

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

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Islamabad

Vol: 14 Issue: 340 Pages: 4 Price: 20 Friday August 21 2026

The Newspaper of ANI Media Group

Authorities 'complete' preparations to shift Imran to Shifa Int'l Hospital



ANI

ISLAMABAD: Preparations have been finalised at Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad to receive incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan for medical treatment in line with the Supreme Court's order, Dawn has learnt.

Imran — imprisoned since Aug 5, 2023, for concealing details of Toshakhana gifts — is serving a 14-year sentence at Rawalpindi's Adiala jail in a £190 million corruption case, also known as the Al-Qadir Trust case. However, his health has deteriorated over the course of his prison sentence, prompting outcry from members of the party.

Sources close to the development said all relevant departments and authorities, including the capital administration, police, jail officials and Rangers, were present at the hospital to finalise security and other arrangements.

Security pickets have been set up on roads leading to the facility, while a security audit of the hospital was also conducted earlier in view of the possible transfer of the former premier there.

The sources further said it had not yet been confirmed when Imran would be brought to the hospital, as a decision was yet to be made. However, arrangements were being made to deal with any situation that might arise.

Teams have also been constituted to bring Imran to the hospital from jail, comprising staff from the capital police and administration. The sources added that the capital police were responsible for transferring the PTI founder from jail for a medical check-up and examination, after which they would take him back to prison. In case of his admission to the hospital for treatment, the chief commissioner would declare the relevant room, ward or floor of the hospital a sub-jail and issue a notification. Staff from Adiala jail would be deployed at the hospital. Meanwhile, capital police and Rangers personnel would also be

present there to provide security and maintain law and order.

In a post on X, PTI Information Secretary Sheikh Waqas Akram wrote, "Imran Khan sahab will, Insha'Allah, be transferred to the hospital today." "We are fully aware of the sentiments of Imran Khan's supporters, who are eager to catch a glimpse of their leader."

However, he requested that people maintain their distance from the hospital and help ensure the party founder's health and treatment. On Tuesday, the Supreme Court directed the government to shift the jailed ex-premier to Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad within the next two days.

Govt bound to facilitate PTI founder's private treatment if needed: Tariq



ANI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Thursday apprised the Senate that the government would be bound to provide the PTI founder treatment at Shifa International Hospital or another better-equipped medical facility if the healthcare facilities required for his treatment were not available at government hospitals.

Responding to a point of order raised by the Leader of the Opposition in Senate, the minister said the government had no intention of opposing or creating hurdles in the provision of necessary medical treatment to the PTI founder.

He said the government had already made it clear that the decision of the Supreme Court of Pakistan regarding the matter would be implemented.

Dr Tariq Fazal said under the prevailing rules, convicted prisoners were provided medical treatment at government hospitals, and a legal point regarding the extent of such arrangements was before the Supreme Court for clarification.

He said if the Supreme Court determined that the required treatment could be provided outside the existing mechanism, the government would comply with its decision. The minister reiterated that if a medical facility required by the PTI founder was not available at a government hospital, the

government would be obligated to arrange the required treatment at Shifa International Hospital or an even better medical facility. Turning to concerns raised about the health of Dr Yasmin Rashid, Dr Tariq Fazal said the government was concerned about her condition and would again take up the matter with the Punjab government and jail administration.

He assured the House that the government would make sure that all medical facilities permissible under jail rules were provided to her.

The minister said Dr Yasmin Rashid had previously been provided hospital treatment and other medical facilities, adding that he would inform the opposition about progress on the matter after obtaining an updated position from the authorities concerned.

Referring to the May 9 incidents, he described the day as one of the darkest in Pakistan's history and said attacks were carried out on sensitive installations, police and national assets, including the attack on the Corps Commander's House in Lahore.

He said footage and other evidence relating to the incidents were available and that those found involved had faced legal proceedings.

The minister said individuals who had no connection with the incidents were not to be punished, while those found involved had been convicted by courts.

Dar says six Pakistani sailors return safely after Houthi attack, two bodies repatriated

ANI

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Thursday that six Pakistani sailors injured in a recent Houthi attack on a Tanzanian-flagged commercial vessel returned safely to Pakistan, while the bodies of two others who were killed in the attack were also repatriated. According to Yemen's Coast Guard, the three Pakistani nationals were among four crew members killed when the Yemeni-flagged vessel Tihamah was attacked by Houthi forces in the Bab al-Mandeb Strait on August 11. The vessel was reportedly struck three times by ballistic missiles, caught fire and sustained material damage, while another missile was fired as rescue teams attempted to



reach the crew. In a statement issued on X, Dar said the six injured sailors had "safely returned to Pakistan", while the mortal remains of the two sailors who "tragically lost their lives" had also been brought back. He said all relevant stakeholders had been directed to ensure the sailors' "safe, dignified and expeditious repatriation".

PM seeks stronger Pakistan-Syria ties in trade, defence and education

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday while recalling the historic and multifaceted Pakistan-Syria ties, emphasized the need to translate the longstanding Pakistan-Syria friendship into enhanced cooperation across politics, defence, trade, investment, education, and human resource development. The prime minister made these remarks during a call on him by Foreign Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, Asaad Hassan Al-Shaibani here, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. Welcoming Al-Shaibani and his delegation, the prime minister conveyed his best wishes for President Ahmed al-Sharaa, and recalled his recent interactions with him. He also reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for the sovereignty, unity, and ter-



ritorial integrity of Syria. He stated that the resumption of direct flights between the two countries would enhance people-to-people exchanges and facilitate a large number of pilgrims who undertake religious visits to Syria from Pakistan. The prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's support for Syria's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and said

Pakistan would firmly support Syria's position on the Golan Heights. The Syrian Foreign Minister conveyed the greetings of Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa to the prime minister, and briefed him on Syria's ongoing political transition and reconstruction efforts. He thanked Pakistan for its consistent support to Syria throughout the past years and expressed his government's keen interest in revitalizing bilateral engagement, including through early institutional mechanisms for cooperation. The

prime minister also extended an invitation to President Ahmed al-Sharaa to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at a mutually convenient date. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, SAPM Syed Tariq Fatemi and Foreign Secretary Amb. Amna Baloch were also present during the meeting.

