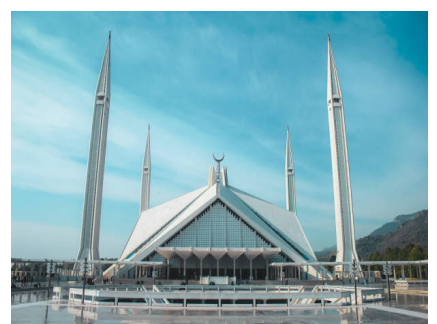




Daily FINANCIAL TIMES

Email: dailyfinancialtimes2@gmail.com, Whatsapp: 00923060106475
Website: <https://dailyfinancialtime.com>

Editor: JAVED SIDDIQ

Islamabad

Vol: 14 Issue: 326 Pages: 4 Price: 20 Friday August 07 2026

The Newspaper of ANI Media Group

PM arrives in KSA on three-day visit amid Middle East tensions



ANI

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Jeddah on Thursday on a three-day official visit to Saudi Arabia at the invitation of Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

According to a statement issued by the PMO, the prime minister was received on arrival by Prince Saud bin Mishal bin Abdulaziz, Deputy Governor of Mecca, Saudi Minister of Agriculture, Water and Environment Engineer Abdulrahman bin Abdulmohsen Al-Fadli, Pakistan's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ahmad Farooq, and senior diplomatic officials.

The statement said Prime Minister Shehbaz would hold a meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during the visit to exchange views on further strengthening the longstanding fraternal relations and partnership between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, as well as the regional situation. During the visit, the prime minister will also perform Umrah and pay respects at the Prophet's Mosque (peace be upon him) in Madina Munawwarah.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar and

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi are accompanying the prime minister on the visit. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in an earlier statement said, "PM Shehbaz will undertake an official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 6-8 August 2026. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising the deputy prime minister and foreign minister, CDF Munir, and other ministers." "During the visit, the prime minister will meet Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. The discussions will focus on consolidating Pakistan-Saudi Arabia bilateral relations as well as exchanging views on regional and international

developments of mutual interest," the ministry said. The MoFA said the visit reflects Pakistan's longstanding partnership with Saudi Arabia, anchored in decades of mutual trust, cooperation and brotherhood.

"Although taking place against the backdrop of heightened tensions in the Gulf, the visit carries significance beyond the immediate crises and short-term considerations," the statement added. "The visit will further strengthen bilateral relations, deepen strategic cooperation, enhance coordination on regional and international issues of mutual interest, and reinforce multilateral cooperation," the ministry said.

Sindh CM Rules Out Violence Over New Provinces

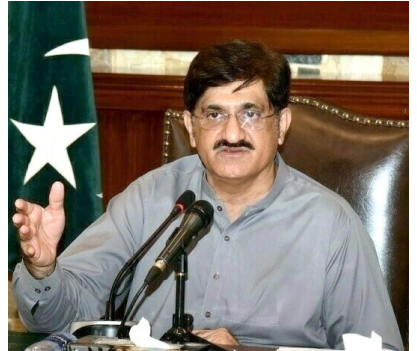
ANI

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah on Thursday rejected claims that the governance system had collapsed, saying no bloodshed would be allowed over the issue of creating new provinces. "The people of Sindh say that the provinces will be built on our dead bodies. My brother, we will not let anyone's dead bodies fall. Don't dramatise it so much. There is a way in the constitution to build provinces. And in that constitution, it is written that if an assembly of a province passes a resolution with a two-thirds majority to divide the province, then it is possible," said Shah while speaking to reporters after addressing the Mining Technical Conference 2026. The remarks came after Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi reignited the debate by saying Pakistan's existing governance system had collapsed and was no longer capable of addressing the country's challenges, calling for administrative reforms, including the creation of new administrative units. Shah, during the conversation with the reporter, said the Sindh Assembly had repeatedly opposed the creation of new provinces. "The Sindh Assembly not once, many times. I don't remember the number, but many times, unanimously opposed the creation of any new province in Sindh," he added. The chief minister said that there was no objection to debating the issue and urged the media not to make it taboo, adding that people had trust in the process.

"So, if there is ever a change in this, which I am not seeing, then we can talk about it. So, there is no harm in debating anything," he said. Responding to a question, he said protests were a right but should be held according to an established procedure, urging demonstrators to obtain permission from the administration before staging protests. Shah said the provincial government had made provision to procure one million tonnes of wheat, adding that its primary objective was to protect local farmers.

Referring to Tharparkar, he said those who believed the system had collapsed should visit the district to see its progress.

During the conference, CM Sindh said electricity generation capacity from Thar



Coal would be increased from the current 2,640 megawatts to 3,000 megawatts in the coming days.

Shah said more than 15 million tonnes of coal were being produced annually from Thar blocks, adding that the use of local coal was saving the country more than \$1.5 billion in foreign exchange annually.

The Sindh chief minister expressed his government's commitment to fully explore the potential of the mining sector.

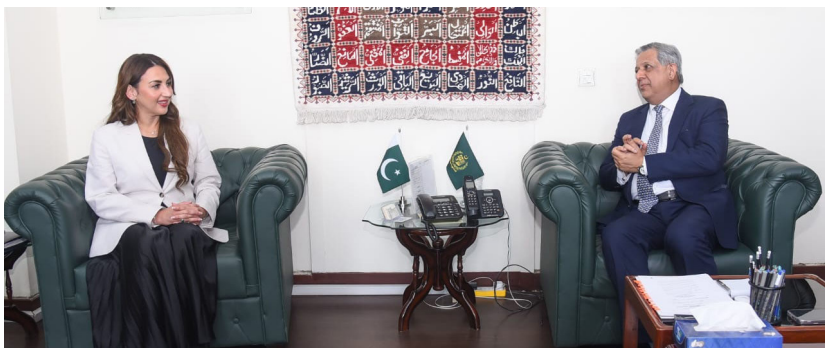
If reset is needed for good governance, then it should happen, says DG ISPR

On July 31, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said an administrative reset, if required, should be undertaken to ensure good governance, stressing that any such change must be carried out through constitutional and legal means and in accordance with the will of the people.

