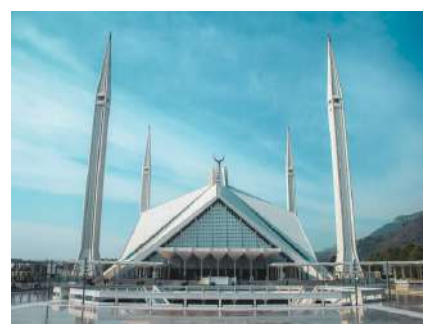




Daily FINANCIAL TIMES

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

Editor: JAVED SIDDIQ

Islamabad

Vol: 15 Issue: 12 Pages: 4 Price: 20 Wednesday September 23 2026

The Newspaper of ANI Media Group

Armed forces remain determined to defeat terrorism, says CDF Munir



ANI

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Asim Munir emphasised that the armed forces, with the unwavering support of the nation, remain resolute in their determination to defeat terrorism and ensure lasting peace and stability across the country.

The Field Marshal stated this during his visit to Corps Headquarters Peshawar on Tuesday.

He was briefed on the prevailing security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ongoing counter-terrorism operations, border management measures and operational preparedness of formations deployed in the province.

The COAS & CDF commended the high morale, readiness and professionalism of officers and troops, acknowledging their steadfast commitment to safeguarding the country and its people.

Field Marshal Asim Munir directed formations to remain vigilant and uphold the highest standards of operational preparedness.

He also laid a floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada and offered Fateha, paying rich tribute to those who laid down their lives in defence of the motherland and in the fight against terrorism. He reaffirmed that their supreme sacrifices would never be forgotten. Upon arrival, the COAS & CDF was received by Commander Peshawar Corps.

Pakistan, KSA sign visa waiver agreement for diplomatic, official passport holders



ANI

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on Tuesday signed an agreement abolishing visa requirements for holders of diplomatic and official, special passports, with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar saying the move would facilitate high-level engagement and institutional exchanges between the two countries, the Foreign Office said. FM Dar signed the agreement with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud on the sidelines of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. "Pleased to announce that on the sidelines of UNGA, I signed today with my brother, His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan," FM Dar said in a post on X. The agreement, formally titled the "Agreement between Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the abolition of visa requirements for holders of Diplomatic and Official/Special Passports", was described by FM Dar as "an important step".

"This important step will further facilitate high-level engagement and institutional exchanges," FM Dar said, adding that it would "contribute to advancing our enduring and brotherly strategic partnership across all areas of mutual interest". "The agreement was signed during a

meeting between FM Dar and Prince Faisal, during which the two foreign ministers also discussed bilateral and regional matters of mutual interest," the FO said.

The two sides reaffirmed the "deeply rooted and brotherly Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relationship" and welcomed the signing of the agreement on mutual visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and official/special passports.

FM Dar also expressed Pakistan's "steadfast solidarity with the Kingdom" and condemned the recent attacks targeting Saudi Arabia. The two foreign ministers discussed matters about the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement and reaffirmed their commitment to "strengthening cooperation under the Agreement". They also reaffirmed their commitment to advancing "regional peace, stability, and security" and underscored the importance of "sustained high-level exchanges" between the two countries.

"The two sides further agreed on the need for continued close coordination on bilateral and regional matters of mutual interest", according to the FO. The meeting and signing took place as the Pakistani and Saudi leadership participated in the UN General Assembly session in New York, providing an opportunity for the two sides to discuss their bilateral partnership as well as regional developments.

PTI's long march unjustified, protesters won't be allowed to enter Islamabad: Tarar

ANI

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) long march towards Islamabad had no justification, adding that protesters having a track record of disruption and vandalism would not be allowed to enter the federal capital. "The nation is witness to the disruption and inconvenience caused to the general public by PTI workers during their previous rallies. On one occasion, a female media anchor even had to take refuge by climbing over a DSGV vehicle to escape from the protesters," he said. Addressing a press conference at the Peshawar Press Club, the federal minister said the Islamabad High Court had issued directions that no compromise would be made over disruption to the movement of people in the federal capital. Former Governor KP, Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML-N) leaders including Ali Khadim Hussain, Ikhtiar Wali Khan and MPAs Tariq Awan and Jalal Khan, among others, were also present. The Information Minister said country could not afford protests and long marches that disrupt routine traffic and economic activities, adding that such disruptions could cause losses of around Rs.120 billion to the national economy each day.



Referring to the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) protest, he said no major disruption or damage had been witnessed during its demonstration, whereas incidents of vandalism and damage to government property had been reported during PTI protests, he added. The information Minister told newsmen that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and JI Central Amir, Engr Hafiz Naeemur Rehman had spoken by telephone, during which the prime minister apprised the JI chief about the relief worth billions of rupees being provided by the government to citizens through fuel price measures. During the conversation, he said, the prime minister and JI chief discussed delaying the party's long march, with the latter assuring that the proposal would be considered. The JI chief also agreed to meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif after his return from the foreign tour, the minister added. Responding to a question about the government's alleged lack of negotiations with PTI leadership, Attaullah Tarar said PTI leader, Barrister Gohar did not have the authority to take decisions on behalf of the party and ensure their implementation.

JI postpones long march until first week of October

ANI

MULTAN: Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said on Tuesday that the party had postponed its long march until the first week of October at the request of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, while making it clear that its protest campaign would continue. Addressing a press conference in Multan, Hafiz Naeem said the JI was raising issues concerning the basic problems faced by the public and accused the government of using petrol prices and tax collection to conceal corruption. He said sit-ins were continuing in 42 cities and that the party had already asked the government in writing to withdraw the levy, but received a negative response. The JI chief said several meetings had been held with the government and the party had also launched a train march from Karachi to Rohri and onward to Multan as part of its campaign over public issues.



Hafiz Naeem said rising petroleum prices had created a difficult situation across the country, adding that the government's relief package would benefit the government rather than address the concerns raised by the JI. According to him, the prime minister

had requested that the long march be postponed. He said the party would not withdraw from its protest movement and that sit-ins would continue. "We will not stop," Hafiz Naeem said, adding that the long march had been deferred until the first week of October.

He said the JI would seek written assurances from the government and would hold further talks with the prime minister after his return to the country.

Hafiz Naeem said the party's agenda was not confrontation or disorder but relief for the people. He warned that if the government failed to provide relief, the long march would resume.