NA passes National Command Authority, Defence Forces of Pakistan bills

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Thursday passed the National Command Authority Amendment Bill 2026 and the Defence Forces of Pakistan Bill 2026. Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif tabled both bills in the House. The National Assembly passed the bills clause by clause through majority votes. According to the statement of objects and reasons of the National Command Authority Amendment Bill 2026: The purpose of the amendments is to make consistent the National Command Authority Act, 2010 (V of 2010) with the Constitutional (27th Amendment) Act, 2025 (XXXII of 2025) and to make consequential amendments in the said law. The National Command Authority (Amendment) 2026, prepared for the said purpose. This Bill has been designed to achieve the aforesaid objective. According to statement of objects and reasons, Defence Forces of Pakistan Bill 2026: Pakistan's response to Indian unprovoked aggression was a textbook demonstration of integrated tri-services jointness.

President approves two important bills related to defense command

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD --- President Asif Ali Zardari has approved two important bills related to defense and national command structure. The President approved the National Command Authority (Amendment) Bill 2026 and the Defense Forces of Pakistan Bill 2026 on the advice of the Prime Minister. After the approval of both the bills, the National Assembly and the Senate sent them to the President for his approval. According to parliamentary records, both the bills were approved.



The National Command Authority Amendment Bill 2026 has amended the legal structure of the national and strategic command, while the Defense Forces of Pakistan Bill 2026 aims to regulate the administrative and legal affairs related to the Chief of Defense Forces and the Chief of Defense Forces Headquarters.

After the approval of the President, both the bills have completed the next stage of the legislative process and are moving towards coming into

INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHI RAJI'UN

CONDOLENCE

SENIOR JOURNALIST,
HAJI LATIF AWAN

With deep sorrow, we regret to inform that the esteemed journalist,
HAJI LATIF AWAN,
has passed away.

We pray to Allah Almighty to elevate his ranks in Jannah and grant patience and strength to his family in this time of grief.

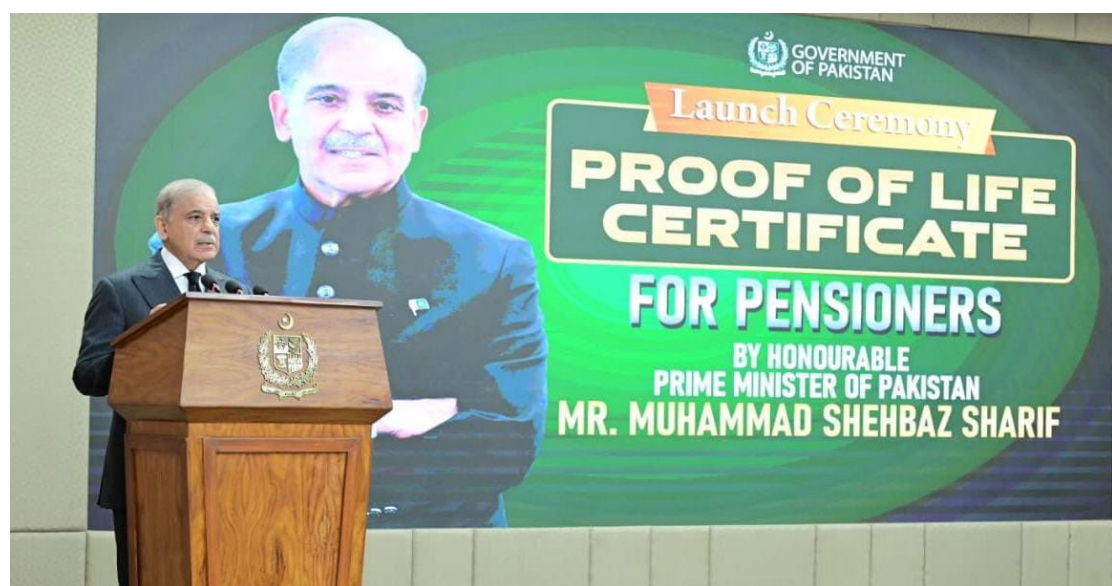
O Allah! Have mercy on him, forgive his sins, and accept his good deeds. Grant him a high place in Jannah. Ameen.

May Allah grant the best reward to everyone who offers their condolences.

ANI

Naeem Hassan Ahuan
Executive Editor,
ANI News Agency

Dr. Waheed Mehmood Khan
Chief Editor,
ANI News Agency



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the launching ceremony of proof of life certificate for pensioners, in Islamabad

Jhelum Administration Reviews Arrangements for Eid Milad-un-Nabi S.A.W Celebrations

BY: ANI Correspondent:

JHELUM -- An important meeting of the District Peace Committee was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Jhelum Mir Raza Özgun and DPO Jhelum Shafiq Ahmed Chaudhry to review arrangements for Eid Milad-un-Nabi celebrations during the blessed month of Rabi-ul-Awwal.

The meeting was attended by religious scholars, Ulema, members of the District Peace Committee and officers of relevant departments.

The participants reviewed arrangements for Milad gatherings, Naatia events, Milad processions, religious gatherings and other programmes. Detailed discussions were held on procession routes, security, traffic management, cleanliness, lighting and other necessary arrangements.

Deputy Commissioner Mir Raza Ozgun said that Rabi-ul-Awwal is a blessed month of love, devotion and respect for the Holy Prophet



Muhammad ﷺ. He directed all concerned departments to ensure comprehensive and coordinated arrangements for the events being held on the occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal.