"The will of the people of Pakistan is superior. If good governance requires an administrative reset, then it has to be done through constitutional methods, legal procedures and political representatives," he said.

On July 25, Federal Minister and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Mustafa Kamal announced that his party had decided to launch street demonstrations against the Sindh government's "systematic injustice" towards Karachi and other urban centres, while renewing his demand for the creation of new provinces and greater devolution of powers. Fazl warns against creating new provinces without public consent.

U.S. Chargé d'Affaires commends Pakistan's role in Gulf conflict



ANI

ISLAMABAD: United States Chargé d'Affaires to Pakistan, Ms. Natalie A. Baker on Thursday appreciated Pakistan's positive and constructive role during the Gulf conflict and commended its diplomatic efforts to promote regional peace and stability during a meeting with Federal Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar.

The meeting, held at the Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights, focused on Pakistan-United States bilateral relations, matters of mutual interest and the regional situation.

During the meeting, Ms. Baker also acknowledged the leadership and contributions of Field Marshal, Syed Asim Munir and Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in promoting peace and stability in the region. Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar reaffirmed that Pakistan would continue to play a positive and constructive role in advancing regional peace, stability and dialogue.

Both sides reiterated their commitment to further strengthening Pakistan-United States bilateral cooperation, including collaboration in the field of law, and enhancing engagement in other areas of mutual interest.

Pakistan, seven nations call Israeli actions in Gaza grave violations of international law



ANI

Pakistan and seven other Islamic countries on Thursday condemned Israel's ongoing violations in the Gaza Strip, denouncing the targeting of healthcare facilities, attacks on civilian infrastructure and the continued loss of civilian lives as grave breaches of international law. In a joint statement shared by the Foreign Office (FO), the foreign ministers of Pakistan, Egypt, Türkiye, Indonesia, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates expressed "their strongest condemnation and denunciation" of Israel's actions in Gaza, particularly the targeting of healthcare facilities and medical infrastructure, attacks on civilian infrastructure, and the continued loss of civilian lives, including women and children. The ministers said the ongoing violations amounted to "grave violations of international law, including international humanitarian law." They said the continuation of these violations constituted "a clear breach" of Israel's obligations under international law and the Comprehensive Plan

to End the Gaza Conflict, undermining international and regional efforts to implement the plan's second phase. The statement said the violations came despite the announcement by US President Donald Trump that the Palestinian factions had accepted the roadmap, including provisions relating to the confinement of weapons, warning that the actions threatened to derail the political process, reignite the cycle of escalation and deepen the humanitarian catastrophe in the Gaza Strip. "The protection of civilians, the safeguarding of medical facilities and personnel working in the health and humanitarian sectors, and ensuring the immediate, safe, and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance, medical supplies, and relief aid throughout the Gaza Strip constitute legal obligations that must not be compromised or diminished under any circumstances," the ministers stressed.

They further said the ongoing violations in Gaza could not be viewed in isolation from settler attacks in the occupied West Bank, the expansion of settlements and unilateral measures aimed at altering the "status quo in Occupied Jerusalem."

The ministers said these actions together constituted "a systematic policy aimed at imposing a fait accompli by force," undermined the foundations of the two-state solution and marginalized the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people "in flagrant violation of international law and the relevant UN resolutions."

Field Marshal Asim, Somali defence minister discuss security cooperation

ANI

Somali Defence Minister Ahmed Moallim Fiqi praises the Pakistan Armed Forces' role in promoting regional peace and stability in a meeting with the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Asim Munir. According to Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), a high-level delegation from the Somalia, led by defence minister called on CDF Munir at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

"The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's steadfast support and the professional role played by the Pakistan Armed Forces in promoting regional peace and stability," said the ISPR.



The statement said that both sides underscored the importance of deepening military-to-military ties and capacity-building initiatives to counter common security challenges. "During the meeting, matters of

mutual interest, regional security dynamics, and measures to further enhance bilateral defence and security cooperation were discussed," it said.

It added that the CDF Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to supporting Somalia in strengthening its security apparatus and fostering enduring peace in the region. Last month, Member of the House of Representatives (State of Montana) Ryeann Keith and Member of the House of Representatives (State of Washington) Michael James Pakistan and acknowledged Islamabad's role in promoting regional stability and economic resilience in a meeting with Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir.

Security forces kill 12 terrorists in Balochistan IBOs: ISPR

ANI

Security forces killed 12 terrorists belonging to Fitna al-Hindustan during intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in the Washuk and Mastung districts of Balochistan, the military's media wing said on Thursday.

The federal government last year officially designated all terrorist groups operating in Balochistan as 'Fitna al-Hindustan', accusing India of sponsoring a proxy war through these outfits. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), high-tempo intelligence-driven operations were conducted as part of the ongoing "Rad-ul-Fitna-3" campaign, which it described as a counterterrorism operation aimed at eliminating Indian proxies. "On August 5, movement of six terrorists was picked up by the security forces in Washuk District. Own troops effectively engaged these terrorists. As a result of precise and skilful engagement, all six terrorists belonging to Indian proxy, Fitna-al-Hindustan, were sent to hell," it said. It said another intelligence-based operation was carried out in Mastung district on August 6, where six more terrorists were killed during an exchange of fire.

Pakistan playing diplomatic role in restoring Middle East stability: FO

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is actively playing a diplomatic role in efforts to restore stability in the Middle East, the Foreign Office said on Thursday, while announcing Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's upcoming visit to Saudi Arabia for talks with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on bilateral ties and regional developments. Addressing the weekly media briefing, Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Hussain Andrabi said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will undertake an official visit to Saudi Arabia from August 6 to 8. During the visit, the prime minister will



meet Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to discuss bilateral relations, matters of mutual interest and avenues for enhanced cooperation. The spokesperson said Pakistan is contributing diplomatically to efforts aimed at restoring stability in the Middle East and

appreciated Oman's constructive role in the evolving regional situation. He said Pakistan highly values Oman's contribution to promoting regional peace and dialogue. Commenting on Indian statements regarding the Azad Jammu and Kashmir elections, Andrabi dismissed them as baseless, saying the electoral process was being conducted in a transparent manner. He said India had no moral justification for making such remarks and could not divert attention from the situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir by spreading misinformation about deaths in Azad Kashmir.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong on Thursday.

