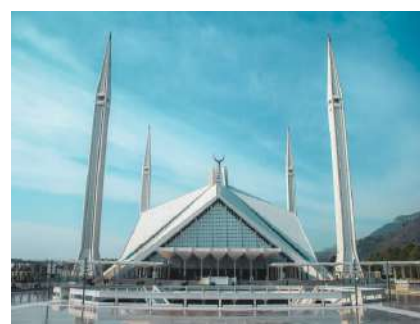




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Political party head upset over not being appointed KP governor, claims Naqvi



ANI

LAHORE: Without taking any names, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday claimed that the "head of a party" was "extremely upset" about not being appointed the governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"The head of a party is extremely upset over being denied a role in the new setup in KP and not getting the governorship," Naqvi alleged while speaking to journalists in Lahore.

He was seemingly referring to Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who has been critical of the federal government over the imposition of

governor's rule in KP.

This politician, Naqvi said, had remained "dependent on the establishment for decades to advance his political career".

"These are the same politicians who remained in politics for decades with the support of the establishment, and this politician even relied on the establishment to arrange air tickets for the members of his party," he further alleged.

He said such politicians had little justification for criticising others now, particularly after having benefitted from the same system they currently denounced.

"Political differences are part of politics. But instead of using inappropriate language and making

allegations, political leaders should speak on the basis of arguments and facts," the minister said.

Naqvi's remarks come days after the Centre imposed governor's rule and emergency in KP, citing the provincial government's "deliberate disengagement" from the fight against terrorism. The move has drawn criticism from the opposition, including Fazl, as well as Mehmood Khan Achakzai and Raja Nasir Abbas of the Tehreek-i-Tahafuz Ayin-i-Pakistan.

In the days preceding the imposition of governor's rule in KP, political tensions between the Centre and the opposition — including the PTI which was in power in KP — had remained high

since jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party announced a protest march to Islamabad to demand his release.

Intense negotiations between the two sides a week before the imposition of governor's rule had failed to yield any results while Fazl was cast as the man who could defuse heightening tensions between the Centre and the PTI. Both sides had held separate meetings with Fazl, reportedly for his intervention to help break the deadlock in the negotiations.

And after the federal government imposed governor's rule in KP, Fazl accused the Centre of reneging on its commitments amid his efforts for mediation.

Pakistan condemns Indian defence minister's remarks threatening military aggression

ANI

Pakistan on Friday rejected and condemned "provocative remarks" by India's defence minister threatening aggression against Pakistan, warning that any military action would be met with a forceful response. "Restraint and commitment to peace must never be mistaken for weakness. Any aggression will be met with a forceful response," Foreign Office spokesperson Ambassador Sajjad Haider Khan said during the weekly press briefing. He said the remarks reflected India's "hegemonistic mindset" and the risks its "belligerent posture" posed to regional peace and stability in South Asia.

Khan reminded India of the consequences of its military aggression in May 2025, saying Pakistan had demonstrated its capability and resolve to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity and had delivered a befitting response.

"Let there be no ambiguity. Pakistan remains fully prepared to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity against any ill-advised aggression," he said.

He urged India to draw appropriate lessons from last year's events, abandon its belligerent posture and dangerous rhetoric, and act responsibly to ensure lasting peace in the region.

The FO also strongly condemned the latest Houthi attack targeting King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, reaffirming its support for Saudi Arabia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security.

Khan said Pakistan remained deeply concerned over continuing attacks against Saudi Arabia and reiterated Islamabad's solidarity with the kingdom. "Pakistan underscores that attacks against civilian populations and critical infrastructure are unacceptable and constitute a grave threat to regional peace and security," he said.

The spokesperson added that Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Türkiye had issued a joint statement on October 11 under the R4 Group Framework, condemning continuing Houthi attacks, including the strike on King Khalid International Airport.

The four countries reaffirmed their solidarity with Saudi Arabia, supported its measures to protect its territory and popu-



lation, and called for an immediate and unconditional cessation of the attacks.

On Palestine, Khan said Pakistan had joined the foreign ministers of 18 other countries in condemning Colombia's inauguration of its embassy in Jerusalem, describing the move as contrary to relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and detrimental to the two-state solution.

In a joint statement issued on Friday, the foreign ministers of Pakistan, Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria, Sudan and Türkiye rejected the move.

Highlighting Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts, Khan said Dar had addressed an international conference on Pakistan's evolving counterterrorism landscape, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), cross-border threats and regional security, organised by the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad on October 12. According to the spokesperson, Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to combat terrorism in all its forms and called on Afghan authorities to take "concrete, verifiable and irreversible action against groups operating from Afghan soil" against Pakistan. He also highlighted the threat posed by "Indian-sponsored terrorist groups operating against Pakistan", including those originating from Afghan territory. Khan said the deputy prime minister had outlined counterterrorism measures, including the implementation of the National Action Plan, Operation Azm-e-Istehkam and enhanced intelligence coordination. He also paid tribute to the armed forces and law enforcement agencies for their sacrifices.

KP announces millions in additional aid for police martyrs, injured personnel

ANI

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has announced a substantial increase in the compensation package for police personnel killed or injured in the line of duty, raising financial assistance across different ranks.

