange trade and minerals delegations to explore new avenues for cooperation and enhance bilateral trade and investment.

Following the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif witnessed the signing of a Protocol on Phytosanitary Regulations governing the import of Canadian canola into Pakistan. The protocol was signed by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand on behalf of their respective governments.

Yemen's Houthis announce maritime blockade of Saudi Arabia



ANI

DUBAI/CAIRO: Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis said on Monday they were imposing a naval blockade on Saudi Arabia, a move that opens a new front against the United States in its war on Iran and widens the threat to global energy supplies and trade beyond the Gulf.

Iran had pressed the Houthis to close the Bab el-Mandeb gateway to the Red Sea if the US continued to attack Iranian power infrastructure.

In their statement, the Houthis' armed forces said they were declaring "a maritime embargo against the criminal Saudi enemy, based on the equation of 'an eye for an eye', effective immediately."

They said the decision was in response to what they called "an unjust and oppressive siege" imposed on Yemen by the Saudis.

There was no immediate response from Saudi Arabia.

The full closure of the Bab el-Mandeb strait would reduce global oil supply by 7% as it would leave most of Saudi oil exports unable to leave the region. The disruption would add to the massive cut to global oil flows from the war in the Gulf, which has already reduced shipments by 10% of global supply.

The Houthis' announcement followed signs from both Iran and the US that they wanted to resume diplomatic efforts to

end an escalating cycle of attacks that has all but wrecked a fragile interim agreement signed last month.

A senior Iranian official told Reuters on Monday that Tehran had received a proposal from mediators for a 10-day ceasefire in an effort to salvage the interim deal, intended to pave the way to a lasting agreement to the war that began on February 28 with US-Israeli attacks on Iran.

Oil prices briefly jumped above \$90 a barrel earlier on Monday after renewed disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. They later pared gains after Iran's Foreign Ministry said mediators had recently presented proposals to Tehran, signalling that diplomatic contacts remain active.

Neither the ministry nor the official who spoke to Reuters gave any further details on the putative ceasefire discussions.

Separately, two Pakistani government sources said Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni, making his second visit to Islamabad in less than a week, had asked Pakistan to resume its mediation role in Iran's conflict with the United States.

The diplomatic flurry came after Iran's Revolutionary Guards said they had struck US military assets across the region following another night of US bombardment of Iranian cities.

Iranian interior minister arrives in Pakistan amid rising tensions with US

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni arrived in Pakistan on Monday leading a high-level delegation, where he was warmly received by his Pakistani counterpart Mohsin Naqvi.

The official reception reflected the close diplomatic ties between the neighbouring countries. Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry presented a bouquet to the visiting dignitary, while Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam, was also present at the ceremony. Welcoming his Iranian counterpart in Islamabad, Mohsin Naqvi described Momeni as "a brother" and extended his best wishes on his arrival in Pakistan.

He expressed confidence that the visit would produce positive outcomes and further strengthen the longstanding relationship between the two countries. Naqvi said the Iranian interior minister's visit would help deepen bilateral relations and open new avenues for cooperation across a range of sectors. He noted that Pakistan and Iran enjoy brotherly relations and continue to work closely on issues of mutual interest.

The interior minister also voiced hope that the discussions during the visit would lead to positive progress on the current regional situation as well as other important matters of shared concern.

He said enhanced cooperation and



closer coordination between Islamabad and Tehran would further reinforce ties between the two neighbouring nations.

During his visit, Momeni is expected to hold meetings with Pakistan's senior leadership to discuss a wide range of bilateral and regional issues. According to officials, the talks are expected to focus on border security, cooperation against terrorism, bilateral relations and the overall security situation in the region. The meetings will also provide an opportunity for both sides to review ongoing collaboration and explore ways to strengthen coordination in addressing shared security challenges.

The visit comes as Pakistan and Iran continue efforts to enhance cooperation on regional stability, security coordination and other areas of mutual interest through sustained high-level engagement between the two countries.

Field Marshal, Canadian foreign minister discuss regional security and bilateral ties

ANI

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Canada have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral relations, with a particular focus on defence and security cooperation, during a high-level meeting held at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Anita Anand called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces of Pakistan, on Monday. The two sides discussed matters of mutual interest, regional security and the broader state of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Canada. During the meeting, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir outlined Pakistan's perspective on global peace and regional stability, stressing the importance



of cooperation and collective efforts to tackle shared security challenges. He emphasised that collaborative engagement remains essential in addressing evolving regional and international security concerns, while highlighting Pakistan's commitment to promoting peace and stability.

The discussions also covered opportunities to deepen cooperation and maintain dialogue on issues of common interest. The Canadian foreign minister appreciated Pakistan's continued efforts and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, acknowledging the country's role in addressing security threats. She also recognised Pakistan's constructive contribution to promoting peace and stability in the region, according to the ISPR statement.

Both sides reiterated their resolve to further strengthen bilateral ties and expand engagement in the fields of defence and security. The meeting reflected the shared interest of Pakistan and Canada in maintaining closer cooperation on regional and international security matters, while reinforcing existing diplomatic and defence relations.

JCP Recommends Key Judicial Appointments

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP), chaired by Chief Justice of Pakistan, on Monday recommended the confirmation of judges, appointment of additional judges to the Sindh and Islamabad High Courts, and the extension of the term of the constitutional benches of the Sindh High Court. The Commission, meeting in its respective compositions for the Sindh High Court, Islamabad High Court and Peshawar High Court at the Supreme Court building in Islamabad, considered matters relating to confirmation and appointment of judges as well as the extension of constitutional benches. For the Sindh High Court, the Commission recommended extending the term of Additional Judge Justice Khalid Hussain Shahani for six months after considering the relevant records and evaluation material. However, it did not recommend the confirmation of Additional Judge Justice Syed Fiaz ul Hassan Shah. The Commission also recommended extending the term of the constitutional benches of the Sindh High Court for a further three months.

Dar, Anand Reaffirm Bilateral Partnership

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Anita Anand on Monday reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the mutually beneficial partnership, and agreed to expand cooperation in priority sectors. The deputy prime minister met with the Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs here, a DPM's Office news release said. The two sides reviewed recent developments in Pakistan-Canada bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and international develop-



ments. They also decided to hold annual meetings to review progress on the agreed Joint Statement. Later, the

deputy prime minister hosted a banquet lunch in the honour of Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

ECP directs political parties to submit annual financial statements by Aug 29

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has directed all registered political parties to submit their annual financial statements for the fiscal year 2025-26 by August 29, in accordance with the provisions of the Elections Act, 2017. According to the ECP, political parties are required to submit their annual accounts on Form-D, providing a complete record of their income, expenditure, assets and liabilities for the financial year ending June 30, 2026. The commission said each party must furnish an audit report prepared by a chartered accountant, while the party head is also required to submit a certificate affirming that the party has not received any prohibited funding from any foreign government, multinational or domestically incorporated public or private company, firm, trade or professional association, or any other prohibited source under Pakistan's election laws. The ECP clarified that overwriting, erasures or alterations on Form-D will not be accepted. Political parties have also been directed to submit bank statements covering the



period from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, along with their financial returns. The commission instructed that the documents must be submitted in person at the office of the Secretary of the Election Commission, adding that statements sent by post, courier, fax or any other electronic means will not be entertained. Under Section 210 of the Elections Act, 2017, every enlisted political party is required to file its audited annual financial statement with the ECP within 60 days of the close of the financial year. The statement must disclose the party's sources of income, assets, liabilities and expenditures, and include a declaration from the party leader certifying that no prohibited funds have been received.