Students Are the Nation’s Future, Their Success Is Pakistan’s Strength” Barrister Danyal Chaudhry



BY: Kiran Shehzadi/ ANI

RAWALPINDI- Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry said that students who achieved top positions in the Matric Annual Examination 2026 are not only the pride of their families but the true asset of the nation and the foundation of Pakistan’s bright future. He was speaking at an awards ceremony for position holders organized by the Rawalpindi Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education at Fatima Jinnah Women

University. The event was attended by Member National Assembly Malik Abrar Ahmed, Member Provincial Assembly Asma Abbasi, Chairman of the Board Professor Dr. Iqbal Mahmood, Controller of Examinations Tanvir Asghar Awan, along with teachers, parents, students, and a large number of guests from different walks of life. Barrister Danyal congratulated the position holders, their parents, and teachers, emphasizing that the day symbolizes the reward of relentless effort, discipline, and determination.

The Parliamentary Secretary said that youth are the architects of Pakistan’s future and must channel their talent and energy toward national development, progress, and unity. He encouraged students to view success not as an endpoint but as a stepping stone toward further achievement and continuous self-improvement. He said education is a transformative force that shapes the destiny of nations, and students should embrace knowledge along with strong morals, honesty, discipline, and respect for national values.

Sherry Rehman Reaffirms Pakistan’s Support for Kashmir at ISSI Youm-e-Istehsal Seminar



By ANI Correspondent :

ISLAMABAD-- Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Vice President Senator Sherry Rehman reaffirmed Pakistan’s unwavering political, diplomatic, and moral support for the people of Jammu and Kashmir while addressing a Youm-e-Istehsal seminar as the chief guest at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI). The seminar was also attended and addressed by Tahir Andrabi, Foreign Office Spokesperson, along with other distinguished speakers and guests, who highlighted various dimensions of the Kashmir issue and reiterated support for the Kashmiri people’s right to self-determination.

In her address, Senator Rehman said August 5, 2019, marked not only India’s unilateral revocation of Article 370 but also a continuing assault on international law, human dignity, and the fundamental rights of the Kashmiri people. She stressed that Jammu and Kashmir remains an internationally recognized disputed territory under United Nations Security Council resolutions and that the dispute cannot be resolved through unilateral actions. She reaffirmed Pakistan’s continued political, diplomatic, and moral support for the Kashmiri people and urged the international community to ensure a peaceful and just resolution of the dispute in accordance with UN Security Council res-

olutions and the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Senator Rehman also expressed concern over the humanitarian situation and alleged demographic changes in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). She called for the restoration of civil liberties, the release of political detainees, and unrestricted access for international media and independent human rights observers. Other speakers, including Tahir Andrabi and the Foreign Office Spokesperson, also underscored the importance of keeping the Kashmir issue on the international agenda and reaffirmed Pakistan’s steadfast support for the Kashmiri people’s right to self-determination.

Government spends Rs163bn on Balochistan CPEC roads

ANI **ISLAMABAD:** The government has allocated more than Rs310 billion for nine under-construction China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) road projects in Balochistan’s western zone since the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2022-23, with releases and expenditures reaching over Rs163 billion so far. According to official data available with Wealth Pakistan, the projects received a combined allocation of Rs310.30 billion between PSDP 2022-23 and 2026-27, while releases and expenditures stood at Rs163.17 billion. The single largest allocation of Rs82.6 billion was made for the 330-kilometre Khuzdar-Kuchlak section of National Highway N-25. Releases and expenditures on the project amounted to Rs40.67 billion. Another Rs81 billion was allocated for the 187-kilometre Kararo-Wadh and Kuchlak-Chaman sections of N-25, with releases and expenditures of Rs25.29 billion. The 273-kilometre Karachi-Kararo

and Wadh-Khuzdar sections of N-25 received an allocation of Rs63 billion, of which Rs33.54 billion has been released and spent. Among the M-8 motorway schemes, the 168-kilometre Awaran-Naal section received Rs26.03 billion, with releases and expenditures reaching Rs20.02 billion, while the 146-kilometre Hoshab-Awaran section was allocated Rs14.79 billion, with releases and expenditures of Rs9.40 billion. The remaining projects include the 103-kilometre Nokundi-Mashkel Road, which received Rs7.84 billion and recorded releases and expenditures of Rs6.90 billion; the 22.7-kilometre Quetta Western Bypass on N-25, with an allocation of Rs6.91 billion and releases and expenditures of Rs5.95 billion. The 106-kilometre Basima-Khuzdar section of N-30, with an allocation of Rs13.55 billion and releases and expenditures of Rs12.97 billion. The 298-kilometre Zhob-Kuchlak section of N-50, which received Rs14.58 billion and recorded releases and expenditures of Rs8.43 billion.

PAL to announce Kamal-e-Fun, National Literary Awards 2025 on Aug 7

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL), under the National Heritage and Culture Division, will formally announce the recipients of the Kamal-e-Fun Award 2025 and the National Literary Awards 2025 at a press conference on Friday. According to an official spokesperson of the Academy, the announcement will be made on August 7 at 1200 noon at the PAL headquarters in Sector H-8/1, Islamabad. The spokesperson said the ceremony is considered one of the country’s most prestigious literary events, during which the names of distinguished writers and poets will be announced in recognition of their outstanding contributions to literature in various Pakistani languages and literary genres. He said prominent literary figures, authors, writers, poets, students and representatives of literary organizations are expected to attend the event. Representatives of media organizations have also been invited to provide extensive coverage of the event, ensuring wide publicity for this prestigious literary occasion. The Kamal-e-Fun Award is Pakistan’s highest literary honour conferred by the Pakistan Academy of Letters, while the National Literary Awards recognize outstanding literary works and significant contributions across diverse languages and literary disciplines.