Under the revised package, compensation for police martyrs from constable to inspector rank has been increased from Rs11 million to Rs17 million, Kundi said. The compensation for martyrs holding the ranks of deputy superintendent of police (DSP) and assistant superintendent of police (ASP) has been raised from Rs16 million to Rs25 million. For police personnel in grades 18 and 19, the compensation has been fixed at Rs30 million, while families of those in grade 20 and above will receive Rs35 million, the governor said.



The relief package also provides greater financial support to personnel injured while on duty. Assistance for injured officers and personnel has been increased from Rs100,000 to Rs1.5 million. In cases of permanent disability sustained during duty, the government has approved compensation of Rs5 million, Kundi added. The package also revises financial assistance for the families of police martyrs in place of residential plots. Families of personnel from constable to inspector rank will receive Rs18 million instead of a five-marla plot.

Similarly, families of police martyrs in grade 20 and above will receive Rs70 million in lieu of a plot, according to the governor. Kundi further announced that financial assistance of Rs3 million would be provided in the event of the death of a police personnel's parents or siblings.

Ji chief Hafiz Naeem slams elite capture, education crisis

ANI

GUJRAT: Jamaat-e-Islami chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has said the state is failing to fulfil its responsibilities, while elite capture has held society hostage and wealthy industrialists are exploiting the poor. Addressing the first graduation ceremony of Alkhidmat Foundation's Bano Qabil programme in Gujrat, Hafiz Naeem said Pakistan had an elite comprising bureaucrats and feudal landlords, who controlled agriculture, the economy and other sectors. He regretted that Pakistan's education system was not up to date, adding that more than 27 million children were currently out of school across the country. He said 11.8 million children were not



attending school in Punjab alone, while 70 per cent of government schools in the province lacked washroom facilities.

Families of children killed in Peshawar school roof collapse demand justice

ANI

The families of children killed in a roof collapse at a school in Peshawar called for "justice" on Friday, the day after more than 30 pupils and a teacher were crushed to death.

A woman teacher and 32 students, mostly younger than 14, died in the building collapse on Thursday morning.

"The parents of all these children must receive justice," tailor Muhammad Wahab, who lost his 11-year-old nephew Hammad in the accident, told AFP on Friday. "I appeal to our rulers," he said, adding that Hammad had been "doing well in school" before the tragedy.

Dozens of people gathered on Friday outside the school to mourn the children who were killed in the collapse, which officials blamed on dilapidated infrastructure.

One grief-stricken father showed AFP a picture on his mobile phone of his young daughter, dressed in red and gold, who lost her life. Another parent, Asadullah, said he lost a son, nephew, and three other close relatives in the tragedy. "The children were good students and often achieved top positions in their classes," he told AFP.

Rana Sanaullah says talks with PTI possible if it adopts constitutional, legal approach

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah has said the government may consider negotiations with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) if the party agrees to play a constructive role within constitutional and legal parameters.

Speaking on a private television programme, Rana Sanaullah said the opposition's approach was causing harm to the party itself. He said that during Imran Khan's tenure as prime minister, he had not even contacted the opposition leader by telephone, whereas Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif shook hands and



spoke with the opposition leader when he arrived in the National Assembly. Rana Sanaullah expressed regret over the detention of Imran Khan's sisters, saying the government was also saddened by the situation. However, he said eve-

ryone knew what they had been saying regarding the long march. He alleged that Imran Khan's sisters had made statements about storming the Governor House, adding that their detention had become necessary to maintain control of the situation.

The prime minister's adviser said the nature of statements made by PTI's social media network was also well known.

He maintained that if the party had agreed to play its role through constitutional and legal means, there would have been no need for an interim arrangement. However, he said the possibility of reconsidering the matter remained open.

Iran president says conflict in Mideast amounts to 'ecocide'

ANI

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian on Friday urged countries to condemn what he called "ecocide" in the Middle East caused by "wars of aggression".

Pezeshkian said the conflicts in Gaza and the wider Middle East had inflicted a significant toll on nature that extended beyond borders and required "international solutions".

"What has occurred in our region as a result of wars of aggression is ecocide, or environmental genocide, and it must be condemned," Pezeshkian told a nature summit in Armenia attended by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

US President Donald Trump ruled out using nuclear weapons against Iran, saying Washington did not need them and emphasising that the "mother of all bombs" was non-nuclear.



Asked during an interview on Thursday with Newsmax about reports that his administration was considering using the bomb against Iran, potentially after the US midterm elections, Trump stressed that it was a conventional weapon.

"The mother of all bombs is not nuclear," Trump said, adding: "This is just an extremely large bomb."



Islamabad :The newly arrived Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Dr. Rajeh Tami Albugamy calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif .

Shazia Marri Calls for Urgent Action Against Terrorism in KP

Report: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD-- Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Central Spokesperson and MNA Shazia Marri, along with Senator Quratul Ain Marri, Fatehullah Khan, MNA, and PPP leader Akhunzada Chhattan, addressed the situation of terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at Parliament House on Friday.

