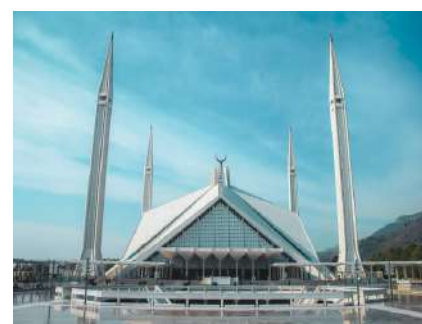




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Editor: JAVED SIDDIQ

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Makkah pact is purely defensive, aims at promoting regional peace: DG ISPR



ANI

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has said that the Makkah Defence Alliance — a tripartite agreement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye — has no “regional aspirations”, adding that it is intended for collective deterrence.

The military spokesperson made the remarks during an interview on Al Arabiya English’s programme ‘Global News Today’, during a conversation with the host, Tom Burges Watson. During the show, aired during the early hours of Wednesday, Lt Gen Chaudhry was asked about

Pakistan’s commitments under the agreement. “It formalises Pakistan’s decades-old relationship with the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the brotherly country of Turkiye in the domains of collective deterrence and defence,” he said.

Watson then asked whether the pact was primarily a defensive cooperation or the beginning of a broader strategic alliance. To that, Lt Gen Chaudhry asserted that the pact was defensive, as its name implied.

“It is defensive. There’s nothing aggressive. There are no regional aspirations. It is collective deterrence,” he said, adding that the agreement was also “complemen-

tery”. Elaborating further, he said the countries part of the alliance had independent relationships with other nations, blocs and alliances.

“So this mutual defence agreement is complementary in nature. It is not competing with any other relationship of these countries,” he added. At that, Watson asked, “But does it contain any mutual defence obligation?” In his short reply to the question, Lt Gen Chaudhry remarked, “The text that has been made public by the leadership of the three countries enunciates that very clearly and it’s interpretation is quite clear.” Asked how Pakistan would respond if one of the countries in

the alliance came under attack, he said that the operationalisation of defensive commitments was never made public in any discourse.

“You see, you have multiple other agreements which are defensive in nature, which are committal in nature. But no country comes out and starts sharing its operational details [...] What you’re asking is the how part — that how we are going to defend Pakistan against any aggression. “That is always part of the operational classification and security [...] What you’re asking is that how it will be done. It is for the three countries to decide, and it is for them to know and for them to actualise it,” he said. Specifically

Saudi-led coalition says Houthis targeted Makkah with drone, warns of ‘red line’

ANI

The Saudi-led coalition battling Yemen’s Houthis accused the rebels on Wednesday of targeting the holy city of Makkah, sparking outrage across the Muslim world and deepening the conflict roiling the region. Fresh fighting between the Houthis and the Yemeni government has dragged in Riyadh, with the Houthis declaring a maritime blockade on the kingdom and targeting its ships in the Red Sea. Last week’s lightning offensive saw the group seize control of the entirety of Yemen’s Red Sea coast and the Bab al-Mandab Strait, a vital artery for Saudi oil exports as the wider Middle East war chokes off the Strait of Hormuz strategic shipping route. The Houthis swiftly rejected as a “lie” Riyadh’s report that it shot down a drone from the rebels heading towards Makkah, which attracts millions of pilgrims each year.

“The claims about targeting Makkah are a worn-out lie that has been used before and no longer fools anyone,” Hazem al-Assad from the Houthis’ politburo wrote on X.

The Saudi coalition vowed retaliation, warning that the security of holy sites was a “red line”.

“The security of the Two Holy Mosques and the pilgrims is a red line, and the Joint Forces Command of the Coalition will not hesitate to take the necessary and deterrent measures against the Terrorist Houthi Militia,” the coalition said in a statement shared by spokesman Turki al-Maliki. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) — a bloc of 57 Muslim countries — condemned the “heinous” attack.

Saudi Arabia had issued brief alerts on Tuesday over possible attacks in Makkah and across swathes of the kingdom’s south, which borders Yemen.

The alerts, including the first one issued in Makkah since the Middle East war erupted in February, came a day after a wave of ballistic missile and drone attacks launched from Yemen wounded 13 people in the kingdom’s south.

Fighting flared in July when the Houthis, who have for years controlled swathes of northern Yemen, launched a large-scale offensive against Yemeni government forces. The conflict in the Arabian Peninsula’s poorest country has forced 82,000 people to flee their homes since the



start of September, according to the United Nations. Yemen’s permanent representative at the UN, Abdullah al-Saadi, said Yemenis were fighting to restore “national institutions across every inch of their land”, and called on the international community to take action against the Houthis.

PM Shehbaz condemns ‘dastardly and heinous attempted drone attack’

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned in the “strongest possible terms the dastardly and heinous attempted drone attack against the Holy Site of Makkah Al-Mukarramah”.

“The people of Pakistan are saddened and perturbed by this outrageous act. There can be no words strong enough to capture the depth of anguish and sorrow felt by us at this reprehensible and unforgivable act,” he wrote in a post on X.

He lauded the “extraordinary vigilance, courage, and professionalism of the Royal Saudi Armed Forces for their swift and heroic action”.

The premier urged “all parties to exercise maximum restraint and to step back from the brink of further escalation”.

“Our region has already suffered far too much from conflict. Dialogue and diplomacy remain the only sustainable path towards peace,” he stressed.

“Pakistan stands unwaveringly, shoulder to shoulder with the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in the defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as for the security and sanctity of the Haramain Sharifain — a duty that every Pakistani carries close to their heart.” Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar also condemned the incident, saying that “such a provocative act violates the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, gravely offends the religious sentiments of the Muslims worldwide, and threatens regional peace and security”.

PM Reviews Fuel Relief Scheme, Directs Desks to Guide Citizens



ANI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Wednesday, chaired a meeting to review progress on the PM Special Relief Scheme aimed at providing relief to low-income and middle-class citizens in view of recent increase in petroleum product prices amid the situation in the Gulf region.

The prime minister directed the establishment of facilitation desks comprising administration officials, volunteers and petrol pump staff to assist citizens in easily obtaining the subsidy. He directed that personnel deployed at the facilitation desks should guide eligible citizens and provide them with all possible assistance in registration and other necessary procedures. The prime minister also asked the relevant authorities to remain proactive in creating public awareness about the scheme. Under the scheme, fuel subsidies are being provided to owners of motorcycles, rickshaws and vehicles with engine capacities of up to 800cc, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Ministers Ahad Khan Cheema,

Attaullah Tarar, Shaza Fatima Khawaja and Ali Pervaz Malik, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani, Special Assistant Tariq Bajwa and senior officers of relevant institutions attended the meeting.

The meeting was briefed on progress regarding the fuel subsidy scheme. Following the launch of its pilot phase in Islamabad, the scheme has now been launched across the country, including Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The meeting was informed that the scheme had been designed in a simple and easy manner for the public to understand. Only four pieces of information were required for registration: the applicant’s CNIC number, vehicle number plate, province of registration and vehicle registration date.