FGEHA to hold grand auction of G-13, G-14 commercial plots in Ist week of September

ANI **ISLAMABAD:** Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) is all set to hold a grand auction of premium commercial plots in G-13 and G-14, during the first week of September, offering investors an opportunity to acquire commercial properties at prime locations. According to an official spokesperson of authority, the auction will feature commercial plots in G-13 and G-14, including commercial plots in G-14 Markaz, Class-III commercial plots in G-14/2, mixed-use commercial plots, and a corporate office plot in the Mauve Area. The spokesperson said the commercial plots are strategically located adjacent to the Metro Bus route and GT Road, around an eight-minute drive from Motorways M-1 and M-2, and approximately 12 minutes from the New Islamabad

International Airport. He said investors would be able to obtain approval for building plans after making an initial payment of 25 percent, facilitating early commencement of development activities. He described the auction as an attractive investment opportunity, highlighting the commercial potential of the sites owing to their prime location, accessibility and planned urban infrastructure. The spokesperson has advised interested investors and members of the public to stay updated through its official channels for the announcement of the auction schedule and other details. Regarding the preparations of auction, he said that the key arrangements, including the preparation of the auction brochure, advertising and publicity strategy, the auction schedule, and other administrative and operational matters to ensure the process is conducted in a transparent, fair, and competitive manner.

SDPI, NIPS sign MoU to forge partnership on demographic research, analysis

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Population Studies-Training and Research (NIPS-T&R) and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) here on Thursday to forge a strategic partnership on population planning, demographic research and policy analysis. Federal Secretary for Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (NH&SR&C), Aslam Ghouri, was the chief guest on the occasion. The MoU was formally signed by SDPI Executive Director, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri and NIPS-T&R Executive Director, Samina A. Hasan, said a press release. Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said the purpose of such ceremonies should



not be the signing of an MoU itself, but its materialization into tangible collaboration. “The MoUs without team ownership and effort cannot be materialized,” he said, adding that with renewed zeal and spirit, SDPI and NIPS-T&R could now identify new aligning areas of work.

Dr. Suleri said that development, economy, energy and housing sectors ultimately came down to per capita requirements, and now NIPST&R role became more critical. He stressed the need to educate all government departments on population measures and demographic needs.

Development of Constituency, Resolution of Public Issues Top Priority , Malik Waqas Ahmed Baghour

BY : FT Correspondent:

SARGODHA --- Advocate Malik Waqas Ahmed Baghour, Coordinator to MNA and Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Communications Engineer Malik Gul Asghar Khan Baghour, said the development of the constituency and the resolution of public issues remain the top priority, with all available resources being utilized to ensure the timely completion of ongoing development projects. Speaking to the media, he said work is progressing on road construction and rehabilitation, drainage



improvement, clean drinking water supply, and other public welfare projects through close coordination with the relevant government departments. He added that providing basic civic facilities and ensuring the timely and quality completion of development schemes would not only address public concerns but also contribute to the area’s overall development, prosperity, and economic growth. He reaffirmed his commitment to meeting public expectations through sustained development efforts.

Balochistan Govt, Traders Reach Agreement; August 7-8 Strike Called Off

BY: FT Correspondent:

QUETTA: Negotiations between the Balochistan government and the traders’ community have ended successfully, leading to the cancellation of the shutter-down and wheel-jam strike scheduled for August 7 and 8. The breakthrough came after talks between Interior Minister

Mir Ziaullah Langau and Anjum-an-e-Tajirani President Syed Abdul Rahim Agha. Following the agreement, traders announced that the planned strike would no longer take place. Earlier, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti chaired a meeting of the Transport Department and directed authorities to utilize all available resources to resolve the

issues of traders and transporters while ensuring the security of travel routes across the province. Mir Ziaullah Langau said operations to secure highways and travel routes would continue, dismissing reports of curfew and threat alerts as baseless. He reiterated that protecting passengers, traders, and transporters remains the government’s top priority.

Daily

FINANCIAL TIMES

Group Editor: Dr. Waheed Mehmood Khan, Editor: Javed Siddiq

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

Disclaimer: All articles, columns, and opinions published in Financial Times are solely the views of their respective authors. The publication does not necessarily endorse or agree with the opinions, views, or positions expressed therein.

Opinion

3

AI and Pakistan’s Jobs Crisis: Will Technology Create More Jobs Than It Destroys?



By: Hurish Shah
Published By: ANI News Agency

Artificial intelligence is no longer a distant idea discussed only by technology experts. It has entered workplaces, classrooms, businesses and even everyday conversations. From writing and designing to customer service, data analysis and software development, AI is changing how people work.

For Pakistan, this transformation comes at a particularly important moment. The country has a large and growing young population, but it also faces unemployment, underemployment and a serious mismatch between education and market needs. The arrival of AI therefore presents both an opportunity and a warning.

The question is not simply whether artificial intelligence will take jobs away. The more important question is whether Pakistan will prepare its people for the jobs that AI will create.

Technology has always changed the labour market. Machines reduced the need for certain types of manual labour, computers transformed office work, and the internet created entirely new industries. AI is different because it can increasingly perform tasks that were previously considered dependent on human intelligence.

Routine writing, basic graphic design, data entry, translation, customer support and some administrative tasks can now be completed faster with AI tools. For workers whose income depends mainly on repetitive tasks, this could become a serious challenge.

Pakistan cannot ignore this reality.

The country already has millions of young people entering the workforce, and creating enough productive employment is one of its biggest economic challenges. If AI adoption happens without investment in skills and education, some workers could find themselves pushed out of jobs without having the knowledge required to move into new ones.

But there is another side to the story.