Shazia Marri said innocent people were being targeted in terrorist incidents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, adding that no one could feel safe as attacks could occur at any time. She noted that even urban centres such as Peshawar were no longer considered safe.

She said the deteriorating security situation in tribal areas required serious attention, emphasising that children, women and families lived in these areas and many had lost their homes due to terrorism. She warned that the effects of terrorism could spread to other parts of the country if the situation was not addressed effectively.

"Terrorism is not an excuse but a bitter reality of Pakistan," Marri said, adding that the country had been fighting terrorism for decades and had achieved significant successes in this struggle.

However, she criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, alleging that adequate efforts had not been made to address terrorism dur-



ing its 13 years in power. She questioned what concrete measures had been taken to eliminate terrorism and improve the security situation in the province.

Marri also referred to the additional one per cent share allocated to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the National Finance Commission (NFC) arrangement for counterterrorism efforts. She said a special fund had been allocated to support people affected by terrorism and stressed the need to ensure that affected citizens received appropriate assistance.

Highlighting the provincial government's responsibilities, she said the chief minister's primary duty was to serve the people of the province. Education, healthcare, infrastructure and access to electricity and water, she added, were among the government's fundamental

responsibilities.

She further said poor families often lacked the financial resources to hire lawyers and called for attention to their problems. According to the figures she cited, 3,787 people had been martyred in terrorist incidents during a one-year period, while attacks continued to occur frequently across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Marri also criticised the chief minister's visits to other provinces amid the deteriorating security situation at home. She said priority should be given to addressing security concerns in Malakand Division, Bajaur and Peshawar before engaging in other political activities.

She urged the provincial leadership to focus on protecting citizens, particularly the people of Peshawar, and fulfil its constitutional and administrative responsibilities.

ICCI President Calls for SME-Centred Economic Strategy to Boost Jobs and Exports

Report: Hurish Shah

ISLAMABAD -- Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia has called for placing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) at the centre of Pakistan's economic development strategy, saying a strong SME sector is vital for industrialisation, job creation and export growth.

Speaking during an interaction with visiting business delegations at the Chamber House, he stressed the need for consistent policies, lower business costs, simplified taxation and a business-friendly environment to help small enterprises expand and invest.



Zia also highlighted the importance of promoting local manufacturing, value addition and entrepreneurship, particularly among women and young people, to broaden economic participation and generate employment. ICCI Senior Vice President

Mohammad Ashfaq Hussain Chatha called for affordable credit, easier access to working capital and simpler tax procedures to reduce financial and administrative barriers facing SMEs.

ICCI Vice President Mohammad Waqas Khan emphasised technology adoption, e-commerce, digital literacy and skills development to improve SME competitiveness, expand market access and facilitate integration into global value chains.

The ICCI leadership maintained that improved access to finance, simpler regulations and greater use of technology are essential to unlocking the potential of SMEs and strengthening Pakistan's economy.

Mövenpick Islamabad and Pakistan Tennis Federation Sign MoU for Rally 4 Her

Report: ANI

ISLAMABAD--Mövenpick Hotel Centaurus Islamabad and the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) have formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), strengthening their partnership for Rally 4 Her, an initiative that brings together women's tennis, cancer awareness and community support.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Nicolas Verdurin, General Manager of

Mövenpick Hotel Islamabad, and Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, President of the Pakistan Tennis Federation, in the presence of media representatives. The ceremony was followed by an interactive press session.

A key highlight of the event was the unveiling of two exclusive items for Rally 4 Her's upcoming charity auction: a shirt signed by tennis legend Rafael Nadal and a framed shirt signed by Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi.

Under the campaign, 60% of the funds raised will be allocated to cancer awareness and care, while 40% will support the development of women's tennis in Pakistan.

The partnership reflects a shared commitment to using sport as a platform for positive social impact, bringing communities together for a cause that extends far beyond the tennis court.

Rally 4 Her – This One, We All Play Together.

National Assembly's Women's Parliamentary Caucus Launches Study on Gender-Based Violence Financing and Women's Protection

Report: Mateen Syed/ANI

ISLAMABAD -- The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) of the National Assembly of Pakistan, in collaboration with the Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub (RSH) Pakistan, launched the summary findings of a study on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) and financing to address gender-based violence (GBV) through gender-responsive budgeting.

The event brought together parliamentarians, safeguarding practitioners, development partners and gender experts to discuss funding for GBV prevention, institutional accountability and parliamentary oversight.

Dr. Shahida Rehmani, MNA and Secretary of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, said tackling



gender-based violence required not only strong legislation but also adequate funding, effective implementation and accountability.

She emphasised Parliament's role in

strengthening gender-responsive budgeting, scrutinising public expenditure and ensuring that commitments to women's protection translated into measurable action.

JKCI Announces Worldwide Observance of Kashmir Black Day on October 27

Report: ANI Reporter:

ISLAMABAD-- The Central Executive Committee of Jammu and Kashmir Community International (JKCI) held a meeting in Islamabad under the chairmanship of Ghulam Nabi Butt, discussing organizational matters, fundraising and efforts to highlight the Kashmiri freedom movement.

The meeting decided to hold committee meetings every two months and established a fundraising committee headed by Ghulam Nabi Butt.