H.E. Ms. Anita Anand, Foreign Minister of Canada calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Govt employees complete advance polling for AJK Legislative Assembly elections

ANI

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) took a significant step towards its July 27 Legislative Assembly elections as advance polling for government employees on election duty concluded peacefully in eight districts on Monday, with an overwhelming voter turnout and election authorities declaring themselves fully prepared to conduct what they pledged would be free, fair and transparent elections.

The special polling exercise, regarded as the Election Commission's first major test ahead of polling day, was held in all districts except Rawalakot and Sudhnoti, where voting was postponed because of security concerns. Despite the exceptions, officials described the process as smooth, orderly and incident-free, with voter turnout exceeding 80 per cent in almost every district where polling took place.

The peaceful completion of the exercise comes at a politically charged time, with election campaigns entering their final week and authorities racing to complete logistical and security preparations for one of the most closely watched elections in the region.

Chief Election Commissioner Justice (retd) Ghulam Mustafa Mughal said the successful conduct of advance polling reflected the Election Commission's readiness to oversee peaceful, transparent and credible elections across all constituencies on July 27. "There is no question of delaying the elections. The polls will be held on schedule under all circumstances, and no attempt to disrupt the democratic process will be allowed to succeed," Mughal said after reviewing polling arrangements.

He said extensive security measures had been implemented to safeguard polling personnel, election material and voters, adding that government employees exercised their voting rights in a peaceful environment without any major untoward incident. "The turnout of more than 80 per cent among government employees is extremely encouraging. It reflects confidence in the electoral system and demonstrates the commitment of public servants to strengthening democratic institutions," he said.

Mughal expressed satisfaction over the coordination between the Election Commission, district administrations and law enforcement agencies, saying the same

arrangements would be replicated on polling day to ensure a peaceful electoral exercise across the territory.

Senior Election Commission Member Khawaja Ahsan said the advance polling had reinforced public confidence in the electoral process and confirmed that all preparations for the July 27 polls had entered their final stage.

"The Election Commission is fully prepared to conduct free, fair and transparent elections. Election material has already been dispatched to the returning officers, while close coordination with district administrations and security agencies continues to ensure peaceful polling," he said. Election Commission Member Syed Nazir Ul Hasan Gillani said polling remained orderly throughout the day, with polling staff efficiently discharging their responsibilities and voters expressing satisfaction over the arrangements. "We remained in constant contact with returning officers across AJK, and polling proceeded peacefully wherever voting was held. No complaints regarding the polling process have been received from any district," he said.

Gillani said ballot boxes used during the

advance polling had been sealed under the prescribed legal procedure and handed over to the respective returning officers under strict security. The ballots cast by government employees will remain sealed until July 27 and will be counted together with votes polled on election day.

He added that ballot papers had already reached all returning officers, while comprehensive security plans for polling stations had been finalised in consultation with law enforcement agencies.

Election officials said that, apart from Muzaffarabad, every district where polling was conducted recorded voter participation of more than 80 per cent despite the voters themselves being engaged in election duties, a development officials described as an encouraging sign for overall voter participation in the general elections. With only a week remaining before voters elect members to the 45-seat AJK Legislative Assembly, the successful completion of advance polling has provided the Election Commission with a crucial operational rehearsal, while reinforcing official confidence that the territory is on course for peaceful, orderly and credible elections on July 27.

Federal Ombudsperson upholds demotion penalty, overturns lifetime ban in University harassment case

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Ombudsperson for Protection Against Harassment has upheld the core penalty of demotion imposed on a senior woman officer of a public-sector university after finding her guilty of harassment through threats, pressure and fear, while setting aside the lifetime bans imposed by the university.

According to the decision, the complainant, the university's Registrar, alleged that the accused officer entered his office and insisted on taking a selfie with him. The complainant stated that when he informed her that he had no authority over an ongoing recruitment process for a key post, her demeanour changed and she threatened to release videos of him, file a false harassment complaint against him and expose alleged irregularities to the media through her journalist husband if she was not given the posting of her choice.

The decision said the complainant had ensured the presence of a staff member in his office as a precaution, but the accused repeatedly insisted that the staff member leave the room. Feeling unsafe, the complainant discreetly recorded part of the conversation before going to the Deputy Registrar's office, where the accused allegedly followed him. When the recording was played back, the accused admitted her conduct, expressed remorse and submitted two written apologies.

HEC invites applications from Central Asian countries for BS degree under AIOU Scholarship Program

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) invited applications for admissions to a four-year BS degree program in Pakistan with full financial support under the Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Scholarship Program for students from Central Asian and friendly countries.

According to HEC, on Monday, the scholarships are available in a wide range of disciplines in various fields including engineering and technology, computer science and information technology, allied health sciences, business and economics, agriculture, social sciences, food security, international relations, media and languages.

The Commission added that this scholarship would be provided to international students wishing to study in top universities in Pakistan. "The scholarship includes tuition fees, accommodation, monthly stipend, one-time round-trip airfare during the degree program and special financial assistance for initial settlement," it said.

Pakistan's air quality is 15 times high than the safe limit

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's recently recorded air quality is 15 times higher than the safe limit in some areas, which is a big danger to human health, reveals an unpublished National State of Environment Report (NSOER) to be launched soon. At a consultation session, held jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change on Monday, the researchers discussed in detail the troubling new findings of the report that mainly focuses on the youth, said a press release issued here.

The session, aimed at gathering youth input for the upcoming report, came



nearly a decade after Pakistan's last State of Environment Report was published in 2016 that had no dedicated youth edition.

Speaking on the occasion, Zainab Naeem, Associate Research Fellow, Head of Ecological Sustainability and Circular Economy at SDPI, said the youth engagement process would directly feed into a

standalone version of the national report, giving younger citizens a formal voice in a process that has historically excluded them.

She said that the gap was now being addressed as part of a broader push to involve young people directly in shaping national environmental policy.