AI does not necessarily mean fewer jobs overall. It can create completely new forms of employment and help existing businesses become more productive. AI specialists, data analysts, cybersecurity professionals, automation experts and digital consultants are already becoming increasingly important around the world.

Pakistan’s large IT and freelancing community could benefit from this transition. Pakistani professionals already provide software development, digital marketing, graphic design, virtual assistance and other services to international clients. With proper training, AI can help these workers serve more clients, improve their productivity and compete in a rapidly changing global market.

The opportunity is particularly significant for young Pakistanis.

A young person with access to a smartphone, internet connection and the right skills can potentially work for clients anywhere in the world. Geography is becoming less important in many digital professions. Pakistan can use this advantage to increase exports of IT-enabled services and generate foreign exchange.

However, having a young population is not enough. Young people need employable skills.

This is where Pakistan’s education system faces one of its biggest tests.



For decades, educational success has often been associated with obtaining degrees. But the modern economy increasingly rewards skills, creativity, adaptability and problem-solving. A university degree without practical knowledge may no longer provide the security it once promised.

Schools, colleges and universities must therefore begin preparing students for an AI-driven economy.

Students should be taught how to use technology rather than simply compete against it. Digital literacy, coding, data analysis, communication, critical thinking and problem-solving should become central components of education. Students should also understand how AI works, its limitations and its ethical implications.

At the same time, vocational and technical education deserves much greater attention.

Not every young Pakistani needs to become a software engineer. The future economy will still require electricians, technicians, healthcare workers, teachers, construction professionals, mechanics, designers and countless other occupations. AI can complement many of these professions rather than replace them.

The challenge is to identify which tasks can be automated and which human abilities will remain valuable.

Creativity, emotional intelligence, leadership, judgement, interpersonal communication and the ability to understand complex human situations are difficult to replace completely. A doctor may use AI to analyse information, but patients will still need empathy and human interaction. A teacher may use AI to prepare lessons, but students will continue to need guidance and encouragement.

The future may therefore belong not to humans or machines alone, but to humans who know how to work effectively with machines.

Pakistan’s businesses have an important role to play in this transition.

Companies should not view AI simply as a tool for reducing their workforce. If used responsibly, AI can help employees perform better and allow businesses to expand. Workers can be trained to use AI tools to increase efficiency instead of being immediately replaced by them.

This approach could create a healthier relationship between technology and employment.

The government also needs a national strategy for AI and employment. Policies should encourage investment in technology while protecting workers from being left behind. Public-private partnerships could provide affordable digital training, particularly for young people outside major cities.

Pakistan must also address the digital divide.

It is easy to talk about artificial intelligence when living in Islamabad, Lahore or Karachi with reliable internet access and modern

digital services. But many young people in smaller cities and rural areas still lack adequate connectivity, training facilities and access to quality education.

If the AI economy benefits only a small urban elite, it could increase inequality rather than reduce it.

Digital infrastructure should therefore be treated as economic infrastructure. Affordable internet, reliable electricity, accessible training and modern educational facilities are essential if Pakistan wants its entire population to participate in the digital economy.

There is another important issue: language.

Most AI tools and digital learning resources are developed primarily around English and other major global languages. Pakistan should invest in developing AI resources in Urdu and regional languages so that technology becomes accessible to a much larger section of society.

The country should also prepare workers for lifelong learning.

In the past, people could acquire a degree, enter a profession and expect their knowledge to remain relevant for decades. That model is changing. Skills can become outdated quickly, meaning workers will need opportunities to retrain and upgrade their knowledge throughout their careers.

This does not mean everyone must become a technology expert. It means everyone should become comfortable with change.

For Pakistan, the AI revolution is arriving at a difficult but potentially transformative moment. The country cannot afford to reject technological progress out of fear of job losses. Nor can it blindly embrace automation without considering the workers who may be affected.

The right approach lies somewhere in between.

Pakistan should welcome AI while investing heavily in people.

The objective should not be to protect every existing job forever. Instead, the goal should be to ensure that workers have the skills and opportunities to move into new forms of employment as the economy changes.

AI may eliminate certain jobs. It may also create many more. History suggests that technological change often destroys some occupations while creating others that could not previously have been imagined.

The final outcome, however, will depend on preparation.

If Pakistan continues to rely on outdated education, limited technical training and degrees without practical skills, AI could deepen the country’s employment crisis.

But if Pakistan invests in education, digital infrastructure, vocational training, entrepreneurship and reskilling, artificial intelligence could become one of the country’s greatest economic opportunities.

The future of work is already arriving.

Pakistan’s challenge is not to stop it.

It is to make sure that its young people are ready when it does.

Pakistan’s Middle Class Under Pressure: Can Economic Growth Reach the Household?



By: Yasmeen Asad
Published By: ANI News Agency

For millions of Pakistanis, economic recovery is not measured by the stock market, foreign exchange reserves or a headline announcing that GDP has grown. It is measured at the grocery shop, at the petrol station, when the electricity bill arrives and when parents sit down to calculate how much they can afford to spend on their children’s education.

This is the reality facing Pakistan’s middle class today.

On paper, there are reasons for cautious optimism. Pakistan’s economy recorded real GDP growth of 3.70 percent in FY2025-26, while per capita income rose from US\$1,751 to US\$1,901. The services sector expanded by 4.09 percent, while industrial growth also improved. These figures suggest that the economy is moving away from the severe instability of recent years.

But economic growth becomes meaningful only when ordinary families can feel it.

That is where Pakistan’s story becomes more complicated.

The middle class is often described as the backbone of a stable economy. It includes salaried employees, teachers, small traders, professionals, entrepreneurs and families running modest businesses. They may not be poor enough to qualify for many forms of social assistance, but neither are they wealthy enough to absorb every increase in the cost of living.

For this group, financial pressure has become a daily experience.

A family that once managed comfortably on one income may now need additional earnings. Parents are reconsidering private schooling. Young people are delaying marriage or home ownership. Families are cutting back on eating out, travelling and other non-essential expenses. Even healthcare and education, traditionally treated as priorities, increasingly require difficult financial decisions.