Complete details of the fuel subsidy scheme are available on its Urdu website, www.pmfuelrelief.pk.

The meeting was further informed that the number of successful registrations was gradually increasing, while provincial governments were extending full cooperation for nationwide implementation of the scheme.

Munir Stresses Tech Innovation in US Defence Firm Meeting



ANI

Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir on Wednesday highlighted the importance of technological innovation and advanced solutions in strengthening national security and resilience in a meeting with an American defence company delegation. A statement from the Inter-

Bret Velicovich, discussed evolving trends in defence technology and avenues for cooperation in defence procurement, production and capacity building. “CDF highlighted the importance of technological innovation and advanced solutions in strengthening national security and resilience. Both sides expressed interest in further developing engagement in areas of mutual interest,” the ISPR said.

Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that representatives from POWERUS, specialising in defence and critical infrastructure solutions, called on CDF Munir at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi to discuss matters of mutual interest. It further said the delegation, led by Robert

Pakistan protests Indian warship’s ‘provocative’ manoeuvres in Exclusive Economic Zone

ANI

The Foreign Office said Indian naval vessel INS Kolkata and its onboard helicopter had repeatedly attempted to enter the area where the Pakistan Navy has been conducting Sea Spark 26 exercises since September 1. According to the FO, the Indian vessel and helicopter had been trying to enter the exercise area since September 7, while INS Kolkata carried out “dangerous and provocative” manoeuvres close to Pakistan Navy ships. “These actions were not routine deployment but a violation of the 1991 bilateral agreement,” the FO said, adding that the Indian vessel continued its manoeuvres despite multiple warnings. The FO said the situation took a more serious turn on September 15 when the INS Kolkata “dangerously changed course” and collided with PNS Hunain. “Despite evasive manoeuvres by PNS Hunain, a scraping



incident occurred with the Indian vessel,” it said. The FO added that the INS Kolkata increased its speed and left the area following the incident. It described the Indian vessel’s actions as “highly provocative”, saying they could have triggered a serious crisis while crediting the Pakistan Navy’s “professional and responsible conduct” that prevented the situation from escalating further.

The FO said Pakistan viewed the Indian Navy’s violations with “grave concern” and rejected what it called attempts by India to distort facts and escalate the matter diplomatically.

The FO said the Indian actions reflected a deliberate attempt to undermine regional peace. Pakistan called on India to respect bilateral agreements and adhere to responsible conduct, while urging Indian authorities to take immediate steps to prevent a recurrence of such incidents.

The statement said Pakistan had made clear that the current level of restraint should not be misconstrued in the face of any future Indian provocation. Earlier, India summoned the charge d’Affaires of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi over the incident that led to a collision between their navies in international waters, according to an official statement from New Delhi.

IHC bars authorities from arresting PTI leaders ahead of Sept 27 march

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has restrained authorities from harassing or arresting Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders ahead of the party’s planned September 27 long march. Justice Raja Inam Ameen Minhas heard the petition filed by PTI leaders Malik Amir Ali, Shoaib Shaheen and others against alleged harassment. During the hearing, lawyers Shoaib Shaheen and Riasat Azad appeared before the court on behalf of the petitioners. Shoaib Shaheen told the court that arrests and raids had allegedly resumed ahead of the planned march. He claimed that raids were being conducted at the homes of PTI workers and that cash and other belongings were allegedly taken during some operations. Shaheen also claimed that he was unwell and that his family was being subjected to harassment. He alleged that women and children were also being taken away during some raids. He said the petitioners were ready to submit affidavits and CCTV footage to support their claims.

Man arrested during IBO for ‘supplying illegal weapons’ to banned JAAC in AJK: Talal

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry on Wednesday said that security agencies apprehended a man during an Intelligence-Based Operation (IBO) for supplying “illegal weapons to a proscribed organisation, the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

“A man identified as Zia has been operating this illegal network for around 8-10 years in AJK; he has supplied several consignments of weapons over the past two years to people associated with JAAC,” said Talal during a press conference in Islamabad.



The minister also said that the network extended beyond arms trafficking and was involved in “smuggling vehicles, petrol and narcotics”. Chaudhry further said that Zia had been in contact with Zarshad, who was based in Afghanistan and supplied illegally acquired weapons to

Pakistan. He said that another individual, identified as Akbar and described as a government employee, used the cover of his institution to transport weapons from Bara to AJK.

The minister added that Afghanistan was being used as a “super-proxy” to spread unrest in Pakistan, saying that authorities conducted IBOs to dismantle a terrorist network involved in funding and supporting a proscribed JAAC.

He said with authority that the JAAC was not banned for expressing political dissent and stressed that they were outlawed for engaging in illegal activities that can be proved through evidence.



CEO of Pak Japan Group Chaudhry Asif Mehmood calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

2

National

PANAH Raises Serious Concerns Over Lack of Consultation on New Heated Tobacco Products Legislation

BY: ANI Correspondent

ISLAMABAD --The Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) has expressed serious concerns over the Senate's approval of legislation aimed at bringing new and emerging tobacco products, including heated tobacco products, within the legal and regulatory framework.

PANAH stressed that legislation concerning products with potential public health consequences should be considered after health experts, doctors, medical organizations and public health institutions are given an opportunity to present their views and scientific evidence.

PANAH General Secretary Sana Ullah Ghumman said the association had contacted the Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Health and the Chairman of the Senate, requesting an opportunity to brief the committee on the potential



health risks associated with emerging tobacco products.

Following PANAH's efforts, the Chairman of the Senate directed the Standing Committee Chairman to hear PANAH's position. PANAH representatives subsequently met the Committee Chairman, who proposed a meeting between PANAH and the Senator who had introduced the bill.

PANAH said it made repeated efforts to arrange the meeting, but despite several assurances and scheduled appointments, it was repeatedly postponed and ultimately did not take place.

The association later requested the Standing Committee to formally hear PANAH, medical organizations, public health experts and civil society representatives. However, PANAH said these stakeholders were not invited to present their views or scientific evidence before the bill was approved.

Sana Ullah Ghumman said, "When legislation concerns products that may affect public health, listening to the voice of health experts is not merely an option; it is an essential part of responsible legislation."

PANAH stressed that tobacco and nicotine policies should be based on independent scientific evidence, protection of public health and prevention of disease.

Parliamentary Affairs Committee Reviews Cyber Fraud, Public Grievances

BY: shamas-ur-Rehman/ANI

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs was held at Parliament House under the chairmanship of MNA Rana Iradat Sharif Khan.

The Secretary, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, briefed the committee on complaints received by the Prime Minister's Public Affairs & Grievances Wing regarding phishing and other cyber-enabled financial frauds and subsequently referred to the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) during the Financial Year 2025-26.

A total of 140 complaints were referred to the NCCIA, including 80 cases of cyber financial fraud, 17 of cyberbullying, 29 of cyber harassment, six visa fraud cases, five identity theft cases and three general complaints.