JKCI announced that its overseas chapters would organize peaceful protests outside Indian embassies worldwide on October 27, in collaboration with local Kashmiri and Pakistani communities. Memorandums will also be submitted to relevant authorities to highlight the Kashmir dispute, the right to self-determination and alleged human rights violations in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir.

The organization also decided to hold a special event in Islamabad on October



28, inviting representatives of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir government, political leaders and other prominent personalities.

The meeting was attended by Sardar Kamran Azam Khan, Raja Muhammad Zareen Khan, Professor Khawaja Farooq Ahmed, Chaudhry Muhammad Shakeel, Syed Yousaf Hamdani, Sajjad

Hussain, Mubashir Paswal and Afshan Kiyani. Media responsibilities were assigned to Sajjad Hussain, Syed Yousaf Hamdani and Dr. Abid Abbasi. At the conclusion, participants expressed condolences over the deaths of the mothers of Raja Shamroz and Sardar Shamshad Ayub, and offered prayers for the departed souls.

Islamabad Police City Zone Arrests 12 Members of Four Criminal Gangs; Stolen Property Worth Rs. 58.5 Million Recovered



Report: ANI Reporter:

Islamabad -- Islamabad Police is continuing its crackdown against criminal elements on the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry. In this regard, City Zone police teams arrested 12 members of four criminal gangs, including two women, and recovered stolen property worth Rs. 58.5 million.

During the past month, teams from Kohsar and Aabpara Police Stations conducted operations against four criminal gangs allegedly involved in vehicle and motor-

cycle theft, house burglaries and street robberies. The recovered property included stolen cars, motorcycles, gold jewellery, valuable mobile phones and cash.

Modern scientific and technical resources, including Safe City cameras, along with confidential sources, were utilised to trace and arrest the accused and recover the stolen property.

SDPO Ali Raza Qureshi and SHO Aabpara Zulfiqar Ali were also present on the occasion. Their presence highlighted the efforts of Islamabad Police to combat criminal activities and ensure the recovery of stolen property for its rightful owners.

During a ceremony held at Kohsar Police Station, SP City Zone Muhammad Khurram Ashraf handed over the recovered valuables and the keys of stolen cars and motorcycles to their rightful owners.

On the occasion, SP City Zone Muhammad Khurram Ashraf said Islamabad Police was committed to protecting the lives and property of citizens and taking effective action against criminal elements. He added that recovering stolen vehicles and returning them to their rightful owners remained a key priority of the police. All available resources were being utilised to provide relief to citizens and prevent crime.

DGSE marks white cane safety day, honours visually impaired children



ANI

ISLAMABAD: Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE), celebrated White Cane Safety Day at National Special Education Centre for Visually Handicapped Children, Islamabad, reaffirming its commitment to empowering visually impaired children through inclusive education and equal opportunities.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Hassan Saglani, said visual impairment is no barrier to excellence. He noted that visually impaired children possess immense talent and potential to achieve remarkable success in all fields of life.

He stressed that with appropriate opportunities, encouragement, inclu-

sive environment and continued support, these children can excel academically and socially, becoming productive and confident members of society and contributing positively to national development. Director General, DGSE Syed Tauqeer Hussain Shah, acknowledged the invaluable contributions of parents, educators and stakeholders in nurturing the abilities and aspirations of visually impaired children. He reaffirmed the Directorate's commitment to fostering an enabling educational environment where every child can thrive with dignity and confidence.

The Chairman of the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council also addressed the gathering, highlighting the remarkable capabilities and achievements of persons with visual impairments.

The celebration brought together

representatives of Sightsavers, the Health Services Academy, leading public and private universities, including Allama Iqbal Open University, SZABIST, International Islamic University and Isra University, alongside representatives of PID, APP and other media organizations.

The highlight of the celebration was the inspiring performances by visually impaired students, whose confidence, creativity and exceptional talents captivated the audience, demonstrating that ability knows no barriers.

The event concluded with a renewed commitment to advancing accessibility, inclusive education and meaningful opportunities, ensuring that visually impaired children are recognized not for their limitations, but for their limitless potential.

Pakistan, China universities deepen academic ties at 6th CPEC consortium conference

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation in higher education, research and innovation as the 6th Exchange Mechanism Conference of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Consortium of Universities concluded at Harbin Engineering University, China. Over 120 representatives from more than 40 universities and research institutions of both countries participated in the conference, guided by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan and the China Association of Higher Education. The conference coincided with the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China. Chairman HEC Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar attended



the opening ceremony alongside senior Chinese officials and university leaders.

A key highlight was the launch of the Annual Development Report on the CPEC Consortium's Exchange Mechanism, documenting progress

in joint research, human resource development and academic exchanges, particularly in artificial intelligence, agriculture, mining, marine information and public health.

First lady emphasises community engagement, trust for sustainable development

ANI

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Asifa Bhutto Zardari has emphasised that community engagement, public trust and inclusive leadership are essential for sustainable development, stressing that lasting solutions must be shaped by the needs and experiences of local communities. In an article published on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan website, she highlighted the growing challenges posed by climate change, conflicts, economic pressures, inequality and displacement, calling for collective action and stronger partnerships to address them.