The numbers help explain this pressure. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the average monthly household income in 2024-25 stood at around Rs82,179, while average monthly household consumption was approximately Rs79,150. The narrow difference between income and consumption leaves limited room for savings, emergencies or long-term investment.

And averages can hide the real struggle.

A household with a relatively stable income may still find itself vulnerable if rent, school fees, transport, food and utility bills rise faster than salaries. The problem is not necessarily that people have stopped earning. It is that their earnings often do not provide the same purchasing power they once did.

Inflation has eased considerably from the extraordinary levels seen during Pakistan’s recent economic crisis, but lower inflation does not mean lower prices. It simply means prices are rising more slowly.

That distinction matters.

If a household has already experienced years of sharp price increases, a reduction in the inflation rate does not return prices to their old levels. Families continue to live with a higher cost base. Pakistan’s Economic Survey reported average CPI inflation of 6.19 percent during July-April FY2025-26, compared with 4.73 percent in the corresponding period a year earlier. On a year-on-year basis, inflation reached 10.89 percent in April 2026.

For the average consumer, these percentages translate into very simple questions: Can I pay the bill? Can I save anything this month? Can I afford the school fee? What happens if someone in the family becomes ill?

This is why the debate about economic growth must move beyond GDP.

Growth is necessary, but growth alone does not guarantee economic security. What matters is the quality of growth: whether it creates productive jobs, raises real incomes, supports small businesses, improves public services and creates opportunities for people to build assets.

Pakistan’s household consumption remains a major part of the economy. The Economic Survey shows household consumption accounting for more than 82 percent of GDP in FY2025-26.

That means the condition of households is not separate from the condition of the economy. They are connected.

When families have confidence, they spend, invest, educate their children and establish businesses. When they are financially anxious, they become defensive. They postpone purchases, avoid investment and focus on surviving the month.

A strong economy therefore needs a confident middle class.

One of Pakistan’s biggest challenges is the cost of essential services. Electricity bills remain a major concern for households and businesses. Education and healthcare costs are also increasing the pressure on families. Housing has become particularly difficult for younger Pakistanis, while transport costs affect workers every day.

The answer cannot simply be higher salaries.

If wages rise but productivity remains weak, businesses face higher costs and may reduce hiring or pass those costs to consumers. Pakistan needs a broader solution based on productivity, investment, competition, skills and employment.

The country must create an environment where businesses can expand and hire more people. Small and medium-sized enterprises, which employ large numbers of Pakistanis, need easier access to finance, predictable taxation and less bureaucratic friction. At the same time, education must become more closely connected to the labour market.

A university degree should not be the end of a young person’s economic journey. Technical skills, digital services, artificial intelligence, freelancing, vocational training and entrepreneurship can provide new avenues of income. Pakistan’s large young population can either become an economic advantage or a source of frustration if sufficient opportunities are not created.

From Cash to Confidence: Financial Literacy Is Pakistan’s Next Economic Frontier



Dr. Anum Shafique is a Lecturer and Researcher in Finance at PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi. Published by ANI

“Risk comes from not knowing what you’re doing.” Warren Buffett

In today’s rapidly evolving financial landscape, Pakistan’s economic future depends not only on stronger banks or advanced digital technologies but also on financially informed citizens. Financial literacy is no longer merely a personal responsibility; it has become a national development priority. It equips individuals with the knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions about saving, borrowing, investing, and managing financial risks. Recognizing this, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has placed financial literacy and consumer awareness at the heart of its National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) 2024-28.

The progress made over the past decade is encouraging. In 2015, only 16 percent of Pakistani adults had a bank account. By 2023, this figure had risen to 64 percent, reflecting a remarkable transformation in the country’s financial landscape. Millions of Pakistanis have entered the formal financial system in less than a decade—a significant achievement that demonstrates the impact of sustained policy reforms and technological innovation.

Women’s financial inclusion has also witnessed remarkable progress. In 2018, approximately 13 million women had bank accounts. By 2023, this number had increased to 31 million, while the gender gap in financial inclusion declined from 47 percent to 34 percent.

These figures are more than just statistics; they represent greater economic participation, financial independence, and empowerment for millions of Pakistani women.

Equally significant is the fact that SBP’s vision extends far beyond increasing the number of bank accounts. While the central bank is widely known for maintaining monetary stability and controlling inflation, it has also assumed a leading role in promoting financial inclusion and consumer empowerment. Through initiatives such as the National Financial Literacy Program, Sikka Bakaida, the Banking on Equality Policy, consumer protection campaigns, digital financial literacy initiatives, awareness programmes for women and youth, outreach in rural communities, and financial education initiatives in schools and colleges, SBP has demonstrated a comprehensive commitment to building a financially informed society. Collectively, these initiatives have already reached approximately 3.2 million beneficiaries, of whom 58 percent are women.

Pakistan is also witnessing rapid growth in digital financial services through initiatives such as Raast, QR-code payments, mobile wallets, Asaan Mobile Accounts, and digital banking platforms. These innovations are making financial services faster, more convenient, and more accessible than ever before. However, technological advancement alone cannot guarantee meaningful financial inclusion. People must also understand how to use these services safely and responsibly. Financial literacy enables citizens to identify online scams, phishing attempts, account hacking, digital fraud, and fake investment schemes, ensuring that technological progress translates into genuine financial security rather than new forms of vulnerability.

Looking ahead, financial literacy

The government also needs to think carefully about taxation.

A sustainable tax system should broaden the base rather than continuously increasing the burden on those who are already documented and compliant. Salaried people should not feel that every attempt to formalise their income results in a disproportionate tax burden while large segments of the economy remain outside the effective tax net.

Similarly, economic policy must give greater attention to savings.

A middle-class family that cannot save is vulnerable to every unexpected event. One medical emergency, job loss, major repair or educational expense can push a household toward borrowing. Encouraging savings, pension planning, insurance and responsible investment should therefore become part of Pakistan’s broader financial literacy agenda.