Neelum Pari, SDPI Research Associate, walked participants through preliminary findings compiled under the internationally recognized DPSIR framework which assessed environmental issues through their Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, and Response. The methodology, she explained, allowed researchers to trace environmental degradation from its root socio-economic causes through to the policy responses meant to address it. Among the most striking revelations was the state of Pakistan's air quality. According to the findings presented, concentrations of PM 2.5, fine particulate-matter considered especially dangerous to human health, have been recorded at up to 15 times the safe limit in some areas, with little to no improvement recorded between 2023 and 2024.

Book Launch "National Security Strategy" The launch of "National Security Strategy 2002-2026," the 16th volume of "A Personal Chronicle of Pakistan" by Ikram Sehgal



BY: FT Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- Bringing together military officers, diplomats, policy-makers, academics, government officials, educationists, and business leaders. The book review session featured an eminent panel of speakers, including Prof. Dr Huma Baqai, Vice Chairperson of Karachi Council on Foreign Relations (KCFR) and Rector Millennium Institute of Technology and Entrepreneurship (MiTE); Air Marshal (Retd) Masood Akhtar, former Deputy Chief of Air Staff (Training); Ms. Gulmina Bilal Ahmad, former Chairperson of NAVTTC; Dr. Salma Malik, Associate Professor of Defence and Strategic Studies at Quaid-i-Azam University; Brigadier (Retd) Mujahid Alam, Chief Executive Officer of Pathfinder Group's Enhanced Harmony Division; Dr. Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq Founder and CEO Roots Millennium Education Group and former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, who delivered the keynote address. The Right Reverend Nadeem Kamran, Bishop of Lahore and Chairman of the Lahore, presented a token of appreciation and thanked Pathfinder for supporting church security, Christian communities, minority rights, and interfaith harmony. The ceremony featured Chief Guest General (Retd) Raheel Sharif, NI(M), Military Commander of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition and former Chief of Army Staff, as the chief guest. Prof. Dr Huma Baqai reflected on Ikram

Sehgal's authorship, patriotism, his father's legacy, and the sacrifices of Pakistan's armed forces. The book is a people-centric chronicle of Pakistan's geopolitical and economic transformation, highlighting state-society relations, food security, population growth, equality, and education. Air Marshal (Retd) Masood Akhtar, said Pakistan had historically lacked a consistently implemented national security framework. He emphasized that strategy was the government's responsibility and required coordination among the Cabinet, ministries, and the National Security Division.

Gulmina Bilal Ahmad, said the book extended beyond defence to food security, climate change, taxation, cryptocurrency, education, skills, and human welfare. Dr Salma Malik described Pakistan as a shared national space. She said national security was not solely military, as a weak economy undermined defence, while education, governance, technology, foreign policy, and traditional and non-traditional threats formed a single framework.

Brigadier (Retd) Mujahid Alam, outlined Elenacare employee welfare, support for bereaved families, the Providentia Books Foundation, Pathfinder Interfaith Harmony Initiative, and Kashmirala Welfare Center. Dr. Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq emphasized that human security is national security, commending Ikram Sehgal for his contributions to education, welfare, and mentorship through the

Providentia Books initiative.

Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said Pakistan's problems required acknowledgment, critical questions, and solutions. He urged Ikram Sehgal to document stories of those who shaped national security and observed that a weak understanding between political and military leadership had damaged policy-making. He said security must be measured through jobs, economic growth, rule of law, constitutional governance, and fundamental rights, including in Balochistan and Kashmir, while paying tribute to those who died fighting terrorism.

Chief Guest General (Retd) Raheel Sharif, NI(M), Military Commander of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition and former COAS Pakistan Army described national security as complex and multidimensional. He said the book's focus on economic resilience, institutional strength, and practical strategy distinguished it. Recalling Ikram Sehgal's service as an aviator, his work in the Karakoram Highway region, business leadership, and Davos engagement, he said Ikram Sehgal's life is an inspiration for younger generations.

In his closing remarks, Ikram Sehgal thanked the guests and reflected on his life journey, his father, the Sharif family, and his national security vision. Expressing strong trust and faith in the people around him, he emphasized that his belief in Allah and the divinity of his faith contributed to his success.

Probe into Alleged Assassination Attempt on Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Essential, Says Sardar Iftikhar Rashid

BY: FT Correspondent :

ISLAMABAD--- Former Adviser to the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Iftikhar Rashid, has strongly condemned the alleged assassination attempt on former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, describing the incident as deeply alarming and calling for an immediate high-level, impartial investigation.

In a statement, Rashid said the incident should not be treated as an ordinary occurrence and urged the government to establish an independent inquiry commission to investigate the motives behind the attack, its planning, the security arrangements, and all other relevant aspects. He said the findings should be made public and those responsi-



ble brought to justice.

He stated that the alleged attack specifically targeted Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan's vehicle despite it being part of a convoy of more than 30

vehicles, highlighting the seriousness of the incident. Rashid also paid tribute to the security guard who, according to the statement, sacrificed his life while protecting the former prime minister, describing his bravery, dedication, and loyalty as exemplary.

Rashid further called on the state security institutions and the administration to ensure a comprehensive investigation, adopt effective measures to prevent similar incidents in the future, and guarantee the safety of political leaders, public representatives, and citizens alike.

He emphasized that while political differences are a normal part of a democratic society, acts of violence are unacceptable and warned that such incidents could undermine peace and the rule of law if those responsible are not dealt with firmly.

ICT Removes 82 Illegal Structures in Chontra

ANI

ISLAMABAD: A total of 82 illegally built structures, including 15 vacant houses and 67 shops, were demolished during an operation in Chontra village as part of the Islamabad district administration's campaign against illegal construction and encroachments.

The operation was carried out under the supervision of the Assistant Commissioner Shalimar, while Deputy Commissioner Islamabad directed enforcement teams to continue daily actions against unlawful occupation of government land.

The Islamabad district administration continued its operation against illegal construction and encroachments across the federal capital, targeting structures built on government land without authorization.

According to officials, enforcement

teams conducted an operation in Chontra village under the supervision of the Assistant Commissioner Shalimar. During the action, authorities demolished 15 vacant houses and 67 shops that had been constructed illegally on state-owned land.

The administration said the operation was part of an ongoing campaign aimed at protecting public land and preventing unauthorized development. Heavy machinery was used to remove the structures, while enforcement staff remained on site throughout the operation to ensure its completion.

Officials stated that the demolished properties had been built without legal approval and were occupying government land. The administration reiterated that no individual or group would be allowed to use public property for private purposes in violation of the law.