Reflecting on the legacy of her mother, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Asifa Bhutto Zardari said public service was a responsibility rooted in listening to people, understanding their concerns and standing with those whose voices often go unheard. Drawing on her experiences across Pakistan, she said development should be measured not merely through policies and programmes but by improvements in people's lives, including greater security for families, better opportunities for children and stronger communi-

ties. She underscored the role of frontline health workers in Pakistan's polio eradication efforts, noting that their engagement with families and continued efforts to build trust are as important as vaccine delivery.

The first lady also highlighted the contribution of the Benazir Income Support Programme in providing social protection and helping vulnerable families cope with economic hardship. Addressing climate-related challenges, she said Pakistan's recurring floods and heatwaves had demonstrated the importance of community resilience.

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Opinion

3

Senate Tickets Are a Reward for Loyalty, Not for Cash Give Respect to the Vote A plea from PML-N workers to Nawaz Sharif



By:
Chaudhry Shabbir Balochistani
Published By: ANI News Agency

With Senate elections approaching in Balochistan, a fresh wave of defections into the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has begun. Every day brings news of another industrialist, businessman or influential figure joining the party, many of whom have never had even a remote connection with any political party, movement or struggle.

These are people who have never carried the party flag, never raised a slogan at a rally, never marched in a procession, and never stood by the party in police stations and court-rooms. Yet the moment Senate seats came into view, they suddenly saw a bright political future in the PML-N. Is this love for an ideology, or merely a shortcut to a Senate ticket? Every veteran worker in Balochistan is asking this question, and his concern is far from baseless.

****The Parachutist Culture: A Silent Injustice to the Worker****

In politics, a “parachutist” is one who, without years of toil, sweat and sacrifice, descends on the eve of an election and seizes a crop that others have grown. For those with wealth, connections and the ability to manage a few votes, every door in the party is thrown open. Meanwhile, dignified workers who have held the party’s banner for years are fobbed off with mere promises.

In Balochistan, this injustice is felt

even more keenly. Workers have stood by the party with limited resources, in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions. They stood by it when it was out of power, when raising its flag meant loss rather than gain, and when cases were filed against workers. If, after all these sacrifices, a Senate seat is handed to a tycoon who arrived overnight, it will mean more than the loss of one seat. It will be the murder of the trust and hope of thousands of workers.

****The Worker Is the Party’s True Strength****

The worker is the backbone of any political party and its real identity. His perseverance kept the party alive in the harshest of times, his loyalty carried its ideology from generation to generation, and his courage supported the leadership through every trial. Parties are built not by the money of the wealthy but by the sweat and selfless loyalty of their workers. A party that values its workers never grows weak.

****Mian Nawaz Sharif: The Last Hope of Balochistan’s Workers****

Today, the eyes of all ideological workers in Balochistan are fixed on the leader of the PML-N, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. Decisions at the local level can fall prey to pressure, recommendations and bargaining, but a single decision by the leader can change the direction of the entire party.

In the last Senate elections, Mian Sahib made an ordinary, long-standing worker a senator and infused the whole party with new energy. That one decision sent a message: hard work is still valued in the PML-N, and loyalty is rewarded. It lifted the spirits of thousands of workers. Today, the worker in Balochistan looks to that same tradition once

again and asks: is it still alive?

We should have no hesitation in learning from our political rival. Under Asif Ali Zardari, the Pakistan Peoples Party has consistently sent its workers to the Senate and the assemblies. Even an ordinary “jiyala” has found recognition and standing there, and that is why the party has remained alive even in the most testing times. If another party can do this, why can’t the PML-N?

****If Your Future Lies with the League, Face the People****

For those who have rushed to the PML-N at the first whiff of a Senate seat, there is an honourable and democratic path: the general elections of 2028. Let the party give them tickets for the National and Provincial Assemblies from constituencies across Balochistan, including Quetta, Khuzdar, Loralai and Zhob, and let them test their popularity in the court of the people.

The Senate route is favoured precisely because it spares candidates from facing the public. There, votes are managed not in streets and neighbourhoods but behind closed doors. How can someone who lacks the courage to ask the people for their votes fulfil the duty of representing them?

****The Way Forward****

The party leadership should set a clear, transparent and publicly announced criterion for Senate tickets, based on length of association with the party, record of struggle and sacrifice in difficult times, organisational performance, and standing among the public. Every worker should be assured that his labour is being noticed. Today, the worker in Balochistan is not asking for ministries. He only wants his years of loyalty to be recognised.

The Widening Gap Between Rich and Poor in Pakistan: How Rising Living Costs, Unemployment and Unequal Opportunities Deepen Economic Inequality



By: Dr. Muhammad Sheharyar E. Mail: mshehar-yar771@gmail.com
Published By: ANI News Agency

What does economic growth mean to a father who cannot afford his children’s school fees? What comfort can economic statistics offer a mother struggling to feed her family? What future awaits an educated young person unable to find work? These questions reveal the human cost of economic hardship in Pakistan. While some households enjoy financial security, others struggle to afford food, electricity, education and healthcare.