DPO Jhelum Shafiq Ahmed Chaudhry briefed the meeting on security arrangements and directed the relevant officers to ensure effective security and traffic management

for processions and religious gatherings.

The meeting appreciated the cooperation of religious scholars and Ulema and expressed the resolve to hold all Eid Milad-un-Nabi celebrations in a peaceful and dignified manner, reflecting the spirit of religious devotion, brotherhood, tolerance and harmony.

PM Shehbaz Sharif Meets Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at National Assembly

Report: F T Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD, August 20, 2026: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari during the session of the National Assembly in Islamabad on Thursday.

The two leaders exchanged views during the meeting at the National Assembly, where the session was underway.



Women's Parliamentary Caucus Holds Focus Group Discussion on Gender-Responsive Budgeting

BY: FT Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) of the National Assembly, under the chairpersonship of its Secretary Dr. Shahida Rehmani, MNA, in collaboration with Resource and Support Hub (RSH) Pakistan, held a Focus Group Discussion on Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) at the WPC Secretariat, Parliament House, Islamabad.

The consultation brought together Members of Parliament and representatives of RSH Pakistan to discuss strengthening gender-responsive financing, budget tracking, parliamentary oversight and accountability, particularly in relation to gender-based violence, safeguarding and protection.

Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani stressed that Gender-Responsive Budgeting should not be treated merely as a technical exercise. She said Parliament must ensure that gender-related legislative commitments are adequately financed, effectively implemented and translated into meaningful outcomes for women and girls.

She also highlighted the need to examine the complete accountability chain, from budget allocation and release to expenditure, service delivery, implementation and parliamentary scrutiny.

Members of the National Assembly called for a strong mechanism to monitor gender-responsive budget allocations in every ministry and department. They proposed appointing a designated focal person for gender budgeting in each minis-



try and department to facilitate coordination, monitoring, reporting and implementation of gender-tagged allocations.

The members also emphasised the need to sensitise Chairpersons of Standing Committees on Gender-Responsive Budgeting so that gender considerations receive due attention during deliberations on ministry-wise budgets, policies, programmes and performance.

Another key recommendation was to ensure appropriate representation of women in public-sector schemes, programmes and departmental initiatives. Members proposed that a women's quota or defined participation target be incorporated, where appropriate, to ensure women benefit equitably from public resources and development programmes.

RSH Pakistan Country Lead Asma Kiran highlighted the importance of strengthening safeguarding systems, prevention of gender-based violence and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

The discussion also focused on improving the visibility, traceability and accountability of gender- and GBV-related expenditure through clearer budget information, institutional responsibility mapping, expenditure tracking and stronger parliamentary follow-up.

Participants agreed that effective Gender-Responsive Budgeting requires a practical mechanism linking legislative commitments with budget allocations, implementation, expenditure and measurable results.

The consultation concluded with a call for stronger coordination among Parliament, ministries, Standing Committees and technical partners to improve gender budget monitoring and ensure public resources effectively respond to the needs and priorities of women and girls.

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus reaffirmed its commitment to continued engagement on Gender-Responsive Budgeting, parliamentary oversight and accountable public financing.

Pakistan's Progress Closely Linked to Strength of Universities: Chairman Senate

BY: FT Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD ---Chairman Senate of Pakistan Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has said that Pakistan's progress is closely linked to the strength of its universities, which play a vital role in educating minds, building character, promoting responsible citizenship and preparing youth for future challenges.

He was addressing the closing ceremony of a three-day workshop titled "Strategic Planning and Leadership Excellence", organised by the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan, for Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Deans and heads of statutory bodies of universities at the National Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF).

Gilani appreciated HEC and NAHE for bringing together university leadership for the important initiative and said effective leadership, sound governance and strategic planning were essential for institutional growth and national development.

He stressed that Vice Chancellors were not merely administrators but leaders responsible for shaping education, research, innovation and the future direction of their institutions. The Chairman Senate called for



promoting innovation, excellence, collaboration and inclusivity in higher education institutions and urged universities to prepare youth to meet future challenges and contribute to society and the national economy.

Chairman HEC Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar stressed the importance of following the laws and regulations of university Syndicates and statutory bodies. He highlighted the role of academic management and faculty in improving governance, enhancing quality and creating a conducive academic and research environment.

Dr. Noor Amna Malik highlighted the financial challenges facing higher education institutions and called for greater prioritisation, support and funding for the sector to achieve tangible outcomes.

Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training Ms. Wajiha Qamar also interacted with participants and termed visionary leadership a key pillar of strong universities. She stressed the importance of innovation, strategic governance, accountability and collaboration.

The three-day workshop covered strategic planning, university governance, financial management, institutional sustainability, resource mobilisation, performance management, stakeholder engagement and the role of artificial intelligence in higher education.

Participating university leaders appreciated the initiative and described it as a valuable platform for learning, experience sharing and finding solutions to challenges facing the higher education sector.

Deputy Commissioner Murree Hears Citizens' Complaints, Orders Immediate Resolution of Issues

Report -- ANI

MURREE -- Deputy Commissioner Murree Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi heard the complaints and grievances of citizens from different areas at his office and issued immediate directions to the concerned officers for their resolution. Several matters were ordered to be resolved on the spot.

The Deputy Commissioner directed officials to ensure that citizens do not face unnecessary delays at government offices and that genuine public complaints are addressed on a priority basis.

Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi said that serving the public and resolving their issues in a timely manner are



among the top priorities of the district administration. He said transparency, merit and public convenience would be ensured at all levels.

He further stated that his office remains open to the public and citi-

zens can approach him with their genuine concerns. The citizens thanked the Deputy Commissioner for listening to their problems and issuing prompt directions for their resolution.

Interfaith Harmony and Intra-Muslim Unity Conference Held in Quetta, Detailed Review of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal Arrangements

BY: ANI Correspondent:

QUETTA -- An Interfaith Harmony and Intra-Muslim Unity Conference was held in connection with 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal, Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH).