"Our Multan sit-in will continue," he said, adding that the party would meet and negotiate with the government but would not abandon its long march.

Security forces kill 6 terrorists in Balochistan operation



ANI

Six terrorists were killed and nine suspected individuals were arrested during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) by security forces in Balochistan's Saran Tangi area, state-run Radio Pakistan reported on Tuesday.

According to the report, the operation was conducted under 'Operation Shaban-2'.

"According to security sources, the operation was conducted against terrorists of Fitna al Hindustan on the basis of intelligence information," it said. The state has designated Balochistan-based groups as Fitna al Hindustan to high-light India's alleged role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan. According to Radio Pakistan, a large cache of ammunition and weapons were also recovered from the possession of the terrorists. "Security forces are continuing operations against terrorists in the area, which will continue until the

last terrorist is eliminated," it said. President Asif Ali Zardari commended the "bravery and professional skills" of the security forces for "thwarting the terrorists' objectives". "The war against terrorism resulting from foreign interference will continue," the president said, adding that Fitna al Hindustan and its facilitators will not succeed in harming Pakistan's peace and stability.

In a statement on X, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi also praised the security forces for the operation, saying they had successfully thwarted the nefarious designs of Fitna al Hindustan. "The brave soldiers of the security forces are the pride of the nation," Naqvi said, adding: "The nation stands shoulder to shoulder with the security forces for the eradication of terrorism." Balochistan has witnessed an increase in terrorist attacks in recent weeks, prompting security forces to intensify counter-terrorism operations. The number of terrorist attacks in the province increased by seven per cent from 83 in July to 89 in August, according to a monthly assessment by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies. On Monday, security forces killed four more terrorists belonging to a banned organisation in an intelligence-based operation carried out in two areas of Panjgur district. Last week, security forces killed 11 terrorists in separate operations in Panjgur and Chagai districts.

Dower not a 'price' for wife but her mandatory legal right, SC rules

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday ruled that dower (Haq Mahr) was a mandatory legal incident of marriage imposed by Islamic law and should be given by the husband to the wife in good faith, at the agreed time, without conditions that demean the wife. "If not given, the courts must step in, not with hesitation, not with apology, but with full authority of the law," ruled a five-judge Supreme Court bench headed by Justice Shahid Waheed and comprising Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan. The unanimous verdict came on a batch of civil and criminal petitions concerning the legal effect of stipulations recorded in the nikahnama regarding dower. "It is neither the price of the wife nor consideration in the technical common-law sense," the judgment said, adding that dower constitutes an exclusive proprietary right of the wife. The institution reflects and reinforces the constitutional values of human dignity, equality before the law, protection of the family and fidelity to the injunctions of Islam, observed Justice Shahid Waheed in the 26-page judgment he authored.

Pakistan, 7 other Muslim nations call upon Israel to fulfil its commitment under Gaza plan

ANI



Pakistan joined other Muslim countries on Tuesday in calling for Israel to "immediately fulfill its outstanding commitments" under the first phase of a plan aimed at ending the conflict in Gaza. The demand was made in a joint statement attributed to the foreign ministers of Pakistan, Egypt, Türkiye, Indonesia, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates after they met on the sidelines of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The statement said that as part of its commitments under the Gaza plan, Israel should ensure the

immediate, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance and early recovery supplies, as well as facilitate the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure. The ministers stressed the "imperative of preserving the ceasefire and ending all violations". They emphasised that the road map for completing the implementa-

tion of the of the Gaza plan was an "integral part" of the plan and provided the framework for implementation to advance its second phase. This included "decommissioning alongside full Israeli withdrawal, the deployment of the International Stabilisation Force (ISF), the assumption by the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG) of its responsibilities throughout the Gaza Strip, and the launch of early recovery and reconstruction across Gaza", the statement read. The ministers called on all parties to fulfill their respective commitments "in good faith and without delay" under the plan.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif arrives in New York to attend the 81st session of United Nations General Assembly. New York.

JBS and Mercantile Partner to Enable Official Apple Products for Enterprises in Pakistan

Report: ANI Correspondent:

KARACHI -- Jaffer Business Systems (JBS) and Mercantile have announced a strategic partnership to expand access to official Apple products for enterprises across Pakistan. Under the partnership, JBS will become Mercantile's Preferred Partner for Enterprise in Pakistan, adding Apple products to its technology portfolio and extending its services from IT infrastructure and data centers to workplace and hand-held devices. The partnership will enable businesses to adopt, deploy and manage Apple technology with local support, including Apple Business, Automated Device Enrolment, Managed Apple Accounts, device management guidance, warranty and after-sales services through Mercantile and Mercantile Care.



JBS CEO Veqar ul Islam said the partnership would connect enterprise infrastructure with the devices employees use every day and support organizations in building secure, AI-enabled technology environments. Mercantile CEO Pakistan and SVP SAGE Nauman Durrani said the partnership would combine Mercantile's authorized Apple eco-

system with JBS's enterprise technology expertise, helping organizations adopt Apple products with greater confidence. The companies said the partnership would provide Pakistani enterprises with a structured route to adopting Apple technology at scale while supporting productivity, digital transformation and the growth of Pakistan's digital economy.

Pakistan, Maldives Agree to Expand Bilateral Cooperation; Child Rights Caucus Meets Maldives Delegation

BY: Hurish shah FT:

ISLAMABAD -- Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq welcomed Speaker of the People's Majlis of the Maldives Abdul Raheem Abdulla and his parliamentary delegation at Parliament House. During the visit, the Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR), chaired by Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry, held a meeting with the Maldives delegation. Barrister Danyal highlighted the role of the caucus in raising issues concerning children at the parliamentary level and stressed greater cooperation in child rights, education and youth development. The two sides agreed to enhance cooperation in parliamentary diplomacy, trade, tourism, education, agri-



culture, health, IT, youth development and other areas. The Maldives delegation appreciated Pakistan's support and expressed interest in cooperation in tourism, fisheries, renewable energy, agriculture, education, vocational training

and scholarships. Members of the Pakistan-Maldives Parliamentary Friendship Group also emphasized expanding collaboration in trade, youth development, agriculture, IT, digital cooperation and health.