The NCCIA representative informed the committee that the agency has adopted a multi-dimensional approach to combating cybercrime, covering investigation, digital forensics, coordination with relevant institutions and public awareness. A dedicated web-based Complaints Management Unit has also been established to receive and process complaints through email, the online complaints portal, 15 Cyber Crime Reporting Centers (CCRCs) across the coun-



try, NCCIA Headquarters and postal correspondence.

The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) representative briefed the committee on measures taken to provide relief to complainants whose grievances were received through the Prime Minister's Public Affairs & Grievances Wing. The committee was informed that complaints were processed according to the nature of each case and the eligibility status of the complainants.

The National Highway Authority (NHA) representative briefed the committee on the operation of the toll plaza on the Okara-Patoki section, particularly road maintenance and the overall condition of the road infrastructure, with a focus on addressing difficulties faced by commuters.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) informed the committee that it had received 18 complaints regarding financial assistance and scholarships for higher studies and 19 complaints concerning distribution of laptops

under the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme. The complaints were addressed by the concerned authorities in accordance with the prescribed eligibility criteria. The committee was also informed that the government does not provide financial support for higher studies on an individual basis.

The committee offered Fateha for the departed soul of its late member Ch. Muhammad Bashir Virk and paid tribute to his honesty, dedication and services to Parliament and his constituency. Members observed that his contributions would be remembered with respect.

The meeting was attended by MNAs Muneeba Iqbal, Shazia Fareed, Malik Shah, Izbal Zehri, Naveed Aamir, Hameed Hussain and Naema Kishwer Khan, along with the Secretary Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary Legislation, Joint Secretary Grievances Wing and senior officers from NCCIA, BISP, HEC and NHA.

Pakistan Australia Business Forum Hosts Award Ceremony Dinner to Celebrate Bilateral Trade Achievements

BY: ANI Correspondent:

KARACHI -- The Pakistan Australia Business Forum (PABF) successfully hosted its Annual Award Ceremony Dinner in Karachi, bringing together leading business leaders, government officials, and trade representatives from Pakistan and Australia to celebrate growing commercial ties between the two countries.

The event was graced by His Excellency Mr. Timothy Kane, High Commissioner of Australia to Pakistan, who attended as Patron-in-Chief of PABF. His presence underscored Australia's commitment to strengthening economic and trade relations with Pakistan.

Speaking at the event, PABF Chairman Pervez Madraswala highlighted the Forum's active role even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a series of productive webinars with the High Commission of Australia, Austrade,



Pakistan Trade Commission Sydney, Pakistan High Commission, and FPCCI officials, PABF ensured continuous dialogue and created new avenues for collaboration.

The Forum also led a Pakistan delegation of pulses traders to Gulfood Expo 2025 in Dubai. In coordination with Austrade, PABF facilitated one-to-one business

meetings at the Expo, resulting in valuable trade linkages.

During the ceremony, PABF recognized and awarded top traders and business leaders for their outstanding contributions to Pakistan-Australia trade across key sectors including agriculture, food, education, energy, and technology.

Senate Human Rights Committee Expresses Strong Resentment Over PIMS Incident, Directs Registration of FIR

BY: ANI Correspondent

ISLAMABAD -- A meeting of the Senate Functional Committee on Human Rights was held at Parliament House on Wednesday under the chairpersonship of Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri.

The committee expressed strong dissatisfaction over administrative negligence, incomplete investigations and procedural delays in several high-profile cases involving loss of life, domestic violence, child-related crimes and cyber harassment.

During proceedings on the death of 14 newborn infants at PIMS, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri questioned the omission of senior management from the inquiry report and rejected the report submitted by the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health.

The committee directed authorities to register an FIR against the



primary accused and submit their complete names and designations, along with forensic and DNA reports, at the next meeting.

Senator Masroor Ahsan sought the Roznamcha diary record from the concerned SP, while Senator Quratulain Marri questioned why the Belt Force security agency had only been issued show-cause notices.

The committee also reviewed the murder case of Hina Zareef, the cyber-harassment case involving Ahmed Javed, the murder case of Mir Raza Ali Khan in Karachi, and the Shukria Bibi case in Quetta, directing police authori-

ties to submit detailed investigation and forensic reports.

The committee further examined the case of domestic worker Ayesha Javed in Lahore involving alleged sexual assault, illegal abortion and subsequent death. Officials informed the committee that forensic samples had been sent to the Punjab Forensic Science Agency, while the illegal abortion inquiry had been referred to the Punjab Healthcare Commission.

The committee directed concerned authorities to submit further investigation reports at the next meeting.

FGEHA Auction of 16 Commercial Plots in G-13, G-14 Generates Rs10.3 Billion

BY: ANI Correspondent :

ISLAMABAD-- The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) concluded a two-day auction of commercial plots in Islamabad's prime sectors of G-13 and G-14, generating Rs10.3 billion in revenue from the sale of 16 plots.

The auction attracted strong participation from investors, with competitive bids received for commercial properties, including prime locations in G-14 Markaz.

The highest-value plot, Commercial Plot No. 8 measuring 2,000 square yards in G-14 Markaz, was sold for Rs1.95 billion.

FGEHA Director General Captain (Retd) Zafar Iqbal expressed satisfaction over the successful auction, saying the strong investor response reflected confidence in the Authority and the potential of commercial



investment in Islamabad.

He appreciated the officers, concerned wings, administrative team and staff for ensuring a transparent and well-organized auction process, and thanked investors for their participation.

The DG said FGEHA would soon hold auctions of additional commercial properties to provide inves-

tors with further investment opportunities. The Authority has also established an Investor Facilitation Cell, supervised by the Director (Staff), to provide investors with a centralized mechanism for resolving queries and issues. The cell will coordinate matters with concerned wings and monitor their timely resolution.

PIMS-Media Town Electric Bus Service Turns Into a Source of Public Hardship

BY : ANI Correspondent:

Islamabad/Rawalpindi-- The electric bus service operating between PIMS and Media Town, introduced to provide modern, comfortable and dignified public transport to citizens, has reportedly become a source of inconvenience due to long intervals between buses and a growing passenger load.

Following the discontinuation of the 136-number bus service on the route, commuters have increasingly turned to electric buses, resulting in significant overcrowding. Citizens said that buses on the route currently arrive at intervals of around 30 minutes, causing large numbers of passengers to gather at bus stops while waiting for the next service.

When a bus arrives, the heavy rush makes boarding difficult, par-



ticularly for women, elderly citizens and children. In some cases, passengers are unable to board because of limited capacity and are forced to wait for the next bus, resulting in delays and additional inconvenience.

Commuters have urged the relevant authorities, particularly the Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA), to increase the frequency of electric

buses on the PIMS-Media Town route and reduce the current 30-minute interval to around 10 minutes.