Deputy Commissioner Islamabad directed all enforcement teams to continue anti-encroachment and anti-illegal construction operations on a daily basis. He instructed field officers to maintain vigilance and take immediate action wherever government land is found under unlawful occupation. The district administration said efforts are being made to identify additional cases of illegal construction across different areas of Islamabad. Relevant authorities have been asked to monitor public land and report violations to ensure timely action. Officials further noted that operations against encroachments are being carried out in accordance with government policy and legal procedures. The administration emphasized that the campaign is intended to safeguard public assets and maintain orderly land use within the capital.

IG Islamabad chairs high-level security meeting to review public safety

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chaired a high-level meeting to review the overall law and order situation, policing strategy and security arrangements in the federal capital. An official told APP on Monday that DIG Headquarters Muhammad Ateeq Tahir, DG Safe City Muhammad Haroon Joiya, DIG Islamabad Muhammad Jawad Tariq, DIG Security Rana Umar Farooq, along with other senior police officers, attended the meeting.

The participants reviewed the overall security environment, operational preparedness and ongoing policing measures aimed at maintaining peace and ensuring

public safety across Islamabad.

The meeting also discussed strategies to strengthen crime prevention, enhance inter-wing coordination, improve emergency response and make greater use of modern technology for effective policing.

IGP Rizvi directed all senior officers to maintain close supervision of field formations, ensure effective coordination among operational units and further enhance security arrangements at all important installations and public places. He emphasized that prompt public service, professional policing, effective law enforcement and the protection of citizens' lives and property must remain the top priorities of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police.

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What crackdown on pro-Palestine voices means for US rights

DR. RAMZY BAROUD

Mahmoud Khalil, a Columbia University graduate student detained by America's Immigration and Customs Enforcement, last week eloquently wrote from his cell that "rights are granted to those who align with power." This poignant statement came soon after a judge ruled that the government had met the legal threshold to deport the young activist on the nebulous ground of being a threat to "foreign policy." "For the poor, for people of color, for those who resist injustice, rights are but words written on water," Khalil further lamented. The plight of this young man, whose sole transgression appears to be his participation in the nationwide mobilization to halt the Israeli genocide in Gaza, should terrify all Americans. This concern should extend even to those who are not inclined to join any political movement and who possess no particular sympathy for — or detailed knowledge of — the extent of Israel's atrocities in Gaza or the US' role in bankrolling this devastating conflict. The perplexing nature of the case against Khalil, like those

against other student activists such as Turkish visa holder Rumeysa Ozturk, starkly indicates that the issue is purely political. Its singular aim appears to be to silence dissenting political voices.

Judge Jamee Comans this month confirmed the legality of the Trump administration's decision to deport Khalil with an uncritical acceptance of the language employed by Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Rubio had previously written to the court, citing "potentially serious foreign policy consequences" stemming from Khalil's actions, which he characterized as participation in "disruptive protests" and "antisemitic conduct." The latter accusation is the reflexive rejoinder to any form of criticism leveled against Israel, a tactic that was prevalent long before the current catastrophic genocide in Gaza.

Those who argue that American citizens remain unaffected by the widespread government crackdown on freedom of expression must reconsider. Last week, for example, the government decided to freeze \$2.2 billion in federal funding to Harvard University.

Beyond the potential weakening of educa-

tional institutions and their impact on numerous Americans, such financial measures also coincide with a rapidly accelerating and alarming trend of targeting dissenting voices within the US. Also last week, Massachusetts immigration lawyer Nicole Micheroni, a US citizen, publicly disclosed receiving a message from the Department of Homeland Security requesting her self-deportation. Furthermore, oppressive new bills are under consideration in Congress, which could grant the Department of Treasury expansive measures to shut down community organizations, charities and similar entities under various pretenses and without adhering to standard constitutional legal procedures. Many readily conclude that these measures reflect Israel's profound influence on US domestic politics and the significant ability of the pro-Israel lobby in Washington to interfere with the democratic fabric of the US, whose Constitution's First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech and assembly. While there is much truth in this conclusion, the narrative extends beyond the complexities of the Israel-

Palestine issue.

For many years, individuals, predominantly academics, who have championed Palestinian rights have been subjected to trials or even deported based on "secret evidence." This essentially involved a legal practice that amalgamated various acts, such as the Classified Information Procedures Act and the Immigration and Nationality Act, among others, to silence those critical of US foreign policy.

Although some civil rights groups in the US challenged the selective application of the law to stifle dissent, the matter hardly ignited a nationwide conversation regarding the authorities' violations of fundamental democratic norms, such as due process (as protected by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments). Following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, however, much of that legal apparatus was also applied to all Americans in the form of the Patriot Act. This legislation broadened the government's authority to employ surveillance, including electronic communications, and other intrusive measures.

Subsequently, it became widely known that social media platforms were integrated into government surveillance efforts. Recent reports have even suggested that the government mandated social media screening for all US visa applicants who have spent "any length of time in an official or diplomatic capacity" in the Gaza Strip since Jan. 1, 2007.

In pursuing these actions, the US government is effectively replicating some of the draconian measures imposed on the Palestinians by Israel. The crucial distinction, based on historical experience, is that these measures tend to undergo continuous evolution, establishing legal precedents that swiftly apply to all Americans and further compromise their already deteriorating democracy. Americans are already grappling with their perception of the country's democratic institutions, with a disturbingly high 72 percent believing that US democracy is no longer a good example for other countries to follow, according to a Pew Research Center survey from April 2024.

— Arab News

What chance of a sustainable Gaza ceasefire?

CHRIS DOYLE

Given that the world has meekly accepted that Israel can starve an entire population under its control to collectively punish them as part of its genocide in Gaza, it is hard to envisage an exit from this horror. But if fishing for miniscule crumbs of comfort, one could entertain faint hope for at least a temporary pause, while some may even indulge in extraordinary ill-founded optimism for a permanent ceasefire deal. But what are the chances? For the Israeli public, the focus is understandably on securing the release of the 58 hostages reportedly left in Gaza, of whom 24 are thought to be alive. They know that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's feverish determination to intensify the Israeli military onslaught on Gaza poses a serious risk to the hostages' lives. Sadly, this does not appear to be the priority of the Israeli government. Netanyahu broke the January deal on March 15, ending six weeks of lower-level hostilities. Israel still killed 170 Palestinians in this period.

This is why the protests in Israel have been so vociferous and the opinion polls show that Netanyahu is not trusted to prioritize the hostages' freedom.

Hamas has its pressures. Protests against it still take place in Gaza. Some Palestinians allege that these are inspired and organized by Fatah. Even if this is partly true, there is significant dissatisfaction with Hamas' rule and its strategy. Many do not see Hamas as having advanced Palestinian rights or their liberation, while, through its actions, it has given Israel the opportunity to decimate Gaza. The Palestinians in the Strip are approaching breaking point. They have endured enough already but the Israeli siege reimposed on March 2 has now lasted more than 50 days, the longest such siege in 18 months. The impact is devastating, though a full scientific determination of how much closer the population is to famine has yet to be made.