Federal Secretary Housing & Works Visits Margalla Orchard Housing Scheme

BY: Hurish shah FT:

ISLAMABAD-- Federal Secretary Housing & Works Capt. (Retd.) Muhammad Mahmood, accompanied by Director General, Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA), Capt. (Retd.) Zafar Iqbal, visited the Margalla Orchard Housing Scheme on September 22, 2026. Senior officers of DHA and the Housing Authority received the Federal Secretary and briefed him on the housing scheme, ongoing development works, basic infrastructure and allied facilities. The Project Director, Margalla Orchard, briefed the Federal Secretary on the progress achieved so far, ongoing development activities and the future course of action. Capt. (Retd.) Muhammad Mahmood reviewed the progress of electricity, gas and horticulture works and directed the concerned officers to expedite the ongoing projects. He also reviewed arrangements for rain-water channelization and lighting along the main boulevard and issued necessary directions for their timely



completion. The progress regarding the handover and possession of Block-A of Margalla Orchard Housing Scheme, scheduled for June 2027, was also discussed. The Federal Secretary directed the authorities to accelerate development activities, ensure quality work and complete basic infrastructure and allied facilities within the stipulated timelines. He emphasized effective monitor-

ing and close coordination among all concerned departments to ensure timely provision of essential facilities to allottees and completion of the project according to the prescribed targets. At the conclusion of the visit, the Federal Secretary expressed satisfaction over the ongoing development activities and directed the concerned authorities to maintain the pace of work and utilize all available resources for timely completion of the project.

Fahad Barlas Highlights New Trade Opportunities at Made in Pakistan Exhibition in Dhaka

Report: ANI Correspondent:

DHAKA -- Chairman Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry (PAEI) Fahad Barlas said the 4th Made in Pakistan Exhibition & Business Investment Conference would help strengthen trade and business ties between Pakistan and Bangladesh. The exhibition was inaugurated at the International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB), Dhaka, by Arif Hussain, Vice Chairman of the Export Promotion Bureau. Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Imran Haider, PAEI Founder Chairman Khurshid Barlas and other distinguished guests attended the ceremony. Fahad Barlas said Pakistan had brought leading brands to Bangladesh and stressed the need to focus on expanding trade within the SAARC region. Pakistan High Commissioner Imran Haider congratulated Khurshid Barlas and Fahad Barlas on organizing the exhibition, describing it as an important initiative for strengthening economic and com-



mercial relations between the two countries. Arif Hussain said the exhibition provided an important platform for regional integration and for showcasing Pakistani products in the Bangladeshi market. PAEI Founder Chairman Khurshid Barlas said the main objective was to introduce Pakistani products to Bangladeshi consumers and international buyers. He also highlighted opportunities for women entrepre-

neurs in the textile, retail and related sectors of both countries. The exhibition featured Pakistani textiles, food products, electrical appliances, kitchenware, footwear, household goods, gems and jewelry, fashion and fabrics, machinery, handicrafts, tourism and hospitality services and other products. More than 5,000 visitors and delegates attended the exhibition and expressed keen interest in Pakistani products and business opportunities.

Talha Mahmood Chairs Senate Defence Committee; Faisal Karim Kundi Seeks Improved Air Connectivity



Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Defence, chaired by Senator Talha Mahmood, was held at Parliament House, with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi attending as a special invitee. The committee was briefed by the Secretary Defence and Civil Aviation Authority Pakistan on flight delays and the situation at Jinnah International Airport Karachi. The Secretary Defence said the factors

behind the airport's current condition needed to be examined and informed the committee that improvement measures were underway. The Secretary Defence invited senators to visit Karachi Airport to review the ongoing measures and assess its previous and current condition. The committee was informed that since the aviation sector came under the Ministry of Defence on February 4, 2025, various steps had been taken to improve airports and aviation services. Flight operations to several airports in Balochistan have increased,

while night-flight facilities have also been introduced at some airports. The committee was also briefed on the need for major renovation and a new terminal at Peshawar Airport. At Gilgit Airport, runway and lighting systems have been upgraded, while plans are underway to induct additional aircraft. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi called for improved domestic air routes, including direct connections from Peshawar to Swat and Lahore. He also urged restoration of Dera Ismail Khan Airport and resumption of commercial flights.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Meets Maldivian Speaker Abdul Raheem Abdulla to Strengthen Parliamentary Ties

BY: Maryam Sajid / ANI

ISLAMABAD -- Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq received Speaker of the People's Majlis of Maldives Abdul Raheem Abdulla and his parliamentary delegation at Parliament House on Tuesday. During the meeting, both sides discussed Pakistan-Maldives relations and agreed to further strengthen parliamentary contacts and institutional cooperation. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said Pakistan attaches great importance to its long-standing and friendly relations with the Maldives, adding that the visit would help strengthen institutional linkages between the two parliaments. He highlighted the role of the Pak-Maldives Parliamentary Friendship Group and various parliamentary forums in promoting cooperation



and parliamentary exchanges. Maldivian Speaker Abdul Raheem Abdulla appreciated the warm welcome and said the Maldives also attaches great importance to its friendly relations with Pakistan. He thanked Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for his support during the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

Conference in Cape Town. Convener Pak-Maldives Parliamentary Friendship Group Shaista Khan and MNAs Syeda Nosheen Iftikhar, Daniyal Chaudhary, Isphanyar M. Bhandara and Asia Naz Tanoli, along with other parliamentarians, attended the meeting.

Ishaq Dar Meets Kuwaiti Foreign Minister, Reaffirms Commitment to Stronger Bilateral Ties

Report: ANI

NEW YORK -- Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar met Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The two foreign ministers reviewed Pakistan-Kuwait relations and welcomed continued



high-level engagement between the two countries. They reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest. They also exchanged views on regional and international developments, including the situation in the Middle East, and stressed the importance of dialogue and diplomacy for promoting peace and stability.