They said increasing the number and frequency of buses would help reduce overcrowding, minimize waiting times and provide safer, more timely and dignified transportation to citizens, particularly women, children and elderly passengers.

Public circles said the success of a modern public transport system depends not only on introducing new buses but also on ensuring their availability according to passenger demand. They expressed hope that the authorities would review the situation and take immediate measures to improve the service and restore public confidence in the route.

NIPA Peshawar Delegation Visits Parliament House

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- A delegation of 30 BPS-18 civil servants participating in the 47th Mid-Career Management Course at NIPA Peshawar, along with three faculty members, visited Parliament House, Islamabad.

The delegation was briefed by Senate Secretariat Joint Secretary Mughees Ahmad Sheikh on the constitutional role, powers, functions and administrative structure of the Senate. He highlighted the Upper House's role in ensuring equal representation of the federating units, legislation, parliamentary oversight, accountability and safeguarding the interests of smaller provinces.

The participants took part in an interactive question-and-answer session, with Joint Secretary Mughees Ahmad Sheikh and Deputy Secretary Muhammad Azam responding to their queries.



The delegation also visited the Senate Museum, Gali-e-Dastoor and Senate Hall, where they were briefed on Pakistan's constitutional and parliamentary history. A documentary on the history of the Senate was also

screened. The participants appreciated the Senate Secretariat's efforts to promote democratic values and institutional transparency and termed the visit highly informative and useful.

Private Hajj Scheme: 11,600 Pilgrims Booked, 60,000 Seats Still Available

Report: Naveed Satti /ANI

ISLAMABAD -- Booking of 11,600 pilgrims has been completed under Pakistan's Private Hajj Scheme 2027 through the Hajj Portal, while around 60,000 seats are still available.

According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs spokesperson, booking under the private scheme will continue until the available seats are filled or November 20, 2026, whichever comes first. Economy, Standard and Premium Hajj packages offered by 25 registered opera-



tors are available on the Hajj Portal.

The ministry said Rs10 billion in Hajj dues has so far been received in the accounts of the 25 operators through the Hajj Portal developed by the National IT Board, including more than Rs4 billion deposited through online channels.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs advised pilgrims to make payments only through the Pak Hajj App or Hajj Portal and warned them against depositing money directly with unauthorized individuals or companies to avoid fraud and financial losses.

NA Speaker Calls for Stronger Parliamentary Action on Climate Change

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, addressing the 69th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Cape Town, called for stronger parliamentary leadership, democratic accountability and international cooperation to tackle the challenges posed by climate change.

During his address, he referred, without naming any country or delegation, to issues related to sudden water flows in rivers and the withholding of water, highlighting the wider impact of water-related challenges. During the speech, members of the Indian delegation reportedly interrupted proceedings, prompting the Chair to call for order. Later, the Jamaican Speaker and host of the meeting intervened and took the microphone from a member of the Indian delegation who was speaking.

Despite the interruptions, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq continued his address,



stressing the need for climate justice, equitable financial support and parliamentary oversight of climate-related policies and international climate finance.

He said Pakistan is among the countries severely affected by climate change, which is impacting food security, water availability and public health. He highlighted

the role of Parliament in legislation, budgetary oversight and ensuring implementation of climate commitments. The Speaker also called for the inclusion of women, youth and other segments of society in climate action and urged Commonwealth parliaments to share experiences and best practices to strengthen resilience.

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Opinion

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“Healthy Pakistan”



Written by:
Mahmood Khan
Published By:ANI News Agency

Healthy Pakistan : Issues, Challenges and the Way Forward

A healthy nation is the foundation of a strong economy, a productive society and a stable state. Pakistan has a large and predominantly young population, a growing network of hospitals and thousands of trained doctors, nurses and health workers. Yet millions of Pakistanis still struggle to access affordable and quality healthcare. The challenge is not simply to treat diseases but to create a healthcare system that prevents illness, protects people from financial hardship and provides equal opportunities for good health.

Pakistan's health system faces several interconnected problems. One of the most serious is insufficient public investment in healthcare. Public hospitals and basic health facilities frequently suffer from shortages of medicines, equipment, doctors, nurses and other essential staff. While major cities have advanced private hospitals and specialist services, people in rural and remote areas often have limited access to even basic medical treatment. This urban-rural divide remains one of the greatest obstacles to achieving a healthy Pakistan. Primary healthcare requires particular attention. Basic Health Units and Rural Health Centres should be the first point of contact for citizens, yet many are poorly equipped or inadequately staffed. Strengthening these facilities could reduce pressure on major hospitals and enable diseases to be detected and treated earlier. Preventive healthcare, vaccination, maternal services, nutrition programmes and health education should all be integrated into primary healthcare.

Maternal and child health is another major concern. Poverty, malnutrition, inadequate antenatal care, unsafe childbirth and insufficient access to trained healthcare professionals continue to place mothers and children at risk. Improving maternal health-

care requires trained midwives, better maternity facilities, regular antenatal check-ups and emergency referral systems, particularly in rural communities.

Pakistan also faces a serious nutrition crisis. Malnutrition, stunting, wasting, anemia and vitamin deficiencies can permanently affect children's physical growth, educational performance and future productivity. Tackling malnutrition requires more than distributing food. It requires clean water, sanitation, maternal education, food security and accessible healthcare. At the same time, Pakistan is witnessing a growing burden of non-communicable diseases. Diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, cancer and obesity are increasingly affecting the population. Unhealthy diets, lack of physical activity, smoking, pollution and stress contribute to these problems. The country therefore needs a balanced health strategy that addresses infectious diseases while also preventing lifestyle-related illnesses.

Mental health is another neglected area. Poverty, unemployment, social pressures, family problems and insecurity can contribute to anxiety, depression and other psychological difficulties. However, mental illness remains surrounded by stigma, while professional services are limited. Mental healthcare should become part of mainstream healthcare, with counselling and psychological support available through schools, hospitals and community centres. The first step towards a healthier Pakistan should therefore be a stronger preventive healthcare system. Prevention is cheaper and more effective than treating advanced disease. Schools should teach children about hygiene, nutrition, exercise and mental well-being. Public campaigns should promote vaccination, healthy diets, physical activity, tobacco control and regular medical screening.

The second priority should be affordable healthcare. Medical treatment should not force families into poverty. Pakistan needs stronger public health financing, effective health insurance schemes and targeted support for low-income households. Greater transparency is also necessary to ensure that health

funds are used effectively.

Pakistan must also invest in its health workforce. Doctors, nurses, paramedics, community health workers and specialists should receive appropriate salaries, training and professional opportunities. Incentives should encourage qualified professionals to work in underserved rural and remote areas.