The conference was attended by Deputy Inspector General of Police Quetta Imran Shaukat, Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehrullah Badini, SSP Operations Quetta Zia-ul-Haq Mandokhail, SSP Traffic Muhammad Baloch, religious scholars (Ulema), the business community, and representatives of various schools of thought.

During the conference, a detailed review was conducted regarding the security and traffic arrangements for religious gatherings, processions, and other events to be held on the occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal. Detailed discussions were also held on promoting intra-Muslim unity, interfaith harmony, religious tolerance, and law and order.

DIG Quetta Imran Shaukat said that the protection of life and property of citizens and the maintenance of law and order on the occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal is the top priority of the police. Effective and foolproof security arrangements will be ensured for all religious gatherings and processions.



Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehrullah Badini said that the district administration will ensure complete cooperation and effective coordination with all relevant departments, Ulema, traders, and representatives of different schools of thought.

SSP Operations Quetta Zia-ul-Haq Mandokhail and SSP Traffic Muhammad Baloch briefed the participants on the security and traffic plan and informed them about the measures being taken to maintain the smooth flow of traffic during 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal.

Ulema, the business community,

and representatives of various schools of thought assured their full cooperation with the police and district administration for the establishment of law and order, religious tolerance, and promotion of intra-Muslim and interfaith harmony.

At the conclusion of the conference, the participants expressed their resolve to promote mutual unity, brotherhood, religious tolerance, and an atmosphere of peace and love on the auspicious occasion of 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal and to continue joint efforts for the establishment of sustainable peace in Quetta.

Rare Jinnah photographs remind youth of Pakistan's struggle and sacrifices': Khichi

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi Thursday said that rare photographs of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah are not merely a record of history but also a powerful message for Pakistan's younger generation, reminding them of the struggle, dedication and sacrifices behind the creation of Pakistan.

He expressed these views while inaugurating a rare and historic photographic exhibition, "Quaid-i-Azam: The First Governor-General of Pakistan 1947-1948," at the National Art Gallery of the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA).

The exhibition, held as part of PNCA's commemorative activities marking Pakistan's 79th Independence Day, presents a visual chronicle of the life and official engagements of the country's founding leader through the lens of his official photographer, Ziauddin Barni.

Rare Jinnah photographs remind youth of Pakistan's struggle and sacrifices': Aurangzeb Khichi

The federal minister emphasized the importance of preserving and presenting historical material to strengthen national awareness and inspire younger generations to understand the values of leadership, determination, public service and commitment embodied by Quaid-i-Azam.

He said such exhibitions provided young people an opportunity to connect with Pakistan's history in a meaningful and visual manner and helped keep the legacy of the nation's



founder alive for future generations.

The exhibition is being held under the patronage of PNCA Director General Muhammad Ayoub Jamali and has been curated by Mariam Ahmed. It was first showcased in 2023 at the Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi, in collaboration with Dawn Media, and was curated by Abdul Hamid Akhund and Hameed Haroon.

The photographs provide a rare glimpse into the formative years of Pakistan through the camera of Ziauddin Barni, who accompanied Quaid-i-Azam on numerous official engagements and documented significant moments during his tenure as the first Governor-General of Pakistan.

Among the most poignant photographs are those depicting Quaid-i-Azam's final days and funeral ceremonies following his death in September 1948.

The images constitute an invaluable visual record of one of the defining moments in Pakistan's history.

Rare Jinnah photographs remind

youth of Pakistan's struggle and sacrifices': Aurangzeb Khichi

The photographs on display represent only a portion of the material from Barni's personal archive, preserved by his family, particularly his granddaughter Zarreen Baqir. Several other photographs preserved in national archives are also believed to have been taken by Barni.

Beyond their historical significance, the photographs offer a deeply human perspective of Quaid-i-Azam, capturing moments of leadership, public service, interaction and reflection during the formative years of Pakistan. The exhibition enables visitors to look beyond the iconic portrait of the Quaid and discover the man behind the historic figure.

PNCA has invited art lovers, historians, researchers, students, photographers and the general public to visit the exhibition and experience the visual journey through the early history of Pakistan. The exhibition will remain open until September 30 at National Art Gallery, PNCA from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Turkmenistan sets out key priorities for 81st UN General Assembly session

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Turkmenistan is preparing an ambitious agenda for the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly, placing peace-building, preventive diplomacy, sustainable development, international security and multilateral cooperation at the center of its international efforts.

"Ashgabat Advances New Initiatives on Peace, Preventive Diplomacy, Sustainable Development and International Cooperation."

Building on its policy of permanent neutrality, Turkmenistan intends to present a series of international initiatives designed to strengthen dialogue, trust and cooperation in addressing global and regional chal-



lenges, said a release issued on Thursday.

On Peace and Preventive diplomacy at the forefront, a central element of Turkmenistan's agenda will be the promotion of a culture of peace, dialogue and preventive diplomacy. The country plans to organize, under the auspices of the United Nations, intergovernmental consulta-

tions on the development of a Strategy for Universal Peace, based on the principles of peace, security and prevention of conflicts.

Turkmenistan will also propose declaring 2027-2037 the United Nations Decade of Dialogue and Preventive Diplomacy.

Another proposed initiative is the establishment of a UN Group of Friends of Multilateralism and the Sovereign Equality of States, aimed at reinforcing multilateral cooperation and respect for the equality of states.

The country also plans to advance efforts toward establishing the proposed University of Peace and Neutrality, including consultations on an Academic Center for Peace, Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy in Ashgabat.