So, how are the talks progressing? The head of Hamas' political bureau, Khalil Al-Hayya, last week presented a comprehensive deal that essentially involved the release of all the hostages in exchange for an end to the war, the release of an agreed number of Palestinian detainees, the lifting of the siege and the start of reconstruction. This has effectively been on the table for months, ever since last July.

Israel offered a 45-day ceasefire in return for the release of 10 hostages. Hamas rejects any partial deals and will only accept an agreement that provides for a permanent

end to the hostilities.

For any long-term deal, Israel demands a complete Hamas surrender. This is simply not a serious negotiating platform. Another demand of the same ilk is that Hamas gives up all its remaining weapons. Maybe there could be room for this in a deal, but how could anyone be sure that all weapons had been handed in? It is still unlikely. Hamas claims to be defending Palestinians and will just see this as surrender by another name.

If Israel and Hamas are not close to a deal, what about the brokers? One issue is that Steve Witkoff, US President Donald Trump's key man on the issue, is also engaged in the Russia-Ukraine talks and the talks held on Iran. It is too early to say whether this erstwhile businessman has any talent for brokering such international deals to end conflicts, but the idea of sorting out three of the most serious issues on the planet in a matter of weeks would be too much for anyone.

Trump is sticking to his lines. He still parrots his plan, as he did when meeting Netanyahu for a second time early this month, that Gaza was an "incredible piece of important real estate" that should be under American control.

This line makes it nigh impossible for Arab brokers to move forward. Much as Egypt and Qatar would both wish to secure a sustainable ceasefire, inflammatory comments from the White House only serve to empower the most militaristic and genocidal tendencies in Netanyahu's Cabinet, while discouraging any trust that could result in a sustainable deal. Palestinians still fear that the real agenda is to force them out of Gaza or to kill those who refuse — in short, ethnic cleansing or genocide.

European powers remain inactive, with France perhaps the exception. President Emmanuel Macron has said France will hold an international conference in June alongside Saudi Arabia. He has indicated Paris might recognize a Palestinian state. "We must move toward recognition and we will do so in the coming months," he said. If he does, will other European powers like the UK follow suit? Only a united front will count. The Palestinians in Gaza cannot wait. Famine is unfolding in plain sight. The humanitarian crisis is more severe than at any time over the last 18 months. More than two-thirds of Gaza is under evacuation orders and Israel is using about 30 percent of the entire Strip for buffer zones it states it will not leave.

— Arab News

Jordan arrests a wake-up call to Muslim Brotherhood threat

DALIA AL-AQIDI

Jordanian authorities last week arrested 16 individuals linked to the Muslim Brotherhood who were allegedly plotting a series of drone and rocket attacks inside the kingdom. This was not some isolated extremist cell — it was a coordinated network, reportedly trained and funded out of Lebanon, that was preparing to unleash violence and instability on Jordanian soil. Security forces uncovered a drone manufacturing site and even a rocket ready for launch. This level of planning speaks to the enduring organizational strength and ideological reach of the Brotherhood, despite repeated claims of its decline.

Jordan's government has been monitoring this network since 2021. But the timing of the arrests was telling, coming just seven months after the Brotherhood's political arm in the country, the Islamic Action Front, gained significant traction in Jordan's 2024 parliamentary elections.

The same group that promises reform at the ballot box is tied, through ideology and network, to plots of destruction behind closed doors. And that should send a chilling message to the rest of the world. Because the threat is not limited to Jordan, it is already in the West, cloaked in slogans and protests and backed by forces determined to weaken societies from within.

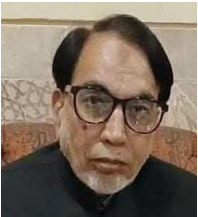
The Muslim Brotherhood has long mastered the art of political doublespeak. In the Middle East, it uses religion as a tool to manipulate the masses and gain power. In the West, it wraps itself in the language of democracy and human rights. Its operatives have learned how to navigate liberal institutions, exploit civil liberties and embed themselves in community organizations under the guise of advocacy.

Make no mistake: this is a radical Islamist movement that has never given up on its founding goal: the creation of

regimes that rule by Shariah. The only thing that has changed is its strategy. Violence remains on the table, but the preferred battlefield is now cultural and political. The Brotherhood does not need to overthrow governments when it can influence them from within.

In the US, Canada and Europe, Brotherhood-inspired groups have built an extensive network of nonprofit organizations, media platforms, lobbying groups and campus alliances. They have positioned themselves as the voice of Muslim communities, while silencing dissenting moderate voices. They claim to fight for justice but their real aim is control. They have also found unlikely allies: far-left activists who have little in common with Islamists but unite in their hatred of Western civilization. This alliance is not built on shared dreams of the future, it is built on a shared enemy. To them, America, Israel and the West are the villains. The Islamists want a theocracy. The radicals want a socialist utopia. They may not agree on what they want to build, but they are absolutely aligned on what they want to destroy.

Together, they have weaponized language. "Islamophobia" has become their shield. Any criticism of Islamist ideology is labeled as hate speech. Anyone who questions the Brotherhood's political agenda is smeared as a racist. These tactics have been frighteningly effective. Institutions, media outlets and even government agencies now walk on eggshells, too afraid to confront the very real threat of political Islamism in the name of sensitivity. But we must draw a line between respecting religion and enabling a radical movement that hides behind it. What happened in Jordan is a glimpse into the Brotherhood's long game. Its rise in the polls was no accident. The alleged plot to unleash drones and rockets is not an anomaly. This is what the Brotherhood does: it gains political cover, builds a network and



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In an era marked by rising polarization, religious intolerance, violent extremism, and social fragmentation, the timeless teachings of Sufism offer humanity a powerful path toward peace, compassion, coexistence, and spiritual renewal. Throughout history, Sufi saints have inspired millions through their message of divine love, humility, service to humanity, and respect for all people regardless of faith, ethnicity, or social background. Their teachings have not only enriched Islamic civilization but have also fostered dialogue among diverse communities, strengthened social cohesion, and contributed immensely to literature, poetry, music, architecture, calligraphy, and the visual arts.

Pakistan is blessed with one of the world's richest Sufi traditions. The shrines and teachings of great saints such as Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh Ali Hujwiri (RA), Hazrat Baba Fariduddin Ganjshakar (RA), Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar (RA), Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai (RA), Hazrat Sultan Bahoo (RA), Hazrat Bulleh Shah (RA), Hazrat Khwaja Ghulam Farid (RA), and many others continue to inspire generations with their universal message of love, tolerance, justice, humility, and service to humanity. Their legacy remains a guiding light for building peaceful, inclusive, and harmonious societies.