Technology can further improve healthcare delivery. Telemedicine can connect rural patients with specialists in major cities, while digital health records can improve continuity of care. Mobile technology can support vaccination programmes, disease surveillance and public health awareness. Above all, Pakistan needs strong governance and accountability. Health policies should be long-term rather than changing with every government. Federal and provincial authorities need better coordination, while hospitals and health departments should be monitored against measurable standards. Medicines and equipment must reach those who need them, and absenteeism and corruption must be addressed. A Healthy Pakistan cannot be created by hospitals alone. Health depends on clean water, nutritious food, education, employment, sanitation, environmental protection and social security. Healthcare should therefore be regarded as an investment in Pakistan's human capital rather than simply a government expenditure.

Pakistan's greatest strength is its people. If the country prioritises prevention, strengthens primary healthcare, improves maternal and child health, addresses malnutrition and mental health, controls non-communicable diseases and makes treatment affordable, it can build a healthier and more productive society.

The vision should be simple: a Pakistan where no child is denied nutrition, no mother is denied safe childbirth, no family is pushed into poverty by illness and no citizen is deprived of healthcare because of where they live or how much they earn. That is the foundation on which a healthier, stronger and more prosperous Pakistan can be built.

The Changing Geopolitics of the Region and Pakistan’s Defence Position



By Rana
Farooq Ashraf
Published by ANI

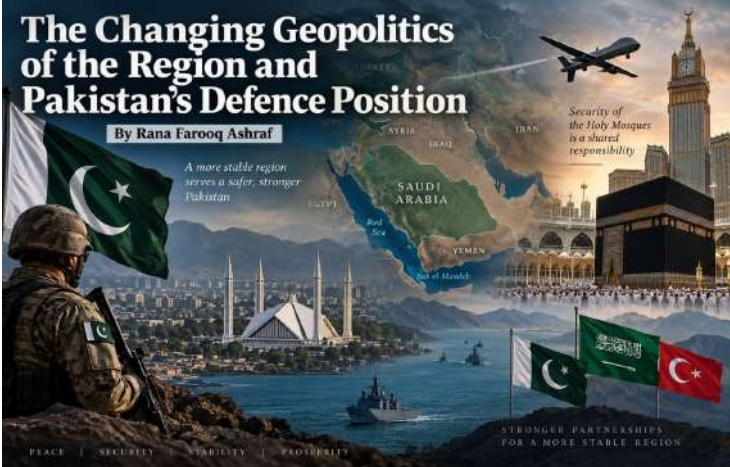
The rapidly changing geopolitical landscape of the Middle East and

South Asia has created new challenges for regional security, foreign policy and defence strategy. Continuing tensions, proxy conflicts, cross-border interference and the growing role of non-state actors have, over the past several decades, affected the political, economic and security stability of Muslim countries. Pakistan itself has paid a heavy price in lives and economic losses because of terrorism, sectarian violence, cross-border interference and different forms of proxy warfare. The incidents in Quetta, Karachi, Parachinar and other parts of the country, as well as the Kulbhushan Jadhav case, remain important references in this wider security context.

The growing military capability of the Houthi movement has further complicated the security environment in the Middle East. The use of drones and missiles is no longer confined to conventional battlefields. Civilian centres, energy infrastructure and international shipping routes can now be exposed to the consequences of such conflicts. The continuing tensions around the Red Sea, Bab el-Mandeb and the Gulf demonstrate how a conflict that begins on one front can quickly affect international trade, energy supplies and regional stability.

The incident near Makkah on September 16 has added another sensitive dimension to an already volatile situation. According to Saudi authorities, a drone was intercepted and destroyed south of Makkah before it entered the prohibited airspace over the holy city. The Houthis, however, denied targeting Makkah or any religious site. Regardless of the competing claims, the incident is significant because of the location involved and because it highlights the increasingly difficult security environment created by modern drone warfare.

Pakistan's response was immediate and clear. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed solidarity with Saudi Arabia, condemned the reported attempt and praised the vigilance and professionalism of the Saudi armed forces. At the same time, he called upon all sides to exercise maximum restraint and return to dialogue and diplomacy. This combination of solidarity with



Saudi Arabia and support for de-escalation reflects the broader challenge facing Pakistan: maintaining its strategic commitments while also supporting regional stability.

The response within Pakistan has also demonstrated the sensitivity of the issue. Despite political differences, the security of the Holy Mosques remains a matter of deep concern across Pakistani society. Similar expressions of solidarity have come from Gulf and Muslim countries. This response cannot be viewed only through a religious lens. Saudi Arabia occupies a central position in the regional economy, energy market and wider Muslim world, and instability there can have consequences far beyond its borders.

The experiences of Iraq, Syria and Lebanon also offer important lessons. When state institutions become weak, armed non-state groups acquire greater influence and external powers exploit internal divisions, the consequences rarely remain confined to one country. They often spread across borders and create long-term instability. For Muslim countries, the lesson is straightforward: strong state institutions, internal cohesion, economic resilience and a balanced foreign policy are essential elements of national security.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have maintained close relations for decades, with defence and security cooperation forming an important part of the bilateral relationship. The recently concluded Makkah Joint Defence Agreement has added a new dimension to this partnership. Pakistan has described the arrangement as a framework for collective defence and deterrence rather than an offensive alliance against any particular country. In the present environment, the distinction is important. Effective deterrence can help prevent conflict, but it must be accompanied by diplomacy and

responsible statecraft.

For Pakistan, the current situation therefore requires a careful balance. Its position regarding Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and the security of the Holy Mosques is clear, while preventing the region from sliding into a wider conflict is equally important. Standing with a strategic partner and supporting dialogue are not contradictory positions. In fact, responsible foreign policy often requires both security preparedness and diplomatic engagement at the same time.

The nature of warfare itself is changing. A drone can travel hundreds of kilometres and challenge the security architecture of another country; a missile strike can unsettle energy markets; and a proxy conflict can quickly involve several states with competing interests. Pakistan therefore needs to strengthen not only its conventional defence capabilities but also intelligence cooperation, air defence, technological preparedness, diplomatic outreach and regional partnerships.

The security of Makkah and Madinah carries exceptional religious significance for Muslims across the world, while the stability of Saudi Arabia has wider economic and strategic implications for the region. The present moment therefore calls for neither complacency nor uncontrolled escalation. What is required is credible deterrence, strong defence, diplomatic engagement and a sustained effort to prevent the expansion of conflict.

Pakistan's role in this changing regional environment will ultimately be measured by its ability to protect its national interests, honour its strategic commitments and contribute to regional stability at the same time. In an increasingly uncertain Middle East, strength and diplomacy cannot be treated as alternatives; both are necessary instruments of responsible statecraft.

The myth of Africa’s ‘leapfrog moment’

HAFED AL-GHWELL

A seductive idea has taken hold in boardrooms, climate summits, and venture capital decks: Africa will vault over the messy stages of development that defined Europe and East Asia. No smokestacks. No sprawling factory towns. No fossil fuels. Just a clean jump into digital services, renewable energy and critical minerals, with smartphones where assembly lines once stood. The story flatters modern sensibilities. It also flatters outside investors who prefer tidy narratives to stubborn facts.