Gulf countries can win the global talent war

ARNAB NEIL SENGUPTA

For decades, the world’s most ambitious young professionals have made a beeline for a familiar set of destinations: New York, London, Silicon Valley, Boston, Research Triangle Park in North Carolina and a handful of other global hubs. These places promised opportunity, job satisfaction and high-growth careers. Today, that promise is fading. A slowdown in white-collar hiring across the West, being felt most acutely by tech industry executives in the US, has opened a rare window of opportunity for Gulf Arab states. This is the moment the Gulf Cooperation Council can win the global talent war. Recent reports in The Wall Street Journal paint a grim picture. Even graduates from elite US business schools — the traditional providers of executives, consultants and financiers — are taking months to land job offers. At Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business, 21 percent of master’s graduates were still unemployed three months after graduation. At the University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business, the figure stood at 15 percent, compared with just 4 per-

cent in 2019. Georgetown University reported that fully a quarter of its MBA class was still searching for work after three months. These are sobering numbers for institutions that once served as launchpads for lucrative careers. The reasons are manifold. Companies are cutting back on white-collar hiring amid economic uncertainty, geopolitical risk and the rapid adoption of generative artificial intelligence, which threatens to automate many entry- and mid-level professional tasks. Layoffs in technology, finance and consulting have flooded the US market with experienced candidates competing for a shrinking pool of jobs. As one Wall Street Journal report noted, the US added just 49,000 jobs per month in 2025 — the slowest pace in more than two decades outside major recessions — and most of those jobs were in healthcare, not business or technology. This crisis for Western graduates represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the Gulf. At precisely the moment when hydrocarbon prices are softening and fiscal pressures are rising, countries hitherto reliant on

energy exports need fresh thinking, new business models and the best managerial capacity. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain all have strategies in place aimed at economic diversification. Significant investments are already flowing into AI, advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, life sciences, logistics and fintech. But capital alone may not be enough to guarantee the anticipated return on such investments. That depends on skilled engineers, product designers, data scientists, business strategists, venture capital professionals and industrial managers. Time is also of the essence. AI data centers, advanced manufacturing projects and tech ventures will take perhaps years to mature and produce stable returns, assuming all goes well. But Gulf states facing fiscal pressures from lower oil revenues do not have the luxury of sitting back and hoping for the best. One way to bridge this gap is to aggressively attract world-class human capital that can help create entirely new revenue streams and industries, while looking forward to seeing their investments in electronics, advanced

industrials, clean energy and AI pay off in the fullness of time. To be sure, the Gulf already attracts a tremendous amount of talent. Since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, Riyadh and Dubai, for instance, have drawn tens of thousands of new expatriates every year. Their booming populations testify to their international appeal. However, a substantial part of this inflow ends up in real estate, hospitality, retail, basic services and mid-level corporate roles. What remains limited is the recruitment of innovation-driving talent from top business schools, engineering institutes, medical schools and research universities — the kind of graduates that powered the rise of Silicon Valley, Boston’s biotech ecosystem and London’s financial sector. It is no secret that the US owes much of its technological leadership to generations of first-generation immigrants who arrived with talent and ambition. From Silicon Valley to Wall Street, foreign-born talent has powered the engines that drive entire sectors of the American economy. Fortunately, the GCC countries have the financial resources, infra-

structure, lifestyle advantages and geopolitical stability to bet on that strategy — provided they act decisively. Several forces work in the regional bloc’s favor. First, world-class healthcare, international schools, modern housing, cultural openness and physical safety make cities like Riyadh, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha highly attractive to cosmopolitan professionals. Second, taxation levels here remain competitive, allowing professionals to retain far more of their income than in the West. Third, governments are increasingly generous when it comes to visas, work permits, property ownership and long-term residency — a crucial factor for young talents who prioritize families and careers. To attract the brightest minds, Gulf countries must offer something intellectually compelling: the chance to build new institutions, industries and ecosystems from the ground up. This is where the region holds a significant advantage over Western economies that are burdened with high-tax regimes, bureaucratic inertia, regulatory inflexibility and policy rigidity.

— Arab News

What Myanmar’s genocide defense reveals about global justice

DR. AZEEM IBRAHIM

Over the past several days, the hearings at the International Court of Justice in The Hague have revealed something far more consequential than a procedural dispute over jurisdiction or representation. They have exposed a deliberate and coherent legal strategy by Myanmar’s military rulers: the systematic erasure of the Rohingya as a people from the courtroom itself. Rather than grappling with the substance of the genocide allegations brought under the Genocide Convention, the junta’s lawyers retreated almost entirely into abstraction. Their submissions were dominated by arguments about standing, admissibility, timelines and who has the authority to speak for Myanmar. What was striking was not simply what was said but what was consistently avoided. The Rohingya were rarely named. Their identity, history and continued suffering were conspicuously absent from a case that exists solely because of crimes committed against them. This was not an oversight. It was a strategy. Genocide, under international law, begins with the targeting of a protected group. The crime is not only about mass killing, it is about the destruction of a people as such. In Myanmar, that process unfolded over decades through the denial of citizenship, restrictions on movement, exclusion from education and the systematic delegitimization of Rohingya identity. By the time the military launched its 2016-2017 “clearance operations,” the Rohingya had already been rendered legally and politically invisible within the state. What the recent hearings at the world court demonstrate is that this logic of erasure has now migrated from the battlefield and bureaucracy into the courtroom. The junta’s legal approach seeks to strip the case of its human core and reframe it as a technical dispute between states. By doing so, it avoids confronting the central question before the court: whether specific people were targeted for destruction because of who they are. This matters because genocide law cannot function in the abstract. The Genocide Convention was drafted in the shadow of the Holocaust precisely to prevent legal formalism from shielding perpetrators. It requires courts to identify victims, name protected groups and assess intent. When