Sufism: The Spiritual Heart of Islamic Civilization

Sufism (Tasawwuf) represents the spiritual and moral dimension of Islam, emphasizing purification of the heart, sincerity in worship, remembrance of Allah, compassion toward humanity, and excellence of character (Ihsan). Its foundation lies firmly in the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), who described Ihsan as worshipping Allah as though one sees Him.

The Holy Qur'an repeatedly calls believers toward mercy, justice, forgiveness, patience, and reconciliation:

"Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence (Ihsan), and kindness." (Qur'an 16:90)

"We have not sent you except as a mercy for all the worlds." (Qur'an 21:107)

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) also said:

"The most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to humanity." (Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat)

These principles constitute the very essence of authentic Sufi thought and practice.

Sufism as a Force for Peace, Tolerance, and Humanity

Throughout Islamic history, Sufi saints promoted reconciliation rather than conflict, dialogue instead of hostility, forgiveness instead of revenge, and love instead of hatred. Their Khanqahs welcomed people from every social class, ethnicity, and religious background, creating spaces where human dignity was respected and communities learned to coexist peacefully.

The enduring message of Sufism teaches that love is stronger than hatred, dialogue is

more productive than confrontation, compassion overcomes violence, justice sustains peace, and service to humanity is among the highest forms of worship. These timeless values remain highly relevant in addressing today's challenges of extremism, sectarianism, intolerance, discrimination, and social polarization.

Sufism and Interfaith Harmony

One of the greatest contributions of Sufism has been its role in promoting peaceful coexistence among followers of different religions and cultures. Sufi saints engaged people through wisdom, moral conduct, compassion, and service rather than coercion. Their teachings reflected the Qur'anic principle:

"There is no compulsion in religion." (Qur'an 2:256)

Across South Asia, Sufi shrines became centers where people from different religious and cultural backgrounds gathered in an atmosphere of mutual respect and spiritual reflection. This inclusive tradition helped shape the region's pluralistic social fabric and remains a valuable model for interfaith harmony today.

The Contribution of Sufism to Art and Culture

The influence of Sufism extends far beyond spirituality. It has profoundly enriched Islamic civilization through literature, poetry, architecture, music, calligraphy, painting, and folklore.

The spiritual poetry of Rumi, Hafiz, Amir Khusro, Bulleh Shah, Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, Sultan Bahoo, and Khwaja Ghulam Farid continues to inspire readers across the world with messages of divine love, peace, humility, and human dignity. Likewise, Sufi architecture, shrine complexes, devotional music, traditional crafts, and visual arts preserve centuries of spiritual wisdom while strengthening cultural identity.

Pakistan's Rich Sufi Heritage

Pakistan possesses one of the richest Sufi traditions in the Muslim world. The shrines of its great saints continue to attract millions of visitors annually, reflecting their enduring influence on society. These saints spread Islamic teachings through wisdom, education, social welfare, kindness, and exemplary moral conduct. Their contributions shaped local languages, literature, ethics, architecture, and folklore while promoting peaceful coexistence among diverse communities.

This priceless heritage is not merely a historical legacy; it is a living source of guidance that can strengthen national unity, social harmony, and interfaith understanding.

The Contemporary Relevance of Sufism

Modern societies face growing challenges including violent extremism, religious intolerance, misinformation, hate speech, social isolation, and cultural polarization. The ethical framework offered by Sufism provides practical guidance for addressing these problems.

Sufism is not only a spiritual tradition but also a practical framework for addressing many of the pressing challenges of the twenty-first century. Its emphasis on dialogue over division, compassion over hostility, justice over prejudice, and service over self-interest offers a compelling model for fostering peaceful coexistence.

For Pakistan, revitalizing its rich Sufi herit-

age can contribute significantly to strengthening national unity, promoting interfaith understanding, and countering extremist narratives through education, ethical leadership, and cultural engagement. This heritage should be viewed not merely as a historical legacy but as a living source of inspiration for policymakers, educators, religious scholars, artists, media professionals, and civil society.

Sufi philosophy reminds us that genuine spirituality is reflected in honesty, humility, justice, and compassion toward others. Peace cannot be sustained through force alone; it flourishes where human dignity is respected, diversity is embraced with wisdom, and dialogue replaces confrontation.

Educational institutions, cultural organizations, religious scholars, artists, media, and civil society all have a shared responsibility to preserve and promote these universal values for future generations.

Recommendations

To strengthen peace and social harmony, the following measures deserve consideration:

- Integrate the ethical teachings of Sufi saints into educational curricula.
- Promote research on Pakistan's Sufi heritage in universities and research institutions.
- Encourage interfaith dialogue inspired by Sufi traditions of mutual respect.
- Support cultural festivals, exhibitions, and artistic initiatives highlighting Sufi philosophy.
- Preserve and protect Sufi shrines, manuscripts, architecture, and cultural heritage.
- Encourage media organizations to promote narratives of peace, tolerance, and social cohesion.
- Strengthen partnerships among governments, civil society, religious scholars, and cultural institutions to counter extremism through education and dialogue.