Digital finance can help, but technology is not a substitute for income security. The country needs a culture in which people understand budgeting, saving, responsible borrowing and investment, while financial institutions provide products that ordinary households can actually use.

There is also an important psychological dimension to the middle-class crisis.

People want more than survival. They want dignity.

They want to believe that hard work will allow their children to live better than they did. They want to own a home, provide quality education, access decent healthcare and save enough to face retirement without depending on others.

That aspiration is not unreasonable. In fact, it is precisely the aspiration that a growing economy should protect.

Pakistan has made progress toward macroeconomic stabilisation, and that progress should not be dismissed. The latest economic figures indicate recovery in several sectors. But stabilisation is only the beginning. The next stage must be about translating stability into opportunity.

The real test of economic policy is therefore not simply whether GDP grows by another percentage point.

It is whether the shopkeeper can expand his business.

Whether the salaried employee can save at the end of the month.

Whether a young graduate can find a productive job.

Whether parents can educate their children without falling into debt.

Whether a family can pay its electricity bill without sacrificing food, healthcare or education.

Pakistan does not need an economy that looks strong only in official reports. It needs an economy that feels stronger inside Pakistani homes.

The middle class has carried a significant share of the country’s economic burden through taxes, consumption, entrepreneurship and employment. Protecting and expanding this class should therefore be treated not as a social luxury, but as an economic necessity. The question before Pakistan is no longer simply whether the economy can grow.

It is whether that growth can reach the household.

And ultimately, that is where economic success will be judged.





Islamabad: Former AJK Prime Minister and IPP AJK President Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan met IPP Punjab President Rana Nazeer Ahmed Khan to discuss political developments, party affairs, and matters of mutual interest.

Protest Held Outside Indian High Commission in London to Mark ‘Kashmir Black Day’



BY: ANI Reporter :

LONDON-- Global Pak Kashmir Supreme Council Chairman Raja Sikandar Khan, along with Fahim Kayani, President of the All Parties Kashmir Coordination Committee and Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK, organized a protest and rally outside the Indian High Commission in London to mark Kashmir Black Day on August 5.

The event began with the recitation of the Holy Quran. Raja Sikandar Khan welcomed and thanked participants who had travelled from across the United Kingdom to attend the demonstration. In his opening remarks, he highlighted the historical significance of August 5 and explained the purpose of the protest. Before inviting Fahim Kayani to address the gathering, he urged all participants to remain peaceful and disciplined throughout the event.

Addressing the rally, Fahim Kayani spoke about the significance

of August 5, outlined the objectives of the demonstration, and conducted the proceedings from the stage.

Speakers noted that on August 5, 2019, the Government of India revoked Articles 370 and 35A of the Constitution, ending the special constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir. They said Kashmiris around the world have since observed the date as Kashmir Black Day, holding protests, rallies, and public gatherings to express solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Hundreds of British Kashmiris and British Pakistanis from across the UK gathered outside the Indian High Commission in London to express support and solidarity with the people of Indian-administered Kashmir. Participants carried the flags of Pakistan and Kashmir and displayed banners and placards bearing slogans, including “Zionism and Hindutva are two sides of the same coin,” “Stop the killings in

Kashmir,” and “Indian Army, leave Kashmir.”

During the demonstration, protesters chanted slogans against the Government of India and the administration of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They called for the Kashmiri people to be granted their right to self-determination, describing it as their birthright, and demanded an end to India's control over the region. The demonstrators also called for the release of Kashmiri political prisoners and the reversal of life sentences handed down to Yasin Malik and Aasiya Andrabi.

The protest concluded with a special prayer led by Dr. Sheikh Ramzy for the people of Indian-administered Kashmir and the wider Muslim Ummah. In his closing remarks, Raja Sikandar Khan thanked all participants for their time, commitment, and support in making the demonstration successful. He also expressed his best wishes for everyone's safe journey home.

FGEHA Hands Over Allotment Letters to 38 Affected Allottees in G-15/3



By ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA), on the directions of Director General Captain (Retd.) Zafar Iqbal, distributed allotment letters to 38 affected allottees of Sector G-15/3 during a ceremony held in Islamabad.

The event was attended by MNA Anjum Aqeel Khan, Deputy Commissioner/Land Acquisition Collector Almas Sabeh Saqib, Director Land and Enforcement Lt. (Retd.) Saad Bin Asad, senior FGEHA officials, and affected allottees.

Officials announced that 132 kanals of government land had been recovered through an anti-encroachment operation, allowing the adjustment of plots for the affected allottees.

Speaking on the occasion, officials



said the initiative fulfilled FGEHA's commitment to resolving allotment issues through transparency and merit. Chief Guest Anjum Aqeel Khan praised the Authority's performance and expressed confidence that development work under DG

Captain (Retd.) Zafar Iqbal would continue at an accelerated pace.

The ceremony concluded with FGEHA reaffirming its commitment to providing modern housing facilities and ensuring transparent implementation of its development projects.

Jamaat-e-Islami Announces Nationwide Protest, Road Blockade on August 7

BY: ANI Correspondent.:

ISLAMABAD-- Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Punjab North finalized preparations for its nationwide protest and road blockade scheduled for August 7 against the petroleum levy, inflation, excessive taxation, and the government's economic policies.

A review meeting chaired by Dr. Tariq Saleem and attended by Nazir Ahmed Janjua decided that protests would be held across the country with participation from lawyers, teachers, students, traders, workers, and other segments of society. Organizers said only ambulances would be allowed to pass during the demonstrations.

JI leaders claimed the govern-



ment's economic policies had placed an unbearable burden on the public through rising fuel, electricity, and gas prices, and urged citizens to join

the peaceful nationwide protest called by Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman on August 7.

Digital Balochistan AI Bootcamp Students Meet NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq



BY: Hurish Shah/FT

ISLAMABAD--- A delegation of students participating in the Digital Balochistan AI Launchpad Bootcamp met Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House in Islamabad. Federal Secretary for Inter-Provincial Coordination Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani was also present.