a respondent state refuses even to acknowledge the existence of the group at the center of the case, it is not mounting a defense in good faith; it is attempting to hollow out the law itself. The danger is that proceduralism becomes complicity. International courts are, by design, cautious institutions. They prize jurisdictional clarity, procedural fairness and state consent. But when those instincts dominate to the exclusion of substance, they can be exploited by regimes that understand how to weaponize the legal process. The junta’s approach at The Hague reflects a broader pattern seen in other atrocity cases: delay justice long enough, bury facts under procedure and eventually the political urgency dissipates. For the Rohingya, time is not neutral. Nearly 1 million remain in refugee camps in Bangladesh. Conditions in Rakhine State have deteriorated further, with new rounds of violence, restrictions on humanitarian access and deepening food insecurity. Each year of legal delay entrenches displacement and normalizes a reality in which return, citizenship and justice drift further out of reach. If the International Court of Justice allows the case to be reduced to questions of representation and standing without insisting on engagement with the underlying crimes, it risks setting a dangerous precedent. Other regimes accused of mass atrocities will learn the lesson quickly: you do not need to refute the facts if you can avoid discussing them altogether. This is not simply a problem for Myanmar or the Rohingya. It goes to the heart of whether genocide law remains fit for purpose in an era of fragmented states, contested sovereignty and authoritarian resilience. Many contemporary conflicts involve regimes that lack full territorial control or popular legitimacy. If such actors are nonetheless able to use procedural shields to evade scrutiny, the deterrent value of international justice will erode rapidly. The world court does not need to abandon legal rigor to avoid this outcome. But it does need to recognize that silence can be as consequential as speech. When a respondent refuses to name the victims of alleged genocide, the court should treat that refusal as legally and morally significant.

— Arab News



Military Continuity, Institutional Maturity and the Test of Strategic Leadership



Written by: Rana Farooq Ashraf : Published by ANI

In a country like Pakistan, where national security, geopolitical realities, internal stability and external challenges remain closely inter-

connected, changes in military leadership, promotions and command structures naturally attract considerable public attention. Yet in a mature state, such developments should be viewed primarily through the lens of institutional continuity, merit, professional competence and established legal procedures rather than through the personalities involved. October 2022 provides an important example. At that time, twelve major generals of the Pakistan Army were promoted to the rank of lieutenant general. The promotions were significant not only because of the seniority of the officers involved, but also because they formed part of the normal process through which the Army maintains its senior leadership pipeline and prepares



for future command responsibilities. The fundamental question, therefore, is not about any individual but about the strength of the institutional process. Professional armed forces around the world depend upon systems of promotion, evaluation and appointment designed to identify officers with the required experience, competence, leadership qualities and professional record. Pakistan’s military promotion boards are part of this institutional framework. The importance of such continuity has become even greater because Pakistan today faces a complex security environment. Challenges along the eastern and western borders, terrorism, instability in parts of the country, developments in Afghanistan, economic pressures and rapidly changing regional geopolitics have expanded the meaning of national security. Modern security policy can no longer be confined to conventional military preparedness; it requires diplomacy, economic resilience, intelligence cooperation and strategic partnerships. It is in this wider context that the leadership of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir deserves attention. His leadership style has been characterised by discipline, decisiveness and an emphasis on strategic thinking,



His approach reflects an understanding that Pakistan’s security interests cannot be separated from the broader political, economic and geopolitical environment. The real test of strategic leadership is not merely the ability to respond to a crisis, but the capacity to anticipate emerging challenges and prepare institutions for them. Pakistan’s growing defence diplomacy has also assumed greater significance during this period. The mutual defence agreement signed between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in 2025 represented an important development in the longstanding defence and security relationship between the two countries. The agreement provided a more structured framework for strengthening bilateral security cooperation. The strategic relationship has continued to evolve. Pakistan’s defence engagement with Saudi Arabia and Türkiye reflects a broader effort to develop partnerships based on mutual security interests, defence cooperation, counterterrorism capabilities, training and strategic coordination. Such relationships are particularly important at a time when the security architecture of the region is undergoing rapid transformation. Pakistan’s strategic importance is also shaped by its geography. It sits at the intersection of South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East, while maintaining important relationships with China, the Gulf states, Türkiye and the wider Muslim world. A prudent foreign and defence policy therefore requires Pakistan to maintain strategic balance while protecting its sovereignty and national interests. The internal dimension is equally important. Pakistan’s long-term security cannot



be separated from economic stability, political stability, social cohesion and effective governance. Countering terrorism, strengthening the economy, attracting

investment and improving institutional coordination are all components of national security. A strong economy, in particular, is essential for sustaining defence preparedness and strategic independence over the long term. This is why the broader vision of the present military leadership should be assessed not simply through military developments but also through its understanding of Pakistan’s changing strategic environment. Defence diplomacy, regional partnerships and national security policy must ultimately serve the larger objective of a stable, prosperous and sovereign Pakistan. The age of social media has, however, created a new challenge. Speculation about military appointments, promotions and retirements can become a national debate within hours. Responsible journalism requires a clear distinction between verified information and speculation. Until a promotion, appointment or retirement is formally announced by the relevant institution, claims circulating on social media should be treated with caution. The strength of the Pakistan Army, like that of any professional institution, lies in its ability to continue functioning regardless of changes in individual leadership.



Officers are promoted, assume new responsibilities and eventually retire, while the institutional structure remains intact. This continuity is not a sign of weakness; it is one of the clearest indicators of institutional maturity. Pakistan therefore needs to look beyond temporary controversies and personalities. The real measure of national strength lies in the resilience of institutions, the professionalism of leadership, the quality of decision-making and the ability to protect national interests in an increasingly uncertain world. The challenge before Pakistan is to combine defence preparedness with economic strength, internal stability and effective diplomacy. If these elements move together, Pakistan can strengthen its position as a responsible and strategically important state. Ultimately, nations are not strengthened merely by weapons or individual personalities. They are strengthened by institutions capable of surviving transitions, leaders capable of taking difficult decisions, and policies designed around long-term national interests. Institutional continuity, professional merit and strategic foresight must therefore remain the guiding principles of Pakistan’s future. Pakistan Zindabad

.Supreme Court Grants Post-Arrest Bail to Advocate Hina Noman in FIA, Emigration Act Case

BY: FT Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- The Supreme Court of Pakistan has granted post-arrest bail to Advocate Hina Noman in a case registered under the Emigration Act and being investigated by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).
The bail was approved by Bench No. 2 of the Supreme Court following detailed legal arguments in the



case.
Following the court's decision, Advocate Hina Noman expressed gratitude and termed the outcome a victory for justice. She said this was the first time she had been granted bail by the apex court.
She also expressed her heartfelt gratitude to her family, friends and well-wishers for standing by her and supporting her throughout the legal proceedings.