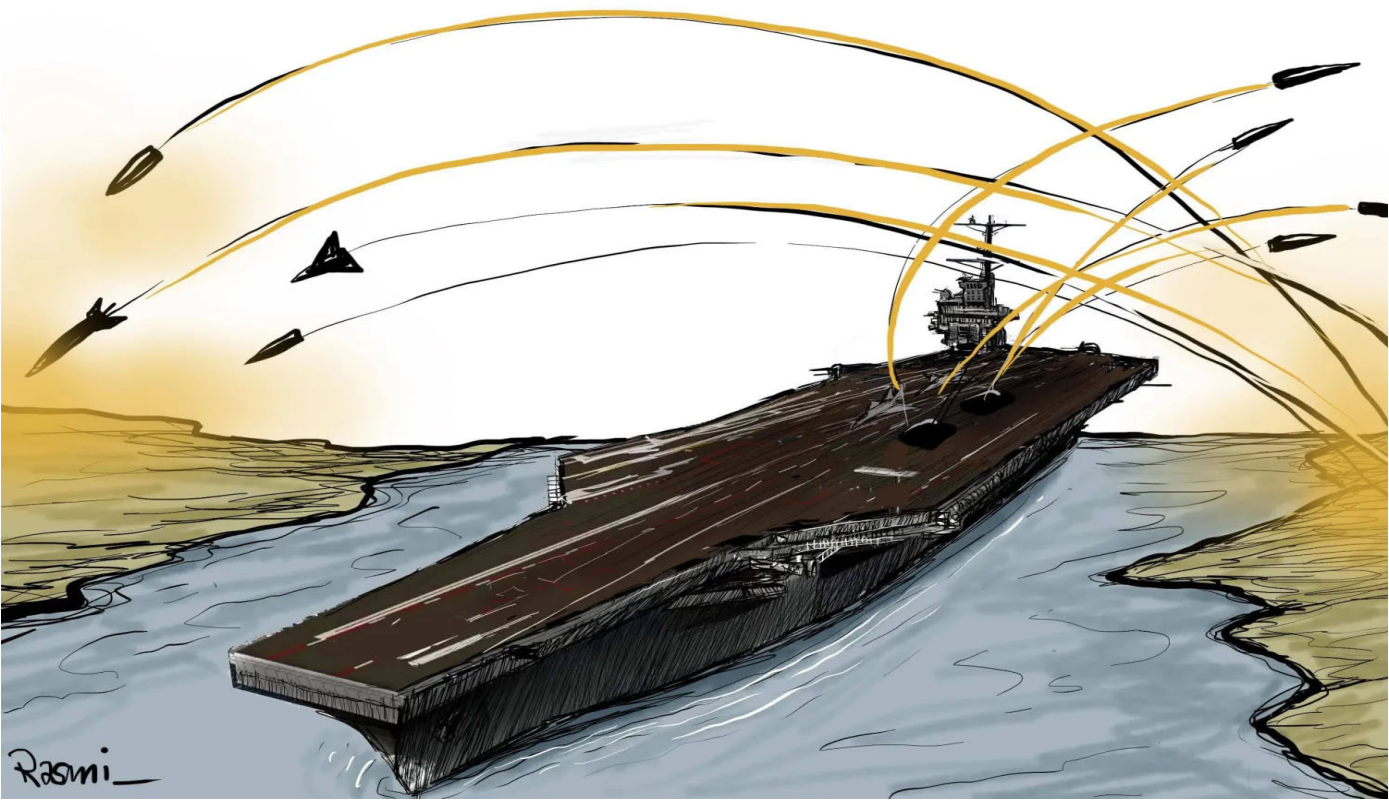
Conclusion

Sufism is not merely a chapter of Islamic history; it is a living tradition that continues to offer practical solutions to many of the social, religious, and cultural challenges confronting the modern world. Its emphasis on compassion, humility, justice, forgiveness, and service to humanity provides a powerful antidote to hatred, extremism, and intolerance.

For Pakistan, safeguarding and promoting its rich Sufi heritage is both a cultural responsibility and a strategic investment in national harmony. Through education, responsible media, academic research, cultural preservation, and interfaith engagement, the enduring wisdom of the great Sufi saints can help strengthen social cohesion and reinforce the values of peaceful coexistence envisioned in the Constitution of Pakistan.

As the Holy Qur'an reminds believers: "And cooperate in righteousness and piety." (Qur'an 5:2). Guided by this principle, the timeless message of Sufism continues to illuminate a path where faith inspires mercy, diversity becomes a source of strength, and humanity is united through mutual respect, dialogue, and love.

By embracing these universal values and preserving its remarkable Sufi heritage, Pakistan can continue to contribute meaningfully to global efforts aimed at building a more peaceful, inclusive, tolerant, and harmonious world.



President Zardari Congratulates UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham on Assuming Office

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD---President Asif Ali Zardari has extended his heartfelt congratulations to Andy Burnham on assuming office as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

The President expressed confidence that under Prime Minister Burnham's leadership, Pakistan and the United Kingdom would further strengthen their longstanding bilateral partnership and expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

President Zardari reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to dialogue, diplomacy, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. He noted that since late February, the world, particularly the Gulf region, has witnessed a period of instability, and Pakistan, with the support of many brotherly countries, has played a constructive role in promoting peace.



He expressed the hope that the United Kingdom, under Prime Minister Burnham's leadership, would also contribute to ending the current hostilities and support a return to the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding.



The President wished Prime Minister Burnham success in his new role and said he looked forward to working closely with him to further deepen the enduring ties between Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

NA Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Congratulates UK's Newly Elected Prime Minister Andy Burnham

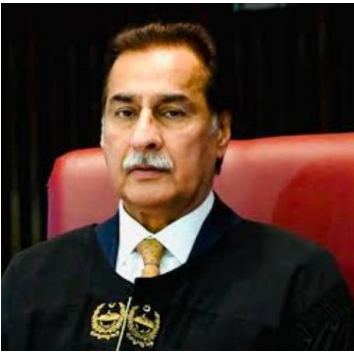
BY: Hurish Shah:

ISLAMABAD---National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has congratulated Andy Burnham on his election as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, expressing confidence that Pakistan-UK relations will continue to grow stronger under his leadership. In his congratulatory message, the Speaker extended his best wishes to Prime Minister Burnham for a successful tenure and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties with the United Kingdom.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq also underscored the importance of parliamentary diplomacy, expressing hope for enhanced cooperation between the



parliaments of Pakistan and the UK. He said stronger parliamentary engagement would foster mutual understanding, institutional collaboration, and serve the shared interests of both friendly nations.



The Speaker further conveyed his best wishes for the continued progress, prosperity, and well-being of the people of the United Kingdom under Prime Minister Andy Burnham's leadership.

ISSI, YFK Hold Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan Event, Reaffirm Support for Kashmir Cause

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD---The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), through its India Study Centre (ISC), in collaboration with the Youth Forum for Kashmir (YFK), organised an event titled "Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan: Revisiting History, Shaping the Future" to mark Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan.

Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon attended as chief guest, while former AJK President Ambassador Masood Khan was the guest of honour. Speakers highlighted the historical



significance of the 19 July 1947 resolution, reaffirmed Pakistan's support for the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination, and called for a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions.

The participants also stressed the

importance of parliamentary diplomacy, credible research, and international engagement to highlight the Kashmir issue and urged the global community to take notice of the human rights situation in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir.

Noman Shah Congratulates Spain on Winning FIFA World Cup, Calls for Greater Sports Investment

BY: ANI Sport Reporter:

ISLAMABAD---President of the World Boxing League Pakistan, Syed Noman Shah, congratulated Spain on becoming FIFA World Cup champions after 16 years, praising the team's outstanding performance in the final against defending champions Argentina.

He commended the Spanish captain, players, and team management for their remarkable achievement and said the Spanish nation also



remembered the oppressed Palestinian people during the victory celebrations, describing it as "a victory for justice, truth, and humanity."

Syed Noman Shah urged the federal and provincial governments to increase funding for sports, particularly boxing and football, and called for sponsorship of sporting activities at the district, sub-division, and tehsil levels to promote young talent and strengthen sports development across Pakistan.

Spain Clinches FIFA World Cup 2026 Title, Lamine Yamal Symbolizes Football's New Generation

BY: Qurat ul Ain Ali Khawaja/ANI

NEW JERSEY---Spain emerged as champions of the FIFA World Cup 2026 after defeating Argentina 1-0 in the final following extra time at MetLife Stadium, New Jersey. Ferran Torres scored the decisive goal in the 106th minute, helping Spain secure their second FIFA World Cup title since their historic triumph in 2010.