The gap between rich and poor extends beyond differences in earnings. It reflects unequal access to resources, decent employment and opportunities for advancement. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics’ Household Integrated Economic Survey 2024-25 illustrates this divide. Average monthly household income stood at Rs 41,851 in the lowest consumption quintile, compared with Rs 139,317 in the highest. Calculated from the survey figures, the ratio between these groups increased from approximately 2.7 in 2018-19 to 3.3 in 2024-25. Although these groups are ranked by consumption rather than income, the comparison indicates a widening gap in their average household earnings.

This disparity becomes more painful when considered alongside the rising cost of living. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, consumer prices in September 2026 were approximately 10.3 per cent higher than a year earlier. For affluent households, higher prices may require modest adjustments to discretionary spending. For families with limited incomes, they can mean smaller meals, postponed medical treatment or interrupted schooling. Even when inflation slows, prices do not necessarily fall; household budgets remain under pressure unless earnings catch up.

That pressure also affects the salaried middle class. A regular income

offers limited protection when rent, utility bills, groceries and school fees absorb most of a household’s earnings. Families may turn to borrowing to meet routine expenses, leaving little room for savings or emergencies. Employment, therefore, must provide more than a monthly pay cheque: it must offer a reasonable prospect of financial stability.

For those without work, the uncertainty is greater still. Pakistan’s Labour Force Survey 2024-25 reported an unemployment rate of 7.1 per cent. Behind this figure are people searching for a livelihood and families waiting for their investment in education to bear fruit. When qualifications fail to translate into suitable employment, frustration grows and confidence in upward mobility weakens. Creating productive jobs must consequently remain central to any serious effort to reduce inequality.

The consequences reach beyond present household budgets. Children from affluent families generally have greater access to quality education, healthcare and professional networks. Disadvantaged children face barriers that can restrict their opportunities long before they enter the labour market. Without effective public support, these differences can allow poverty to persist across generations, weakening social cohesion and public confidence in national development.

Breaking this cycle requires a closer examination of how public resources are distributed, particularly through government subsidies. Subsidies should help narrow the gap between rich and poor by directing greater support towards households with the greatest need. Broad price subsidies can deliver larger financial benefits to those who consume more, leaving less fiscal space for assistance to vulnerable families. The central policy question should be straightforward: who receives the benefit, and how much does it improve their lives?

The government should therefore prioritise targeted assistance for essential electricity consumption, food and public transport, alongside affordable education and healthcare. Eligibility should reflect household circumstances, including income, family size and vulnerability, using regularly updated socioeconomic

records. Transparent payments and independent audits would help reduce misuse, while accessible registration and appeals procedures would protect eligible families from exclusion. Any withdrawal of broad subsidies should be phased carefully, with support reaching vulnerable households before their costs increase.

Yet subsidies can provide only part of the solution. Lasting progress depends on productive employment, fair taxation and reliable public services. Supporting small businesses, improving agricultural productivity and linking vocational training to employers’ needs would help expand earning opportunities. At the same time, progressive taxation and stronger action against tax evasion would allow those with greater means to contribute fairly, rather than placing additional pressure on already strained households.

These reforms must reinforce one another. Targeted support can protect families from immediate hardship; education and healthcare can strengthen their future prospects; and productive investment can create the jobs needed for lasting independence. Effective labour protections and fair access to employment would help ensure that economic expansion translates into better living standards.

Above all, Pakistan needs a development strategy that places ordinary citizens at its centre. GDP growth, government revenues and investment figures matter, but their value must also be judged by improvements in purchasing power, employment and access to essential services. Economic justice requires a fair opportunity to earn a decent living and protection against avoidable deprivation.

A nation’s prosperity remains incomplete when financial success for some coexists with persistent hardship for others. Pakistan’s economic progress should enable a father to educate his children without fear, a mother to feed her family with dignity, and a young graduate to approach the future with hope. Until these possibilities become more widely shared, one question will remain: if the economy is progressing, why are so many families still struggling to meet their basic needs?

Questioning Welfare for the Poor While Ignoring Losses in State-Owned Enterprises



By: Rana Farooq Ashraf
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Pakistan’s economic challenges demand an honest and balanced debate about public spending, poverty alleviation, government subsidies, and the performance of state-owned enterprises. While financial assistance provided to poor families often becomes a subject of public criticism, an equally important question deserves attention: why is there not the same level of scrutiny over the enormous financial losses, administrative inefficiencies, and waste of public resources in various government institutions?

Poverty remains one of Pakistan’s most pressing social challenges. Rising inflation, unemployment, low wages, and the increasing cost of essential commodities have made life increasingly difficult for millions of citizens. For families struggling to afford food, healthcare, education, and housing, financial assistance can make the difference between survival and deprivation. Therefore, programmes such as the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) serve an important social purpose. A responsible state must provide a safety net for citizens who cannot meet their basic needs.

However, the debate should not end with the question of whether financial assistance is necessary. It must also examine whether public money reaches the genuinely deserving, whether the distribution system is transparent, and whether the programme contributes to long-term improvements in living standards.