Africa does hold assets the world urgently needs. Lithium, cobalt, manganese, graphite, copper, and rare earths sit beneath its soil. Solar radiation and wind reach levels Europe can only envy. Cities such as Nairobi, Lagos, Kigali, and Accra host young coders, logistics startups, and fintech firms that would look at home in Berlin or Bangalore. Services exports already make up about a quarter of the continent's total exports, and they have grown far faster than goods trade since the mid-2000s. Productivity in tourism, business services, agro-processing, and ICT often exceeds that of traditional farming several times over, with job growth that in some countries rivals or even exceeds manufacturing. Manufacturing itself, by contrast, has hovered around 11 percent of the gross domestic product for more than a decade, less than half the share seen in East Asia during its takeoff.

Potential is real. The conclusion that Africa can therefore skip the hard work of building factories, power grids, transport networks, and mass employment systems is not. “Leapfrogging” works best when the old system is narrow, self-contained, and easy to replace. Landlines fit that description. Electricity systems, industrial supply chains, and urban labor markets do not. Development is not an app update.

Historically, manufacturing did the heavy lifting because it combined three features that services rarely match at scale: the ability to employ large numbers of moderately educated workers, rapid productivity gains through learning by doing, and strong links to exports that earn foreign currency. East Asia did not grow rich on code alone. It grew rich by moving hundreds of millions from farms into factories, then up the value chain.

Africa’s manufacturing share remains low for structural reasons that digital enthusiasm does not erase. Electricity is unreliable or

absent for hundreds of millions of people. Transport costs within many countries exceed the cost of shipping to Europe. Ports remain congested. Firms face fragmented markets despite recent progress on continental free trade. None of these obstacles vanish because a country installs fiber-optic cables or launches a fintech incubator.

Leapfrogging advocates often reply with the mobile phone analogy. Africa skipped landlines and moved straight to smartphones. Why not skip coal plants and factories too?

Unfortunately, the analogy fails on economics. A phone is a consumer device that plugs into a global network funded largely by private capital. A power grid is a national system requiring heavy upfront investment, long planning horizons, and constant maintenance. Distributed solar panels can light homes and charge phones, but they struggle to power steel mills, fertilizer plants, refrigerated warehouses or mass transit.

Even Egypt’s vast Benban solar complex, among the largest in the world, supplies only a fraction of national demand despite covering dozens of square kilometers. Scaling such systems to industrial levels means land, transmission lines, storage facilities, and backup generation, all of which cost money that Africa often lacks.

Industrialization itself remains unfashionable in some policy circles, dismissed as dirty or old-fashioned. History offers little comfort to this view. No country has reached high income without building a substantial manufacturing base at some stage. Services grow rich on the back of industry, not instead of it. Software firms run on servers built in factories. Tourism thrives where airports, hotels, water systems, and roads already exist. Even the vaunted green economy rests on industrial inputs: turbines, batteries, cables, vehicles, and concrete.

Services-led growth, often cited as proof of leapfrogging, also depends on foundations that rarely make headlines. Business process outsourcing relies on stable electricity, data centers, and contract enforcement. Agro-processing requires cold storage, rural roads, and predictable trade rules. Studies of so-called “industries without smokestacks” show impressive productivity gains and employment elasticity higher than many manufacturing sectors.

They also show that these industries flourish mainly where infrastructure and institutions already function tolerably well.

Optimism about technology further ignores the distribution of

skills. Only a small share of African secondary students reach proficiency in math and science. Universities produce talented engineers, but not in numbers sufficient to anchor continent-wide transformation. Artificial intelligence may automate routine service tasks before Africa reaps its employment benefits, repeating a pattern already visible in some middle-income economies.

None of this denies Africa's potential role in future supply chains or green industries. The continent will almost certainly supply materials for batteries, hydrogen, and renewable infrastructure. Cities will host more startups. Services exports will expand. Solar and wind will claim a growing share of new power generation. Progress will occur.

The error lies in assuming substitution rather than accumulation. New sectors add to old ones; they do not erase the need for them. Digital payments did not eliminate banks. Mobile phones did not remove the need for landlines or roads. Solar panels do not abolish the need for stable grids.

Development remains a process of layering capabilities. Power plants precede factories. Factories support urbanization. Urbanization creates markets for services. Services, in turn, raise demand for better infrastructure and skills. Trying to reorder this sequence results in disappointment.

Outside enthusiasm for leapfrogging also masks a moral hazard. Rich countries that built prosperity on coal and oil now urge poorer nations to remain virtuous and energy-poor. The request sounds noble, yet it shifts the cost of global decarbonization onto those least responsible for the problem. Africa's emissions share is tiny. Its development gap is vast. Asking the continent to close that gap without abundant energy and mass employment is not visionary. It is unrealistic.

Talk of leapfrogging flatters donors, investors, and climate diplomats by simplifying Africa into a stage for outside hopes. Reality is less cinematic and more demanding. Development still requires boring things: power stations, vocational schools, ports, tax systems, zoning laws and factories before they produce prosperity.

Africa's future will include code and cobalt, wind farms, and fintech. It will also include welding shops, cement kilns, and gas turbines. Expecting otherwise confuses aspiration with strategy. Ambition is necessary. Illusion is not.

— Arab News

Gaza: A step forward or a recycling of the crisis?

DR. ABDELLATIF EL-MENAWY

Once again, Gaza has returned to the center of international debate, not through an announcement of peace but through a proposal for management. Under US President Donald Trump's 20-point peace plan for Gaza, accompanied by strong American messaging and dense organizational language, an old dilemma has resurfaced in a new form: Is the world finally searching for an exit from the Gaza war or merely redesigning the mechanisms used to contain it?

At first glance, the plan, which is now entering its second phase, appears ambitious. It speaks the language of coordination, stability, reconstruction and postwar governance. It suggests international oversight, regional participation and an administrative framework that would, in theory, prevent Gaza from sliding back into chaos once the fighting subsides. Yet beneath this polished surface lies a deeper, unresolved tension — one that has haunted every previous attempt to “solve” Gaza without confronting its political core.

The idea of international or quasi-international management of Gaza is not new. Variations of it have surfaced repeatedly over the past two decades, particularly after each major escalation. What changes are the labels, the actors involved and the institutional architecture. What remains constant is the underlying assumption: that Gaza can be stabilized administratively while its political status remains suspended.

This is precisely where skepticism begins.

The proposed framework appears less like a peace initiative and more like an advanced crisis-management model, designed to control fallout, distribute responsibility and prevent total collapse. It focuses on how Gaza might be governed, rather than why it has repeatedly reached this state. In doing so, it risks treating the symptoms of the conflict while carefully avoiding its causes.

At the heart of Gaza's tragedy is not merely destruction, humanitarian collapse or security breakdown. It is a persistent political vacuum — the absence of a credible, agreed-upon political horizon for Palestinians in Gaza that is connected to the broader Palestinian question.