NA Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Congratulates Newly Elected Office-Bearers of Video Journalists Association

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, has congratulated the newly elected office-bearers of the Video Journalists Association following the recently held elections. Congratulating Kashif Abbasi on his election as President of the Video Journalists Association, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that leading the association is an important responsibility. He expressed hope that Kashif Abbasi would fulfil this responsibility effectively and play a constructive role in addressing the professional concerns of video

journalists and protecting their professional rights. The Speaker also congratulated Rizwan Rao on his election as General Secretary, Khurram Roshan as Finance Secretary, Anees-ur-Rehman and Zulqarnain Rao as Vice Presidents, and Mehboob-ur-Rehman as Joint Secretary. He also congratulated Wajid (VOA), Khakan Ahmed, Atiq, Faheem Raja and Muhammad Sajjad on their election as members of the Association's Governing Body. Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that video journalists are performing important responsibilities in the

field of journalism and play a significant role in providing timely and effective information to the public. He expressed hope that the newly elected office-bearers would play an effective role in addressing the professional concerns of video journalists, protecting their rights, and promoting greater cooperation within the journalist community. The Speaker extended his best wishes to newly elected President of the Video Journalists Association Kashif Abbasi and other office-bearers and prayed that Allah Almighty may grant them success in fulfilling their responsibilities.

Faisal Saleem Rehman Chairs Senate Interior Committee Meeting on Tax Evasion, Smuggling and Passport Issues



Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- The Senate Standing Committee on Interior and Narcotics Control, chaired by Senator Faisal Saleem Rehman, reviewed issues relating to tax evasion, smuggling, the theft of 2,828 cartons of cigarettes from FBR warehouses and passport rules for over-seas Pakistanis. The committee examined a sub-committee report presented by Senator Saifullah Abro regarding alleged revenue losses in the tobacco sector and tax-exempt areas. Members questioned the handling of the cigarette theft case and expressed concern over accountability of senior officials. The FIA was directed to provide an

update on the investigation. The 2,828-carton case has been under parliamentary scrutiny in previous meetings as well. The committee also reviewed gaps in FBR warehouse management, including inventory records and security arrangements, and discussed coordination between the FIA and FBR in matters involving tax evasion and smuggling. The committee decided to constitute a sub-committee for further examination of the tax-evasion issue and directed the FBR and FIA to submit comprehensive reports within one month. Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry suggested that matters falling within the Finance Committee's jurisdiction should also

be referred to that forum, while Senator Jam Saifullah Khan called for the Finance Minister's participation. The committee also reviewed Rule 18 of the Passport Rules 2021 concerning Emergency Travel Documents for stranded or deported Pakistanis. Chairman Faisal Saleem Rehman raised concerns over delays in nationality verification and family-tree attestations and discussed complaints regarding short-term passports issued to Pakistanis abroad. The committee further discussed the issuance of official passports, with the Minister of State for Interior assuring members that the matter would be addressed within one to two weeks.

Daily

FINANCIALTIMES

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

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

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

Opinion

3

Why Are We Afraid of Questions?

– The Crisis of Inquiry, Research and Intellectual Freedom



By:Dr. Nasser Hussyn Bukhari
Published By:ANI News Agency

European history offers us an important lesson: when authority is placed over knowledge and questioning is treated as rebellion, societies can become intellectually stagnant. Describing medieval Europe simply as a “Dark Age” would be a historical oversimplification, because religious institutions also preserved many traditions of learning during that period. Yet it is equally true that, at certain points in history, religious authority came into serious conflict with independent intellectual inquiry. When established ideas were placed beyond the reach of questioning and experimentation, intellectual progress was constrained.

The case of Galileo Galilei is a prominent example of this conflict. Galileo supported a view of the universe based on astronomical observation and evidence that challenged the dominant religious and intellectual understanding of his time. His trial before the Roman Inquisition in 1633 became symbolic of a much larger question: could human beings challenge an established conception on the basis of observation, evidence and reason?

Later, the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment transformed Europe’s intellectual landscape. This transformation did not occur simply because religious authority declined; political, economic, scientific and institutional factors also played significant roles. But one fundamental lesson emerged: knowledge must never be afraid of questions.

And this brings us to the question facing Pakistan today: Why are we afraid of asking questions?

There are many reasons for this problem in Pakistan. Family upbringing, teacher-centred education, a rote-learning examination system, social hierarchies, the culture of unquestioning obedience to authority, weak research infrastructure and a limited research culture in universities all contribute to the problem.

Among these factors, a form of clericalism that seeks to restrict questioning, disagreement and inquiry in the name of religion is certainly an important and sensitive issue. But an immediate objection arises: does this mean that all religious scholars in Pakistan are opposed to knowledge and research? The answer is clearly no. Islamic civilisation has a remarkable intellectual tradition in medicine, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy and many other fields. Many Muslim thinkers regarded reason, observation, questioning and rational argument as important means of acquiring knowledge. The criticism, therefore, is not directed at religion itself

but at an intellectual attitude that uses religion to restrict legitimate questioning.

Another objection is that not every question is necessarily acceptable. That is correct. Questions must also be responsible. Insulting an individual, spreading false information or making an unsubstantiated allegation is not scholarly inquiry. However, suppressing a serious intellectual question merely because it challenges an established idea is contrary to the spirit of research. A question should be answered through evidence and reasoning, not by silencing the person who asks it.

Another concern is that if children are given freedom to question everything, they may stop respecting their parents, teachers and social values. This concern is also misplaced. Questioning and disrespect are two different things. A student can disagree with a teacher while continuing to respect the teacher. Critical thinking does not mean rudeness; it means learning to disagree through reason and evidence. We should teach children that they can say, “I do not agree with you,” but they should also be able to explain, “Here is my evidence and here is my argument.”

A fourth objection is that questions about religion may create social conflict. The answer is that suppressing questions does not make them disappear; it merely pushes them underground. If young people cannot find credible answers to their questions in educational institutions and reliable intellectual forums, they may turn to unverified sources, social media or extremist material. Open intellectual dialogue is not necessarily a source of disorder; it can be a defence against misinformation.

The real issue, therefore, is not clericalism versus science. It is authority versus inquiry. If a religious scholar presents an argument based on evidence and reasoning, that scholar is participating in intellectual dialogue. If a scientist presents a hypothesis as an absolute truth without sufficient evidence, that hypothesis should also be questioned. In an intellectual society, it is not the personality of the speaker but the strength of the evidence that should matter.

Our education system does not adequately teach this principle. Students are often trained to memorise what is written in a textbook and reproduce it in an examination. They are taught much less frequently how to formulate a new question when the existing answer is incomplete.

The world is now confronting new questions in artificial intelligence, genetic research, biotechnology, climate change, space science and cybersecurity. In the social sciences, poverty, unemployment, migration, urban expansion, the digital society and social inequality require serious local research. But if our research remains limited to producing theses and papers merely for degrees or promotions, we will be producing academic documents rather than new knowledge.