Pakistan needs a comprehensive approach that combines immediate financial relief with opportunities for economic independence. Eligible beneficiaries should have access to vocational training, employment opportunities, skills development, and support for small businesses. Such initiatives can help working-age individuals gradually improve their financial circumstances. At the same time, elderly citizens, persons with disabilities, and individuals who cannot work must continue to receive appropriate protection without being subjected to unrealistic

employment requirements.

The second major concern is the financial performance of state-owned enterprises. Institutions that repeatedly incur losses place an additional burden on the national exchequer, limiting the resources available for education, healthcare, infrastructure, and poverty reduction. If public debate focuses on the money given to low-income families, it should also examine the public funds consumed by inefficient institutions.

The prolonged closure of Pakistan Steel Mills illustrates the need for serious institutional accountability. Whenever a major public-sector enterprise remains unproductive for an extended period, the government must explain the costs involved, the reasons for its failure, and the future strategy for its assets and operations. Similar assessments should be conducted across state-owned enterprises to identify the causes of persistent losses and determine appropriate solutions.

Every institution should have measurable performance targets, clear timelines for reform, and accountable management. Depending on its strategic importance and financial condition, the appropriate course may include restructuring, professional management, operational improvements, public-private partnerships, or privatisation. However, such decisions must be based on transparent assessments of public interest, financial viability, employment implications, and long-term economic benefits.

Energy subsidies and inefficiencies also require urgent attention. Rising electricity and gas prices place pressure on households and businesses, while financial losses and circular debt create wider economic problems. The government should publish clear information about the allocation of energy subsidies, the groups benefiting from them, and the results achieved. Unnecessary expenditure and avoidable operational losses must be reduced, while targeted assistance should protect low-income households from excessive financial pressure.

Public spending must also be evaluated according to its economic and social returns. Development projects, welfare programmes, debt servicing, energy subsidies, and losses incurred by state-owned enterprises should be examined separately and transparently. Every

major expenditure should have a clear justification, measurable objectives, and an effective monitoring mechanism. Parliamentary committees and independent auditors must play a meaningful role in reviewing government performance.

The government should take several practical steps. First, it should strengthen beneficiary verification and introduce regular independent audits of BISP to ensure that assistance reaches eligible families. Second, it should publish comprehensive financial statements showing the losses incurred by state-owned enterprises, the reasons behind those losses, and the progress of corrective measures. Third, it should establish time-bound reform plans for persistently unprofitable institutions. Fourth, it should review energy subsidies and eliminate unnecessary expenditure without withdrawing essential protection from vulnerable consumers. Finally, it should expand employment-oriented training and economic opportunities for low-income families and publish annual progress reports on these initiatives.

These reforms should not be treated as competing priorities. Protecting poor citizens and ensuring fiscal discipline are complementary responsibilities of the state. Financial assistance is not inherently wasteful, just as every public-sector loss cannot automatically be attributed to mismanagement without examining the relevant evidence. The objective should be to ensure that every rupee collected from taxpayers produces a meaningful public benefit.

Pakistan does not merely need reductions in government expenditure; it needs better spending, stronger institutions, transparent decision-making, and a productive economy capable of generating employment and sustainable revenue.

The fundamental question is not whether poor citizens deserve financial assistance. It is whether public resources are being used fairly, transparently, and effectively—and whether those entrusted with managing national wealth are being held accountable. A stronger Pakistan requires a system in which the poor are protected, public institutions are answerable for their performance, and national resources are directed towards measurable improvements in the lives of ordinary citizens.

So that what happened in Gaza never happens again

FAISAL J. ABBAS

By any measure, the recent developments in Gaza mark a pivotal moment in the region’s long and painful history. And while cynics may scoff and skeptics may roll their eyes, it is time to acknowledge what must be said plainly: US President Donald Trump deserves credit for his bold and determined efforts to broker peace in Gaza.

Two years after countless failed initiatives, the current US-led push — chaired personally by the president as head of the newly formed Board of Peace — seems to be not just another diplomatic gesture with a fancy name. It has all the attributes of a serious, high-stakes undertaking that, if supported and sustained, could finally begin to reverse the devastation that has plagued the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian people.

Is the plan perfect? Far from it. Could it fail? There is definitely a high risk, given the many spoilers. With an extremist, trigger-happy Israeli government still in power, and a not-so-encouraging track record of Hamas, the road ahead is treacherous. But perfection is not the measure of progress. And repeating the same failed UN mechanisms while expecting different results is, as the famous quote says, the definition of insanity. I say this while fully and wholeheartedly wishing that the reality was otherwise. The reality is, unfortunately, that this is more a case of the Arabic proverb which says “and so cure it with what caused the illness to start with.”

In other words, this is a matter of resorting to America precisely because President Trump is the deal-maker that he is, Washington has the leverage and the trust of Israel, and

that everything else has failed so far. My point is having a plan, with all its faults, is far better than allowing the killing to continue as a result of having no plan. Besides, pleasing everyone is an illusion and a recipe for failure in itself.

Even within the same political camps, reactions are and will continue to be divided. In Israel, some see the initiative as a lifeline for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu — a way to climb down from a tree he has been perched on for far too long. Others argue it unjustly rewards Hamas, whose refusal to surrender has come at the expense of thousands of innocent lives and the near-total destruction of Gaza.