One of the tournament's most memorable moments came after the final whistle when young Spanish star Lamine Yamal knelt on the pitch, raised his hands in prayer, and expressed gratitude to Almighty Allah. The emotional scene drew widespread praise from football fans around the world and quickly went viral on social media.

Lamine Yamal's remarkable journey also captured global attention. As a baby, he appeared in a charity photoshoot with football legend Lionel Messi. Years later, the young winger became a FIFA World Cup champion, symbolizing the rise of a new generation of football stars.

Spain's victory reflected the country's continued investment in youth development, tactical discipline, and technical excellence under head



coach Luis de la Fuente. The triumph highlighted the success of blending experienced players with emerging young talent. The 2026 FIFA World Cup, jointly hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico, was the first edition to feature 48 participating nations, marking a new chapter in the history of international football.

The tournament also carried emo-

tional significance as it is widely expected to have been the final FIFA World Cup appearance for football legends Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo. Their extraordinary careers and historic rivalry have left an enduring legacy, while the emergence of players like Lamine Yamal signals the beginning of a new era in world football.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood Calls for Stronger Pakistan-Netherlands Trade Ties at ICCI Seminar



BY: Hurish Shah :

ISLAMABAD---Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) President Sardar Tahir Mehmood has called for enhanced trade, investment, and technology cooperation between Pakistan and the Netherlands, saying Pakistan offers attractive investment opportunities for Dutch businesses.

Addressing a seminar titled "Enhancing Bilateral Trade between Pakistan and the Kingdom of the

Netherlands," he highlighted Pakistan's strategic location, large consumer market, skilled workforce, and growing IT, manufacturing, and agriculture sectors as key attractions for foreign investors. He identified agriculture, renewable energy, healthcare, logistics, education, and water management as promising areas for bilateral collaboration.

Speaking on the occasion, Alexander Akerboom, First Secretary for Economic Affairs at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the

Netherlands, said Pakistan has immense potential to expand exports to Europe. He praised the quality of Pakistani mangoes and described Pakistan-made footballs as a symbol of the country's manufacturing excellence and global reputation.

The seminar concluded with a discussion on expanding bilateral trade, investment, market access, and institutional cooperation between the business communities of Pakistan and the Netherlands.

Misbah Khar, Malaysian Envoy Discuss Strengthening Pakistan-Malaysia Parliamentary Ties

BY: Hurish Shah

ISLAMABAD---Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Malaysia, Mohd Syafik Firdaus Hasbullah, called on Misbah Khar, Advisor to Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, at Parliament House to discuss ways to further strengthen Pakistan-Malaysia relations and institutional cooperation.

Misbah Khar said Pakistan and Malaysia enjoy longstanding friendly relations based on mutual respect and shared values. She emphasized the importance of parliamentary diplomacy and reaffirmed the Senate of Pakistan's commitment to enhancing engagement with friendly countries through parliamentary exchanges and stronger institutional linkages.

Both sides discussed expanding cooperation between parliamentary institutions, think tanks, academic institutions, and youth organizations, while exploring opportunities in trade, investment, tourism, education, the digital economy, women's



empowerment, and youth development.

Mohd Syafik Firdaus Hasbullah reaffirmed Malaysia's commitment to deepening bilateral cooperation and expressed confidence that stronger parliamentary engagement

would further strengthen ties between the two countries. The meeting concluded with both sides reaffirming their commitment to promoting Pakistan-Malaysia relations and expanding cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Noreen Niazi's Anti-Pakistan Remarks Unacceptable, Designed to Please Indian Media" Barrister Danyal Chaudhry

BY: Kiran Shehzadi/ANI

RAWALPINDI:Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry, has strongly condemned the anti-Pakistan remarks made by Noreen Niazi, calling them unacceptable, unforgivable, and contrary to national interests. In a statement, Barrister Danyal said Noreen Niazi is raising questions on Maarka-e-Haq to serve her brother's political interests, and her remarks are being deliberately amplified by Indian media to damage Pakistan's image.

He was addressing a rally led by Senior Provincial Minister Maryam Aurangzeb in Rawalpindi. The rally was also attended by Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi, MNAs Tahira Aurangzeb and Malik Abrar, along with a large number of PML-N leaders, workers, and citizens.



Barrister Danyal said the government will not compromise on national security, state dignity, sovereignty, and national interests, and any negative propaganda against Pakistan will be rejected outright.

He added that the politics of Noreen Niazi's brother has been buried, his party is in disarray, and the KP government has failed to deliver on public issues. "Certain

elements are trying to divert attention from their political failures by defaming Pakistan, but the nation will never allow such designs to succeed".

The Parliamentary Secretary said the entire nation stands united for the protection of Pakistan's security, sovereignty, stability, and dignity, and the government will continue to strengthen national cohesion.

37th LADIESFUND Power Gathering Unites Pakistan's Women Leaders with British Deputy High Commissioner



BY : FT Correspondent:

KARACHI---The 37th LADIESFUND Power Gathering brought together Pakistan's leading women entrepreneurs, executives, professionals, diplomats, and changemakers for an afternoon of dialogue, networking, and collaboration. Hosted by Tara Uzra Dawood, the event featured Acting British Deputy High Commissioner Tom Burge as Chief Guest, alongside prominent personalities including Senator Nasreen Jalil, Senator Khushbakht Shujat, Aameena Saiyid, Arjumand Rahim, Nighat Misbah, Shamaeel Ansari, Nabila Bano, Angie Marshall, Laeeq Akbar, and

Sadiah Pal. Speaking on the occasion, Tom Burge highlighted the importance of supportive women's networks, governance, entrepreneurship, and international collaboration in advancing female leadership across Pakistan. Tara Uzra Dawood said LADIESFUND was founded on the belief that bringing exceptional women together creates opportunities for mentorship, business partnerships, philanthropy, and public service that extend well beyond the event.

Now in its 37th edition, the LADIESFUND Power series has become one of Pakistan's longest-running platforms connecting women leaders with diplomats, poli-

cymakers, business executives, entrepreneurs, and philanthropists to promote collaboration and women's leadership.

Participants praised the initiative for fostering meaningful dialogue, partnerships, and professional connections. Among those commending the event were Arjumand Rahim, Shahana Ahmed Ali, Senator Nasreen Jalil, Senator Khushbakht Shujat, Nighat Misbah, Shanzay K. Subzwari, Andleeb Uroos Ahmed, Shamaeel Ansari, Aameena Saiyid, Sadiah Pal, Nabila Bano, and Angie Marshall, who described the gathering as an inspiring platform for networking, innovation, and empowering women across diverse sectors.