The solution is clear. The curriculum must give greater importance to questioning, research, experimentation, discussion and problem-solving. Students should be assigned research projects. They should learn how to collect data, evaluate sources, formulate hypotheses and draw conclusions. Teachers should be trained to understand that a student’s question is not a challenge to their authority; it is a sign that meaningful learning is taking place.

Universities should establish Research and Innovation Clubs, expand scholarships and research grants for young researchers, and make national and local problems an integral part of university research. Religious institutions and scholars should also play their role in encouraging intellectual dialogue, questioning and research. If religious leadership frightens young people away from questioning, it will not eliminate the questions in their minds. If, instead, it guides them towards evidence, reason and responsible inquiry, it can contribute to a stronger society.

There is another important objection that must be addressed: does freedom of inquiry mean that every tradition, belief and institution should constantly be viewed with suspicion? No. Critical thinking does not mean rejecting everything; it means evaluating every claim according to the appropriate standards of evidence and reasoning. A tradition may deserve respect, but a scholarly claim remains subject to evidence.

Pakistan does not need to move away from religion; it needs to move away from intellectual stagnation. We need a generation that understands its cultural and religious heritage but is not afraid to ask questions; that respects teachers but can disagree with them through reason; that reads books but also conducts new research.

The logical conclusion is clear: if we suppress questions, research will be restricted; if research is restricted, the production of new knowledge will decline; and if new knowledge declines, we will remain consumers of the knowledge produced by others in technology, economics, education and social policy. Therefore, the problem cannot be solved simply by blaming one particular group. We must create a culture of intellectual inquiry at home, in the madrasa, school, college, university and wider society—a culture in which questioning is not treated as rebellion but recognised as the first sign of learning.

Perhaps our educational reform should begin with one simple sentence:

“Ask questions, seek evidence, conduct research—and where no answer exists, create new knowledge.”

Because developed societies are not those that already know the answers to every question; they are those that have the freedom to generate new questions, tolerate disagreement and search for their answers.

US’ Gaza ‘Master Plan’ clashes with reality

CHRIS DOYLE

Anyone who saw Jared Kushner’s PowerPoint presentation in Davos last week without knowing the topic would have struggled to identify the territory to which he was referring. Many might have thought this was for North America, with shiny new office and residential blocks and a certain space-age or Hollywood sci-fi feel to the slides of the “Master Plan.” The vaulting ambition of the speaker may have impressed his father-in-law, US President Donald Trump, who is certainly familiar with the world of real estate. No doubt Trump, the freshly minted chairman of the Board of Peace, was the premier target of the messaging. It reflected much of what was released at the announcement of Trump’s “Gaza riviera” plan last February, which envisaged the Strip being entirely emptied of Palestinians. Even this version treats Gaza as a tabula rasa to impose whatever architectural fantasies its authors can conjure up. It treats the enclave as being devoid of any culture, tradition or history.

Others have been more skeptical – and with good reason. First of all, Israel has not even adhered to the Oct. 10 ceasefire and is bombing and shelling with intensity. Second, the full entry of aid, as referenced in the Trump peace plan, has not yet been achieved. Third, the plan presumes the disarmament of Hamas, something that is far from imminent. Finally, no international stabilization force is on the horizon. Those are the significant near-term impediments. Delivering this plan, at a time when the conflict still rages, will be nigh on impossible. Just clearing the 60 million tonnes of rubble, which is peppered with unexploded ordnance and a host

of toxins, will take an age and cost a fortune.

One major element Kushner did not address was how the land would be acquired and whether owners would be compensated. According to a 2015 study, about half of the land in Gaza is privately owned. Much of the land is unregistered because owners did not wish to pay tax. What is clear is that the companies lining up to fill their coffers have no claim to the land at all. But progress also presumes the Israeli leadership will be comfortable with this. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is still smarting from the invitation that was extended to Türkiye and Qatar to join the executive committee of the Board of Peace. Many members of Netanyahu’s Cabinet and right-wing Knesset members have dreams of inhabiting these plush new riviera residences themselves.

Israel will have to consent as the occupying power. For starters, it will have to allow in all the construction materials and abandon its restrictive dual-use list. Throughout Kushner’s presentation to world leaders and the business elite, it was clear that Palestinians have had no input into these plans – and not just because the Arabic on the slides was all wrong. He did not outline how the local Palestinians in Gaza would be won over by the project or where they would go during reconstruction. Kushner said Gaza would be run on free-market principles, as opposed to how Palestinians might wish to shape their economic future.

Do Palestinians want tourism, given the beachfront is all labeled for coastal tourism? Who decided on the importance of data centers at this stage? And how many of the companies making a fortune

out of this dreamworld will be Palestinian and how many will be rich businessmen with no link to Gaza at all? The Palestinians in Gaza I have spoken to largely see this all as a sick joke. “Who is going to live in these villas and flashy apartments? Certainly not us Palestinians,” sighed one woman. Another said: “What will stop Israel from bombing them again? Where will our security come from? We need that before rich houses.” But there is also the issue of who will pay for it. The experts at the UN, those who actually have experience of such situations, calculate that postwar reconstruction will cost about \$70 billion. This is without the high-end infrastructure of Kushner’s presentation. The UAE has reportedly expressed an interest in funding the first planned community on the outskirts of Rafah in the south. Beyond that, it is not clear. More alarming is who might make money out of it. This is a war zone profiteering racket. US companies are lining up at the trough. This is all premised on the naive and ill-founded belief that the entirety of Gaza’s problems can be resolved with bulldozers, cranes and cement. The plan has echoes of earlier economic roadmaps for peace, but even those were not so divorced from reality. At no stage did the presentation reference a viable peace process or even mention that Gaza would be the western segment of an independent state of Palestine. It did not address a single one of the underlying causes or drivers of this 100-year-plus conflict. On this occasion, the last word goes to French President Emmanuel Macron, who was reported as saying: “Peace is not a real estate transaction. You cannot build stability on the erasure of a people’s history and the privatization of their tragedy.”

– Arab News

Alleged Armed Attack on Social Leader Dr Prof Syed Mohsin Ali: Questions Raised Over Delay in Investigation Despite Arrests

Family Demands Immediate, Comprehensive and Transparent High-Level Probe

Special Report: ANI

RAWALPINDI-- The family of social leader and doctor Professor Syed Mohsin Ali, Dr Syeda Amina Batool and her mother has raised serious questions over the lack of visible progress in the investigation into an alleged armed attack on them in the sensitive Saddar area of Rawalpindi Cantonment, despite the reported arrest of suspected individuals.