Any proposal that isolates Gaza from the West Bank or treats it as a standalone administrative problem implicitly reinforces fragmentation. Even if unintentionally, such approaches risk normalizing the

idea that Gaza can be governed indefinitely without resolving issues of sovereignty, representation, borders or occupation.

This is why many observers view the latest concept with caution. It may offer order without justice, calm without resolution and stability without legitimacy.

The strong American endorsement of the proposal reflects a growing impatience in Washington. After months of war, humanitarian catastrophe and international pressure, there is a clear desire to move from active conflict to controlled aftermath. From this perspective, the priority is preventing Gaza from becoming an ungovernable space that destabilizes the region.

However, urgency is not the same

By emphasizing managerial solutions, the US appears focused on preventing immediate deterioration rather than investing in the difficult, politically costly work of redefining the conflict's parameters. This may be understandable in the short term — but history suggests it is insufficient in the long run.

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By emphasizing managerial solutions, the US appears focused on preventing immediate deterioration rather than investing in the difficult, politically costly work of redefining the conflict's parameters. This may be understandable in the short term — but history suggests it is insufficient in the long run.

For regional players, the proposal presents a dilemma. Participation offers influence and a chance to shape outcomes, but it also carries significant risks. Any regional or international body involved in governing Gaza without a clear political mandate could quickly find itself blamed for failures it did not cause and unable to make decisions it does not control.

There is also a deeper concern: Does international management become a substitute for political accountability? If so, Gaza risks becoming a permanent international trusteeship in everything but name — managed, monitored and funded but never truly resolved.

The most troubling aspect of the proposal is the possibility that it

only be sustainable if they are clearly linked to a political process that addresses Palestinian unity, territorial integrity and a viable future beyond emergency management.

The danger lies in allowing the language of “peace management” to replace the pursuit of peace itself.

Ultimately, the debate over the peace plan is not about its technical details. It is about intent. Is the world attempting to end a war or merely to manage its consequences more efficiently?

If the proposal evolves into a bridge toward a genuine political settlement, it could mark a meaningful step forward. But if it remains confined to administrative engineering, detached from the broader Palestinian question, it risks becoming yet another chapter in Gaza's long history of postponed solutions.

Gaza does not suffer from a lack of plans. It suffers from a lack of political courage. Until that changes, even the most sophisticated frameworks may do little more than recycle the crisis under a new name.

— Arab News

Pakistan Protests Indian Naval Provocation in EEZ

Report : FT

ISLAMABAD --Pakistan on Wednesday lodged a strong protest with India over what it described as a “highly provocative and unacceptable” action by an Indian Navy vessel in Pakistan’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) on September 15, 2026.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Charge d’Affaires of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad and conveyed

Pakistan’s strong objection to the incident, which occurred during Pakistan Navy’s biennial exercise SEASPARK-26.

According to the Foreign Office, the Indian vessel carried out aggressive maneuvers in close proximity to a Pakistani naval ship, resulting in contact between the two vessels. Pakistan said the incident violated international law and the 1991 bilateral agreement on advance notice of military exercises, manoeuvres and

troop movements.

Pakistan urged India to strictly adhere to international law and bilateral agreements aimed at preventing incidents at sea. A similar demarche will be lodged with India’s Ministry of External Affairs by Pakistan’s High Commission in New Delhi.

Pakistan also called on the international community to urge India to refrain from actions that could further increase tensions and instability in South Asia.

US Defence Company Delegation Calls on Field Marshal Asim Munir

Report: ANI Correspondent:

RAWALPINDI -- A delegation of US-based POWERUS, led by Mr. Robert Bret Velicovich, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), at GHQ, Rawalpindi.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, emerging trends in defence technology and potential cooperation in defence procurement, production and capacity building were discussed.

Field Marshal Asim Munir underscored the importance of technological innovation and advanced solutions in strengthening national security and resilience. Both sides expressed interest in further enhancing engagement in areas of mutual interest.



Protecting Young Generations: Murtaza Solangi Urges 85% Graphic Health Warnings and Comprehensive TAPS Ban

BY: syed Mateen / ANI

ISLAMABAD -- The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) organized a session on strengthening Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship (TAPS) regulations and increasing Graphic Health Warnings (GHWs) on cigarette packs to protect young people from tobacco-related harms.

Addressing the session as chief guest, Spokesperson to the President of Pakistan Murtaza Solangi said tobacco continues to claim millions of lives globally and called for stronger measures, including a comprehensive ban on TAPS and increasing GHW coverage to at least 85 percent.

He said stronger regulations could reduce the appeal and visibility of tobacco products, particularly among young people, and help protect present and future generations.

Member of the National



Assembly Huma Akhtar Chughtai said youth are exposed to indirect promotional strategies through attractive packaging, event sponsorships and online content. She supported strengthening TAPS regulations and expanding GHWs to 85 percent.

SPARC Program Manager Dr. Khalil Ahmad Dogar said promotional activities continue to influence consumer behavior despite existing restrictions. He called for a complete ban on direct and indi-

rect tobacco promotion and stressed that effective graphic health warnings can encourage smokers to quit and discourage tobacco use among non-smokers.

CITF Country Representative Anees Sukhera also called for stronger TAPS regulations and 85 percent GHW coverage, saying these measures could help create a safer and healthier environment for youth.

Prof. Dr. Matior Rahman, Dean of Allied Health Sciences, Lung Diseases and Tobacco Control at the Health Sciences Academy, highlighted the health, healthcare and economic burden caused by tobacco use. The session was attended by PEMRA DG Operations Broadcast Sajjad Ahmed, Prime Minister Youth Program Director Dr. Waqar, Tobacco Control Cell representative Muhammad Aftab Ahmad, government officials, journalists, civil society representatives, academics, media professionals and youth ambassadors.

Founders Group Sweeps ICCI Elections, Wins All Executive Committee Seats

BY: Hurish Shah FT :

ISLAMABAD --The Founders Group of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has secured a sweeping victory in the Chamber’s elections for 2026-28, winning all seats of the Executive Committee with a substantial majority.

Congratulating the successful candidates, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub and Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry said the victory reflected the business community’s confidence in the elected representatives. They expressed hope that the new Executive Committee members would effectively promote and protect the legitimate interests of the business community.

Sheikh Tariq Sadiq, Chairman ICCI Founder Group, also congratulated the newly elected members and thanked ICCI voters for giving the Founders Group candidates a decisive mandate.

Former ICCI President and



United Business Group Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari said the clean sweep reflected the confidence of Islamabad’s business community in the group’s leadership and performance. He said the result conveyed expectations for stronger representation of the business community.

Following the announcement of

results, supporters celebrated with slogans and drumbeats, while victorious candidates were lifted onto the shoulders of their supporters.

Chief Election Commissioner Omar Rafiq, along with commission members Chaudhry Nadeem-ud-Din and Assad Aziz, thanked ICCI members for ensuring the peaceful conduct of the elections.