Ali and Sajal’s grand wedding ceremony, attended by a large number of political and social figures

BY: ANI Correspondent.:

NOTTINGHAM/UK -- A large number of prominent personalities from political, social, journalistic and other walks of life attended the grand wedding ceremony of Ali and Sajal.
The ceremony was attended by Sardar Abdul Razaq Khan, Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan and former President Rawalpindi High Court Bar Association Rawalpindi, Sheraz Khan, former President Pakistan Press Club UK, Senior Journalist and Executive Editor Financial Times/ANI, Raja Masood Sharif and Mian Imran Ramzan, President UK Islamic Mission, Nottingham, and other dignitaries.



At the end of the ceremony, the dignitaries also took a group photo.

Gujranwala Central Jail Superintendent Azhar Cheema Arrested

BY: ANI Correspondent:

GUJRANWALA--- Superintendent of Gujranwala Central Jail Azhar Cheema has been arrested by anti-corruption officials.
According to anti-corruption authorities, Azhar Cheema is facing



alleged corruption charges and was taken into custody in connection with the case.
Officials said Azhar Cheema will be produced before the court shortly after his arrest, where further legal proceedings will be initiated.

Murree Police Arrest Two Drug Dealers, Recover 4.52kg of Hashish

BY: ANI Crime Reporter :

MURREE -- Murree On the directives of DPO Murree Raza Tanveer Supra, Murree Police continued its crackdown against drug dealers, arresting two suspects in separate operations and recovering a total of 4.520 kilograms of hashish.In the first operation, Kotli Sattian Police arrested drug dealer Muhammad Sajjad alias Fauji and recovered 2.840 kilograms of hashish from his possession. Police said the suspect had previously been booked in several drug-related cases.In a separate operation, Patriata Police arrested Sajid Mahmood and recovered 1.680 kilograms of hashish from his possession. According to police, Muhammad Sajjad alias Fauji was allegedly operating as a wholesale drug dealer and supplying narcotics to other dealers at



the local level.DPO Murree Raza Tanveer Supra appreciated the police teams for their successful operations and said that indiscriminate action against drug dealers would continue.

He added that protecting the youth from drugs remains a top priority of Murree Police and the crackdown would be further intensified until the menace of drugs is eliminated.

Pakistan Police Canoeing Teams Win 10 Medals in Independence Cup Championship 2026

BY: ANI Sport Reporter :

LAHORE -- Pakistan Police Sports Board players delivered an outstanding performance at the All Pakistan Jashan-e-Azadi Open Gold Cup Men's and Women's Canoeing Championship 2026, winning a total of 10 medals.
The Pakistan Police canoeing teams secured 2 gold, 2 silver and 6 bronze medals in various categories.
Teams from the Army, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also participated in the championship.
Punjab Police spokesperson said the players displayed excellent sportsmanship and achieved remarkable success in different events.
IG Punjab Abdul Karim congratulated the Pakistan Police Canoeing



Teams, players and officials on their performance, saying the department is proud of athletes who bring honour to the force through achievements at national and international events.

Director General Pakistan Police Sports Board Additional IG Imran Arshad and Chief Sports Officer DIG Athar Ismail Amjad also praised the winning teams and appreciated the players' outstanding performance.

Pakistan’s Total Debt Stands at Rs81,374 Billion: Finance Ministry

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- The Finance Ministry presented details of Pakistan's overall debt during the Senate session.
According to the ministry, Pakistan's total debt stood at Rs81,374 billion as of December 2025. The government's domestic debt amounted to Rs55,363 billion, while its external debt stood at Rs23,166 billion.
The Finance Ministry informed the Senate that Pakistan had obtained Rs2,845 billion in loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
The ministry further stated that from 2021 to fiscal year 2026, the gov-



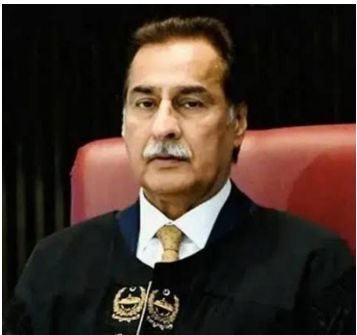
ernment paid a total of Rs32,239 billion in interest on its debt.
During the same period, the gov-

ernment repaid loans amounting to Rs102,780 billion, according to the Finance Ministry.

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq Expresses Displeasure Over Delay in Answer to Question on IPC Ministry

BY: Maryam Sajid/ ANI

ISLAMABAD --- Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq expressed displeasure during Question Hour over the non-receipt of an answer to a question raised by MNA Muhammad Ilyas Chaudhary regarding the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC).
The Speaker also took notice of the absence of officials of the concerned ministry from the National Assembly and questioned Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry and Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar as to why the answer had not been provided during the last four consecutive sittings.
Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said the question had been raised during the 26th



sitting of the National Assembly, but despite several subsequent sittings, the House had still not received an answer.
The Speaker termed the delay a matter of serious concern and directed Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal

Chaudhry to immediately summon the Secretary, Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary and concerned Section Officer of the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination to the House.
He directed the officials to remain present in the House until the conclusion of the proceedings.
The Speaker made it clear that concerned ministries were responsible for providing timely and comprehensive answers to questions raised by parliamentarians during Question Hour, adding that negligence in this regard would not be tolerated.
Subsequently, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq temporarily suspended the proceedings of the National Assembly until the attendance of the concerned officials of the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination in the House.