The family has called for an immediate, comprehensive and transparent high-level investigation to determine the motives, planning and possible factors behind the alleged attack.

According to the family, Professor Dr Syed Mohsin Ali is not only a doctor but also a social worker and social leader who has remained involved in various social, welfare, educational and humanitarian activities in Pakistan and internationally. The family maintains that the alleged attack on such a social figure requires a thorough examination of all possible motives and circumstances.

Unnumbered Motorcycle in Rawalpindi Cantonment Raises Questions

According to the FIR, on August 11, 2026, two motorcycle riders allegedly intercepted the vehicle carrying the affected family near the entrance of Al-Tawheed Hotel in the Saddar area of Rawalpindi Cantonment.

The family alleges that the suspects attempted to snatch belongings and opened fire when resistance was offered.

According to the family, the motorcycle allegedly had no registration number plate. They have questioned how a motorcycle without a number plate entered a sensitive cantonment area and whether it was checked at any checkpoint or security post.

The family wants investigators to establish the route through which the motorcycle entered the cantonment area, whether it was checked at any checkpoint, whether any record of such checking exists, and how the motorcycle and its occupants were subsequently identified.

Alleged Prolonged Pursuit Raises Further Questions

According to the family, investigating authorities informed them that a review of CCTV footage and other technical evidence allegedly indicated that the suspects had been following the victims for an extended period before the attack.

The family says the alleged pursuit reportedly extended across Taxila, Rawalpindi, Cantonment, Saddar and Islamabad.

If this aspect is established through evidence, the family believes an important question arises as to whether the incident was merely an attempted robbery or whether the victims had allegedly been specifically targeted and their movements monitored beforehand.

The family has called for a detailed investigation into when the alleged pursuit began, how the victims’ movements were allegedly monitored and whether anyone had provided information about their movements.

Suspects Arrested, But Why the Delay in Further Proceedings?

According to the family, the suspected individuals have been in custody for around one and a half months and are reportedly being held at I-9 Police Station in Islamabad. However, the family says there has been no clear progress in the case.

The family has questioned why further legal proceedings have allegedly been delayed if the suspects have been arrested and identified and CCTV and other techni-



cal evidence is already part of the investigation.

According to the family, if important information or alleged confessional statements have been obtained from the suspects, these statements should be examined and corroborated in accordance with law and followed up through further investigation.

The family maintains that arrest alone is not sufficient and that the alleged pursuit, possible planning of the attack, selection of the target, possible sources of information and the actual motive behind the incident must all be investigated.

Presence of Police Officer at Time of Attack Also Questioned

The family has also raised questions regarding the alleged presence of a police officer at the time of the incident.

According to the family, a police officer was allegedly present near a shop opposite the scene of the incident, yet the attackers were able to flee after the alleged attack.

The family has called for the statement of the relevant police officer, police deployment records, statements of eyewitnesses and CCTV footage from nearby shops and other locations to be made part of the investigation.

However, the presence of a police officer or any alleged administrative lapse cannot itself establish negligence or responsibility without evidence and a formal inquiry.

Dr Syed Mohsin Ali’s Social and Humanitarian Role

According to the family, Professor Dr Syed Mohsin Ali has remained associated with the medical profession while also actively participating in social and humanitarian work.

The family says he has for years participated in various social, welfare, educational, medical and humanitarian activities in Pakistan and at the international level.

These activities have included health and education initiatives, social awareness programmes, assistance to deserving people and various support measures for underprivileged communities.

According to the family, Dr Syed Mohsin Ali has also participated in lectures, seminars, awareness programmes and other social activities.

The family believes that investigating all possible motives behind an alleged attack on a doctor and social leader is a matter of public interest.

However, his social activities by themselves do not establish a motive for the alleged attack. Any conclusion regarding the motive would require evidence-based investigation.

Demand for High-Level Investigation

The family has demanded an immediate and comprehensive high-level investigation and urged authorities not to treat the matter as a routine investigation alone.

According to the family, the investigation should examine the alleged pursuit, possible planning of the attack, selection of the target,

the alleged unnumbered motorcycle, possible facilitators and the actual motive behind the incident.

The family has also called for the role of any new individual, contact or possible facilitator emerging during the investigation to be determined strictly in accordance with law.

Demand for Immediate Action and Disclosure of Facts

The family says that the suspected individuals have been in custody for approximately one and a half months and that, if there has still been no clear progress in the case, the reasons for any further delay should be explained.

According to the family, if investigators have information indicating that the victims were allegedly followed for an extended period before the attack, the arrested suspects should be questioned thoroughly on this aspect and all relevant evidence should be examined.

The family has demanded an immediate high-level investigation and a comprehensive review of all available CCTV, digital, technical and forensic evidence so that the facts of the case can be established without further delay.

According to the family, further delay is causing concern regarding both the security of the victims and their family and the pursuit of justice.

The family maintains that the purpose of the investigation should not be to prematurely hold any individual or institution responsible, but to establish the facts and determine responsibility strictly on the basis of law and evidence.

The suspected individuals are entitled to full legal rights and are presumed innocent unless and until convicted by a court of law. At the same time, the victims and their family are seeking transparent and impartial answers to the key questions surrounding the case following the arrests.

Family Seeks Answers to Key Questions

The family’s clear demand is for an immediate high-level investigation to establish who allegedly carried out the attack, what the actual motive was, why the victims were allegedly followed, how an allegedly unnumbered motorcycle entered the sensitive cantonment area, how the attackers managed to escape despite the alleged presence of a police officer, and whether any person other than those already arrested played a role as an alleged facilitator or accomplice.

The family says all available evidence needs to be examined in an integrated manner so that no aspect of the case is overlooked and the investigation proceeds on the basis of credible evidence rather than assumptions or one-sided claims.

The family has once again called for an immediate, comprehensive, transparent and impartial high-level investigation and urged the authorities to keep the affected family informed about progress in the case.

Beyond Greenwashing: Building an ESG Materiality Risk Framework



By: Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naveed
Published By: ANI News Agency

Pakistan’s ESG agenda is entering a more consequential phase. The question is no longer simply how much sustainability information companies disclose, but which Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) risks are genuinely material to their financial performance, access to capital and long-term resilience.