Welcoming the students, the Speaker described Balochistan as a vital province and said Reko Diq has the potential to transform Pakistan's future. He said the National Assembly's internship programme

currently includes students from 21 universities and that more opportunities would be created for students from Balochistan.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq emphasized the importance of reading, research, and continuous learning, adding that equal employment opportunities are being ensured for all provinces, with increased representation for women and special opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The students were briefed on the National Assembly's AI-enabled parliamentary system, digitization of parliamentary business, and the transition to paperless operations.

The Speaker said Artificial Intelligence is improving parliamentary research, legislation, and administrative efficiency while complementing, not replacing, human decision-making.

Tech Valley Pakistan Founder and CEO Umar Farooq also briefed the Speaker on the AI Launchpad Bootcamp. The Speaker appreciated the efforts of the Government of Balochistan, Tech Valley Pakistan, the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination, the Ministry of Federal Education, and USEFP for promoting AI education and equipping youth with future-ready skills.

Rana Tauqeer Joins Pakistan Awaami Quwat Party, Appointed President of Chamber of Commerce Wing

By ANI Reporter :

ISLAMABAD--- Prominent political, social, and business leader Rana Tauqeer joined the Pakistan Awaami Quwat Party along with his associates during a ceremony held at the party's central office in Islamabad.

Party Chairman Khaqan Waheed Khawaja welcomed Rana Tauqeer

into the party and appointed him President of the Chamber of Commerce Wing, issuing an official notification on the occasion.

Speaking at the event, Khaqan Waheed Khawaja said Rana Tauqeer's experience would help address the concerns of the business community, particularly traders in Faisalabad.

Rana Tauqeer said he had previously served as Joint Secretary of Pakistan Muslim League (Q) Punjab but decided to join Pakistan Awami Quwat Party after being impressed by its vision and manifesto. He pledged to work for the welfare of the business community and contribute to Pakistan's development through the party platform.

Senate Panel Orders Probe into Alleged Irregularities in KP World Bank Projects



By F T Reporter :

ISLAMABAD---The Senate Standing Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Senator Saifullah Abro, reviewed foreign-funded development projects and expressed serious concern over alleged irregularities in World Bank-funded road projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Committee questioned the bidding process, alleging that projects were split into multiple packages and that procurement procedures lacked transparency. It

directed the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) to seek a comprehensive inquiry, recommend legal action against those responsible, recover any excess public funds, and request the World Bank to examine the procurement as a possible case of misprocurement.

The Committee also recommended reducing reliance on foreign loans and called for a meeting with the World Bank Country Director to discuss its observations.

Reviewing the Karachi Mobility Project (BRT Yellow Line), mem-

bers were informed that the project is expected to be completed by December 2028, with 250 electric buses to be procured under a public-private partnership model. The Chairman directed authorities to ensure transparency and submit subsidy details to the Committee.

The Committee also reviewed progress on the Akram Wah Canal Project and directed officials to provide a timeline for finalizing the contract while ensuring strict scrutiny of the procurement process.

Balochistan Issues Must Be Resolved Through Political Dialogue: All-Parties Conference

BY: ANI Reporter

QUETTA --- Leaders of various political parties in Balochistan declared that the province's challenges are political in nature and require a political solution, following a joint consultative meeting and press conference in Quetta.

The participants expressed concern over the law and order situation, claiming that highways in Balochistan have become unsafe and that public frustration, particularly among the youth, is increasing. They emphasized that their struggle would remain constitutional and democratic.

The leaders also announced that an All-Parties Conference on Balochistan would be held under the leadership of Maulana Fazlur Rehman, while another all-parties



meeting chaired by Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch is scheduled for September 5 to discuss the province's issues and formulate future recommendations.

The press conference was attended by senior leaders of the Awami National Party (ANP), Jamiat Ulema-

e-Islam (JUI-F), National Party, Balochistan National Party (BNP), Pashtunkhwa National Awami Party, National Democratic Movement (NDM), Hazara Democratic Party (HDP), Jamaat-e-Islami, and other political parties.

PML-Z to Observe Gen Zia-ul-Haq's 38th Death Anniversary on August 17 Ijaz-ul-Haq.

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- Pakistan Muslim League (Zia-ul-Haq) President and Member of the National Assembly (MNA), Muhammad Ijaz-ul-Haq, announced on Thursday that the 38th death anniversary of former President General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq and the martyrs of the Bahawalpur tragedy will be observed on August 17 with solemnity and reverence. He said all necessary preparations and arrangements for the occasion are being finalized.

Addressing a meeting to review the preparations, Ijaz-ul-Haq expressed deep concern over the lack of progress in the investigation into the Bahawalpur tragedy. He described the incident as a major conspiracy, stating that its underlying facts have yet to be brought before the nation.

He noted that the Justice Shafi-ur-Rahman Commission inquiry report has neither been made public nor



implemented, urging the government and relevant authorities to give immediate and serious attention to the matter.

Commenting on the country's political situation, the PML-Z chief said Pakistan is currently facing serious political, economic, and administrative challenges on both domestic and external fronts. He stressed that all political forces must rise above personal and partisan interests to develop a Charter of

Economy and build a broad national consensus.

Ijaz-ul-Haq emphasized that strengthening democratic institutions within the constitutional framework and promoting sustained dialogue among all stakeholders are essential for overcoming political instability and putting the country on the path to progress.

He further announced that a seminar titled “General Zia-ul-Haq Shaheed - Salute to Your Greatness” will be held in Rawalpindi on August 17 to pay tribute to the martyrs of the Bahawalpur tragedy and all the martyrs of Pakistan.

The seminar, he said, will also feature a comprehensive discussion on the prevailing national and political situation. A future roadmap addressing key national issues, including counterterrorism, the creation of new administrative provinces, and other major challenges, will be presented. He called upon the public and party workers to participate in large numbers.