Japan Provides Grant Assistance for Special Students’ Transportation Project in Karachi

BY: ANI Correspondent:

KARACHI -- The Government of Japan has announced a grant of USD 55,734, equivalent to approximately PKR 15.5 million, to a local NGO for the purchase of a new school bus for special students in Karachi.
The grant agreement was signed at the Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi between Japanese Consul General HATTORI Masaru and Ms. Habiba Habib, President of the Institute of Behavioral Psychology (IBP) School of Special Education Karachi.
The new school bus will enable an additional 30 students to access quality education, vocational training and specialised therapeutic services.
The bus will provide safe and reliable door-to-door transportation to students with psychological and physical challenges, many of whom face difficulties in accessing education due to lengthy travel arrange-



ments.
The project will also allow the families of these students to pursue socioeconomic opportunities during school hours.
Speaking at the signing ceremony, Consul General HATTORI Masaru expressed hope that the grant assistance would generate substantial social benefits and contribute to long-

term economic development through support for the IBP School of Special Education.
The Government of Japan reaffirmed its commitment to providing flexible and timely support to local NGOs through grant assistance programmes aimed at improving the social wellbeing of the people of Pakistan.

Youth and Parliamentarians Call for Stronger Tobacco Control in Pakistan

BY: FT Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- An Orientation Session with Youth Mentors and Parliamentarians was held in Islamabad under the theme “Youth for a Tobacco-Free Pakistan: From Awareness to Action.” The session brought together parliamentarians, health experts, tobacco-control representatives, youth mentors, civil society and the Aurat Foundation (AF) team to discuss stronger measures to protect Pakistan's young population from tobacco and emerging nicotine products.
The session was attended by Ms. Syeda Amnah Batool, MNA and Focal Person, Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP); Ms. Sabheen Ghoury, MNA and Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Information and Technology; Mr. Jamal Ahmed Khan Raisani, MNA; and Mr. Tanveer Aslam Raja, MPA. Mr. Aftab Ahmed from the Tobacco Control Cell (TCC), Prof. Dr. Mati-ur-Rehman, Senator Faisal Javed Rana and Mr. Anees Ahmed from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK) also participated, along with youth mentors and the Aurat Foundation team including CEO Mr. Naehm Ahmed Mirza, Mr. Syed Safdar Raza Team Lead Anti-Tobacco Project, Ms. Mumtaz Mughal Director Programs and Ms. Fatima Jafry Program Officer Anti-Tobacco Project.
During the session, participants stressed that tobacco control must remain a public-health priority, particularly given the increasing exposure of young people to tobacco and new nicotine products. The participants emphasized the need to move beyond awareness towards concrete policy and legislative action.
A key demand emerging from the



session was to increase Graphic Health Warnings (GHWs) on tobacco product packaging from the existing level of 70% to 85%. Participants highlighted that larger and more prominent health warnings can strengthen public awareness about the harmful consequences of tobacco use and help discourage initiation among young people. The participants also called for stronger and regular increases in taxes on tobacco products as an effective public-health measure. Higher tobacco taxes can make tobacco products less affordable, particularly for young people, while contributing to reducing tobacco consumption. The session emphasized the importance of ensuring that tobacco taxation policies are effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.
Parliamentarians highlighted the critical role of legislation, oversight and effective implementation of tobacco-control measures. They also emphasized the importance of engaging young people in policymaking and advocacy so that their voices and experiences are reflected in national and provincial tobacco-control strategies.
Health experts underscored the harmful effects of tobacco and nicotine and stressed that prevention among young people must be strengthened

through evidence-based policies, awareness campaigns and effective enforcement.
The session further recognized youth mentors as potential change-makers and tobacco-control advocates who can take accurate information to their peers, educational institutions and communities. Participants agreed that empowering young people with knowledge and advocacy skills is essential for building a sustained movement for a tobacco-free Pakistan.
The participation of the Parliamentarians, Tobacco Control Cell, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and Aurat Foundation provided an important platform for strengthening coordination among government, civil society, health experts, parliamentarians and youth.
The session concluded with a collective call for stronger tobacco-control policies, an increase in Graphic Health Warnings to 85%, effective tobacco taxation, stronger enforcement and meaningful youth engagement. Increase Tax on Tobacco and Nicotine products were emphasized.
The participants reaffirmed their commitment to working together to protect Pakistan's young generation and advance the vision of a Tobacco-Free Pakistan.

Secretary Local Government Punjab Reviews Development Projects in Noorpur, Rangpur Baghour and Chak No. 51/D.B

BY: ANI Correspondent:

SARGODHA -- Secretary Local Government Punjab Zaid bin Masood, accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner Khushab, paid a special visit to Tehsil Noorpur, Rangpur Baghour and Chak No. 51/D.B. to inspect ongoing development projects being executed under the Local Government Department.
During the visit, the Secretary reviewed various development schemes, including water supply and sewerage lines, Punjab Rural Municipal Services Company (PRMSC) projects and other mega development projects. He inspected the progress and quality of the ongoing works and reviewed the facilities being provided to the local population. Deputy Director Development Sohail Sikandar Ranjha and officers of the Local



Government Department, Tehsil Noorpur, briefed the Secretary about the ongoing development schemes, their progress and other related matters.
Speaking on the occasion, Secretary Local Government Punjab Zaid bin Masood directed the concerned officers to ensure that all ongoing projects and development works were completed

within the prescribed time frame and according to the approved schedule. He further emphasized that high-quality and standard construction materials must be used in all development projects to ensure durability and transparency.
Local Government officers and other concerned officials were also present during the visit.