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has already established an important regulatory foundation. It has adopted IFRS S1 and IFRS S2 on a phased basis and issued revised ESG Disclosure Guidelines aligned with the Pakistan Green Taxonomy. This creates an opportunity to move ESG from a reporting exercise into a core

component of corporate and financial risk management.

For Pakistan, ESG Materiality Risk Assessment should become the bridge between sustainability information and financial decision-making. Companies should systematically identify, quantify and monitor ESG risks that can affect revenues, operating costs, asset values, cash flows, creditworthiness, financing costs and market valuation. Climate transition risk, physical climate exposure, energy and water dependence, labour conditions, supply-chain vulnerabilities and governance weaknesses will not be equally material across sectors.

The need is evident. A recent baseline survey of Pakistani listed companies found that only 56% of respondents, on average, had completed a materiality assessment, with significant differences across sectors. This suggests that the next challenge is not merely improving disclosure, but institutionalizing materiality assessment within corporate strategy and risk governance.

Pakistan should therefore develop sector-specific materiality-risk frameworks, strengthen board accountability, integrate material ESG exposures into enterprise risk management and financial stress testing, and encourage reliable, comparable and assured ESG data. Banks, institutional investors and rating agencies should likewise be encouraged to incorporate financially material ESG risks into credit analysis, investment decisions and risk pricing. The objective should not be more ESG disclosure for its own sake. It should be better identification, measurement and management of the sustainability risks that matter economically. For Pakistan’s capital markets, ESG materiality can become the missing link between sustainability reporting, financial risk management and efficient capital allocation helping companies anticipate emerging risks, investors make better-informed decisions, and the financial system build greater resilience in an increasingly climate-constrained economy.

Sindh Governor, CM and Chinese Acting CG Laud Time-Tested Pakistan-China Ties

Report: ANI Correspondent:

KARACHI -- Sindh Governor Syed Nehal Hashmi, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and Acting Consul General of China in Karachi Feng Deheng have lauded the long-standing and time-tested friendship between Pakistan and China.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the Chinese Consulate in Karachi to mark China's National Day, Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said Pakistan-China relations were based on mutual trust, sovereign equality and support for each other's core interests.

He highlighted China's economic and technological achievements and appreciated its contribution to global peace, development and international cooperation.

The Chief Minister described Pakistan-China relations as an All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, saying CPEC had added a transformative dimension to bilateral ties through connectivity, energy, infrastructure and industrial development.

He said Sindh, as Pakistan's economic and commercial hub, remained central to Pakistan-China cooperation, particularly in energy, ports, logistics, industry, agricul-



ture, IT, healthcare and education.

Murad Ali Shah said the Sindh government was keen to further expand cooperation with China in renewable energy, smart urban development, agricultural modernization, vocational training, digital transformation and industrial innovation.

Acting Chinese Consul General Feng Deheng said practical cooperation between Pakistan and China had deepened, while both sides were

promoting high-quality development of CPEC. He said agriculture, industry and mining would remain key areas under the upgraded CPEC 2.0 framework.

He noted that frequent high-level exchanges between the two countries had further strengthened political trust and cooperation.

The ceremony began with the national anthems of Pakistan and China and concluded with a cake-cutting ceremony.

Security Preparations Intensified in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Attock Ahead of Possible Long March

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- Security preparations have been intensified in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Attock ahead of a possible Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) long march.

More than 22,000 security personnel are being prepared for deployment in Islamabad, while over 13,000 police personnel are being deployed in Rawalpindi. Around 30,000 personnel are also being deployed in Attock, a key district connecting Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Punjab.

Additional security arrangements are being made at key entry and exit points and along major routes in anticipation of the possible protest.



Senate Climate Committee Reviews GLOF Threats, Glacier Monitoring and Climate Challenges



Report: Hurish shah FT:

ISLAMABAD -- The Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change, chaired by Senator Sherry Rehman, reviewed the growing threat of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), glacier melt, deforestation and climate-related risks.

The committee was informed that Pakistan has 13,032 glaciers and more than 3,000 glacial lakes, with 33 lakes identified as potentially dangerous. Senator Sherry Rehman said a GLOF event could put around 7.1 million people in Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at risk.

Officials said 24 glacial lakes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had been identified, including five categorized as high-risk. Climate-related

incidents during 2026 have reportedly damaged 535 houses and 31 bridges.

The committee stressed the need for a unified glacier inventory, regular monitoring, satellite and drone surveillance, AI-based risk assessment and community-based early warning systems. Senator Rehman called for clear, time-bound action plans and stronger coordination among SUPARCO, NDMA, PMD and provincial authorities.

Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik said GLOFs differ from conventional floods and require safe zoning, integrated data systems and stronger regional data sharing. The committee was informed that 34 early warning systems had been installed, while

another 284 were expected to be provided within six months.

The committee also discussed deforestation, illegal timber cutting and forest degradation. Officials said the Forestry Component of the Green Pakistan Programme had achieved 54 percent of its overall target.

Progress on the Islamabad Capital Territory (Prohibitions of Plastic Book Covers) Act, 2026, was also reviewed. Senator Rehman stressed that legislation must be followed by effective implementation and enforcement. Senators Syed Waqar Mehd, Sarmad Ali, Khalida Ateeb and Bushra Anjum Butt, along with the Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination and relevant officials, attended the meeting.

Pakistan army kicks off joint military exercises with Russian and Omani forces



ANI

The Pakistan Army commenced joint military exercises with Russian and Omani forces at Cherat and the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) Pabbi, respectively, the military's media wing said on Tuesday. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the ninth edition of the Pakistan-Russia Joint Exercise Druzhba-IX and the second edition of the Pakistan-Oman Joint Exercise Washaq Al Jabal-II (Mountain Lynx-II) commenced today.

"The two-week exercises bring together contingents from Pakistan Army and their counterparts from the Russian Army and the Royal Army of Oman to share operational experience, refine counter-terrorism drills, procedures and enhance interoperability," the ISPR said.

The military's media wing further stated that through joint train-

ing and the exchange of best practices, the participating forces would hone their combat skills and tactical expertise while further strengthening bilateral defence cooperation. The Pakistan Army routinely conducts joint military exercises with foreign militaries to improve operational readiness and enhance combat capabilities. On May 7, Pakistan and Sri Lanka concluded a two-week-long joint counter-terrorism exercise at Tarbela, focused on enhancing counter-terrorism skills and strengthening their longstanding military-to-military relations.