AJK Prime Minister Meets Central Press Club President, Assures Journalists of Priority Resolution of Issues

Report: ANI Correspondent:

MUZAFFARABAD --Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Iftikhar Gilani met President of the Central Press Club Sohail Mughal. During the meeting, the Press Club president drew the Prime Minister’s attention to the issues faced by journalists.

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Iftikhar Gilani said the government believed in freedom of the press and would wholeheartedly accept positive criticism. He assured that the issues faced by journalists across Azad Kashmir, including those associated with the Central Press Club, would be addressed on a prior-



ity basis. President Central Press Club Sohail Mughal thanked Prime Minister Barrister Iftikhar Gilani and

said his key role in the construction of the Central Press Club building would always be remembered.

NIPA delegation visits Ministry of Foreign Affairs

ANI

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of participants of the 47th Mid Career Management Course of the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Peshawar, currently undertaking an inland study tour of Islamabad and Murree, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday.

The delegation was received and briefed by Ambassador Sajjad Haider Khan, Spokesperson and Director General (South Asia and SAARC), on the functioning of the Foreign Office, the contours and priorities of Pakistan’s foreign policy, and the evolving landscape of Pakistan’s diplomatic and international engagements, according to a press statement issued by the Foreign Office.

The briefing was followed by an interactive question-and-answer



session, during which participants engaged in a discussion on Pakistan’s foreign policy, diplomatic outreach, and Pakistan’s positioning globally.

The interaction provided an oppor-

tunity for the participants to gain a better understanding of the Foreign Office’s role in advancing Pakistan’s national interests and strengthening its relations with the international community.

Rizvi Takes Charge as NCCIA DG, Vows Action Against Anti-State Propaganda

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Newly appointed Director General of the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi has said that propaganda against the state or any state institution would not be allowed, directing officers across the country to take strict legal action in accordance with the law against those involved. An official told APP on Wednesday that Rizvi issued the directions during his first meeting with NCCIA directors, additional directors, deputy directors and assistant directors

from across Pakistan soon after assuming charge as the agency’s Director General.

During the meeting, the DG Rizvi outlined his priorities and directed officers to strengthen action against cybercrime and other illegal activities on social media and the internet. Rizvi also directed strict action against online harassment of women, saying the use of abusive language against women on social media or any attempt to harass them would not be tolerated. He said those posting abusive or objectionable content against women would face strict action under the law.

Daily meetings decided to expedite finalization of Auto Policy draft

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The committee constituted on the directions of Prime Minister to deliberate on the Auto and Auto Parts Manufacturing Policy 2026–31 has decided to hold daily meetings to expedite the review and finalisation of the policy draft.

The committee met on Wednesday at the Ministry of Law and Justice under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, with Federal Minister for Energy Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan and representatives of relevant federal ministries, divisions and organisations in attendance.

The meeting undertook a detailed review of the draft policy, with participants agreeing that all key aspects



should be thoroughly examined before its finalisation. The committee decided to consider, clause by clause, the concerns and observations raised by various ministries and relevant organisations. Members also agreed to assess the final draft from legal, financial and administrative perspectives to ensure that the proposed policy addresses rel-

evant institutional and regulatory requirements. Suggestions and recommendations received from stakeholders were also discussed during the meeting. The committee agreed that the Auto and Auto Parts Manufacturing Policy 2026–31 would be aligned with the policy priorities approved by the Prime Minister.

Mohsin Naqvi, Chinese Vice Minister agree to expand security cooperation, set up law enforcement centre

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday met with Chinese Vice Minister of Public Security Gao Qi and discussed Pakistan-China bilateral relations, joint measures against terrorism and narcotics, and cooperation in internal security. The meeting also agreed to enhance collaboration in police training, technology exchange, and modern law enforcement systems.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed ongoing cooperation in security-related fields and explored ways to strengthen coordination in tackling common challenges.

They agreed to expand cooperation in police training exchange programmes and the use of modern technology and equipment. The two sides also agreed that China would support the establishment of a modern law enforcement centre in Pakistan. Speaking on the occasion, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said the law enforcement centre would become another symbol of Pakistan-China friendship. He said Pakistan wants to further expand cooperation with China in matters related to internal security. The minister said Chinese artificial intelligence-based technology and equipment could provide significant support in addressing security challenges.

Mahe Zehra Husain brings her entrepreneurial journey to readers through ‘Women Rising’

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani entrepreneur, data scientist and author Mahe Zehra Husain has launched her latest book, Women Rising: A Practical Guide to Building a Business You Love, offering readers a framework for building businesses around their values, strengths and life goals. The book was introduced at a launch event held at Readings in Lahore, where entrepreneurs, educators, writers, journalists and readers gathered to discuss women’s entrepreneurship and changing ideas of success. The event featured a discussion with Husain about the ideas behind the book, followed by a question and answer session focused on entrepreneurship, ambition, identity, failure and personal well-being. Readers later met the author during a book-signing session. Mahe Zehra Husain brings her entrepreneurial journey to readers through ‘Women Rising’.

For Husain, the book reflects lessons learned during a career that has combined

technology, business, education and creative work. She has spent more than fourteen years leading a software company while also building a career as an author, educator and entrepreneur. Over the years, she has written more than twenty books and worked with students and professionals in different parts of the world. A mathematician with a Master’s degree in Operations Research, Husain currently serves as Chief Data Scientist at Ballogy, where she oversees analytical systems that help assess athletic performance and development. Her work connects technology with data-driven decision-making and youth development. Beyond technology, she has expanded her work into business development and real estate. She is the founder of Kinetic Developers and is leading FivePines, a residential community project in the Murree Hills being developed in partnership with FiveRivers Developers. The project focuses on creating residential spaces integrated with the surrounding natural environment.

IHC reissues notices, seeks PIPS recruitment record

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday reissued notices and sought the recruitment record of the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) after the record was not produced despite an earlier court order.

Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir heard a petition filed by Ahmed Mujtaba, a candidate for the post of Assistant Director at PIPS. The petitioner appeared in person before the court.

The court was informed that the recruitment record could not be produced despite its earlier direction.

Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir remarked that the petitioner had stood up for his right and brought the matter before the court, which was a positive step.

Counsel Shahzad Shaukat did not appear before the court and an application seeking adjournment was submitted on his behalf. The court reissued notices to the concerned authorities and directed PIPS to produce the relevant record. The hearing was adjourned until October 5.

Subsidised petrol available at 146 fuel stations; registered citizens can report violations on 9771

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Subsidised petrol is being provided to registered citizens at all 146 fuel stations across the federal capital under the Prime Minister’s relief scheme, with the district administration maintaining real-time monitoring to ensure that eligible consumers receive the fuel at the reduced price. The initiative covers all major areas of Islamabad, where arrangements

have been made to facilitate consumers and ensure smooth implementation of the government’s relief package. Registration and information banners have been displayed prominently at fuel stations to guide citizens about the procedure and eligibility requirements. According to the district administration, citizens who have not yet registered can complete the process at fuel stations within a few minutes and become eligible for subsidised petrol immediately.