"The two-week exercise began on April 27 and concluded today. Combat teams from the Special Services Group (SSG) of the Pakistan Army and the Sri Lankan Special Forces participated in the exercise," ISPR said. ISPR also said that the exercise aimed to refine the drills, procedures and techniques

involved in counter-terrorism operations through joint training, while also reinforcing the historic military-to-military relations between the two friendly countries.

On April 20, Pakistan and Egypt successfully concluded a joint counterterrorism exercise called "Thunder-II".

According to ISPR, combat teams from the Pakistan Army's Special Services Group (SSG) and the Egyptian Special Forces participated in the exercise, "demonstrating exceptional professionalism and operational skill throughout".

ISPR added that the exercise "served to further strengthen the longstanding and historic military-to-military relations between the two friendly nations".

In September 2025, "Druzhba-VIII" between the Pakistan and Russian armies was conducted from September 15-27 in the counter-terrorism domain.

"The exercise was aimed at refining the drills, procedures and techniques involved in counterterrorism operations with a focus on drone warfare, fighting in built-up areas and counter-improvised explosive devices," ISPR had said in a statement.

Read More: Pakistan-Russia joint anti-terrorism drill concludes with military show of solidarity

The troops from both countries displayed the highest standards of professional excellence during the exercise, ISPR added.

CDA chairman orders measures to ease Kashmir Chowk traffic

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chairman Sohail Ashraf on Tuesday directed officials to ensure uninterrupted traffic flow at Kashmir Chowk and minimise inconvenience to commuters during construction of the underpass being built at the busy junction. The chairman issued the directions during a visit to Kashmir Chowk, where he reviewed progress on the underpass project and the traffic management measures in place. He was briefed by the director general infrastructure on the progress of work, ongoing activities and the timeline for completion. The chairman directed the concerned formations to ensure that temporary traffic arrangements remained effective until completion of the underpass. He also called for special attention to traffic manage-



ment during peak hours. Officials briefed him on a traffic management solution for Kashmir Chowk and Murree Road aimed at addressing bottlenecks and improving vehicular movement.

The chairman directed the authorities to coordinate with relevant departments and focus on lane man-

agement, road improvements and connectivity between major roads to minimise disruption caused by the development works.

He also directed the director general infrastructure, project directors and field officers to conduct regular inspections and closely monitor the pace and quality of construction.

Over 22,000 security personnel to be deployed in Islamabad ahead of protests

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Security preparations have been intensified across Islamabad and the Rawalpindi Division as authorities make arrangements to maintain law and order amid planned protest rallies and marches by several opposition groups. More than 22,000 security personnel are being deployed in Islamabad under the supervision of eight deputy inspectors general (DIGs), while around 30,000 personnel are being assigned to Attock district, a key route connecting Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Punjab. Additional police personnel have started arriving in Attock from other districts to assist local law-enforcement authorities. The Rawalpindi police have also requested around 9,000 additional personnel to rein-

force security arrangements during the expected protests.

Authorities are also preparing to restrict access to the twin cities if necessary. Around 30 entry points are expected to be blocked, including 11 points in Rawalpindi, with a large number of shipping containers being positioned along highways and other locations. Several political and farmers' groups have announced demonstrations in Islamabad in the coming days. Jamaat-i-Islami has announced a long march against increased petroleum product levies, while Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has announced a march on September 27 calling for the release of its founder, Imran Khan. The Kissan Ittehad has also announced a protest march seeking relief for farmers.

According to the security plan, the

more than 22,000 personnel assigned to Islamabad will operate under eight DIGs, 10 senior superintendents of police (SSPs), 40 superintendents of police (SPs) and 58 deputy superintendents of police (DSPs).

Accommodation arrangements have been made for officers arriving from outside the capital.

In Attock, approximately 30,000 security personnel have been called in from various parts of Punjab, including Sheikhpura, Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan and Faisalabad. Personnel from the Punjab Constabulary, Riot Management Police and other specialized units are also being deployed.

Meanwhile, all types of leave for police personnel in Rawalpindi district have been suspended until October 1, except in cases of extreme emergency.

Pakistan to Host Global Mental Health Summit 2026 in Islamabad

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD -- The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination will host the Pakistan Global Mental Health Summit 2026 on October 1-2 at Serena Hotel, Islamabad, in connection with World Mental Health Day.

The summit will be held under the theme "Building Climate-Resilient and Future-Ready Mental Health Systems for Children, Young People and Communities." It will bring together federal and provincial governments, parliamentarians, UN

partners, mental health experts, academia, development partners, civil society and young people.

The two-day summit will focus on child and adolescent mental health, suicide prevention, substance use, digital mental health, innovation and climate-resilient mental health systems. It will also address the integration of mental health and psychosocial support into disaster preparedness and climate adaptation.

The Ministry said Pakistan continues to face a significant mental health burden, with services remaining limited and unevenly distributed. The summit is expected to

strengthen institutional commitment and identify priority actions for community-based mental health services, including integration into primary healthcare, schools and disaster preparedness.

The event is also expected to culminate in the Islamabad Declaration on Mental Health and promote partnerships and investment in mental health services. Minister of State for National Health Services Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmad said mental health must be treated as a public responsibility and called for concrete commitments on financing, workforce and accessible services.

ICCI to Host Islamabad Governance and Provincial Status Convention on Sept 25

Report: Hurish Shah FT:

ISLAMABAD --The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) will hold the "Islamabad Governance and Provincial Status Convention 2026" on September 25 to initiate consultation on the future governance structure and status of the federal capital.

ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, addressing a press conference, said Islamabad's existing governance system, based on the 1960 ordinance, was no longer sufficient to address the needs of a rapidly growing city with a population approaching 2.5 million.

He said the convention would bring together representatives of the business community, trade associations, bar councils, civil society, aca-



demia, professionals and residents to discuss governance, municipal services, financial arrangements and other issues facing Islamabad.

Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi has agreed to attend the convention as Chief Guest, while political representatives from major parties will also be invited.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood said ICCI was an apolitical platform and would neither support nor oppose any political party or particular governance model. He stressed that Islamabad's future should be discussed through an inclusive consultation involving all stakeholders.