On the Palestinian side, the sentiment is understandably bitter. For many, this effort feels like “too little, too late.” After tens of thousands of deaths, widespread famine and what a UN agency has now labeled genocide, the scars are deep and trust is thin. Yet among Hamas ranks, the narrative is spun as a victory — proof that they have not capitulated. This, of course, ignores the staggering human toll of their obstinance.

But these debates, while important, must not distract from the larger truth: Trump is not just paying lip service, but is now fully invested as the chairperson of this peace initiative. That matters. It matters because it places real pressure on all parties, including Israel, to honor commitments. And it matters because it limits Netanyahu’s ability to maneuver or escape accountability under the guise of security concerns.

Arab and Muslim nations have, to their credit, rallied behind the initiative. Their support is both morally necessary and strategically wise. But

let us not be lulled into premature celebration. The war is not over. The suffering is not over. And the peace is far from being won.

Labeling this effort as anything less than sincere and serious would be a disservice to the cause of peace. Yes, it is fresh. Yes, it is fragile. But that fragility demands our full support — not just in words, but in action. Humanitarian aid must flow freely. Food, shelter, and medical supplies must reach those in need before winter deepens the crisis. This is not the time for political posturing or ideological purity tests. It is the time for pragmatism, compassion, and rapid resolve.

If we are truly committed to ensuring that what happened in Gaza never happens again, then talk of a two-state solution must follow immediately. Not eventually. Not “when the time is right.” But now — as that is the only logical and just way to safeguard against another future atrocity.

The horrors of Oct. 7 and the Israeli genocide committed since must serve as a wake-up call. The region cannot afford another cycle of vengeance and victimhood. The international community must push for a viable, just, and enforceable resolution that guarantees security for Israelis and protection, statehood, and dignity for Palestinians.

President Trump’s initiative may not be perfect, but it is a start. And in a region where starts are rare and hope is often fleeting, that alone is worth applauding. The question now is whether Israel and Hamas will rise to meet this moment — or squander it, as they have so many times before. Let us hope, for the sake of Gaza and for the future of the region, that they choose wisely.

— Arab News



Speaker Ayaz Sadiq Calls for Renewed Commitment to Poverty Eradication and Social Justice

Report: FT Reporter:

ISLAMABAD-- Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has called for a renewed national commitment to eradicating poverty, ensuring equal opportunities and protecting human dignity on the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, observed on October 17.

In his message, the Speaker said poverty was not merely an economic challenge but also a matter of human dignity, social justice and equal access to essential services. He stressed the need to ensure quality education, affordable healthcare, decent housing, nutritious food and employment opportunities for all citizens.



Referring to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 1, he emphasised strengthening social protection, promoting inclusive economic growth, reducing inequalities and creating

employment opportunities. Ayaz Sadiq also highlighted the importance of empowering women and youth, supporting small businesses and agricultural communities, and improving access to housing and basic facilities for vulnerable families.

He underscored Parliament's role in poverty alleviation through effective legislation, oversight and transparent public spending, while calling for stronger coordination between federal and provincial governments to address regional disparities.

The Speaker urged all stakeholders to work collectively towards a prosperous and inclusive Pakistan where every citizen can live with dignity, security and equal opportunities.

Parliamentary Kashmir Committee Chairman Rana Qasim Noon Meets AJK Prime Minister Iftikhar Gillani

Report: ANI

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Parliamentary Kashmir Committee Rana Qasim Noon met Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Iftikhar Gillani to discuss the prevailing political and human rights situation in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir, along with other matters of mutual interest.

During the meeting, both leaders expressed concern over the human rights situation in the region and urged the international community to play an effective role in seeking a peaceful resolution to the long-standing Kashmir



dispute. Rana Qasim Noon congratulated Iftikhar Gillani on assuming office as Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and extended his best

wishes for his tenure. They also discussed development initiatives, public welfare and the promotion of development activities across Azad Kashmir.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan Ishaq Dar is meeting with Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Iftikhar Gilani.

Awareness Session Held in Mithi to Mark International Day of Rural Women

****Report: Narender Kumar/ ANI****

MITHI: An awareness session marking the International Day of Rural Women was held in Mithi under the leadership of Manmeet Kumar, Assistant Director of the Women Development Department, Tharparkar, in collaboration with the Social Cooperation Initiative (SCI).

The session highlighted rural women's contributions to agriculture, family welfare and social development, while focusing on their legal rights, health, protection and access to essential services.

Addressing participants, Manmeet Kumar said rural women played a vital role in Pakistan's agricultural economy and household management but continued to face social and economic challenges. He stressed the need to improve their access to education, healthcare, employment and vocational training to promote economic independence.



He also urged rural women to prioritise their health through regular medical check-ups and timely diagnostic tests. Other speakers emphasised the importance of protecting women's rights, ensuring equal opportunities and strengthening their social and economic

empowerment. The session called for coordinated efforts by government departments and social organisations to improve rural women's access to essential services and support their meaningful participation in sustainable development.

PANAH Engages CUST Students in Campaign Against Unhealthy Foods and Rising NCDs

Report: ANI Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) organised an awareness session at the Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST) to educate students about the health risks of ultra-processed products and the importance of Front-of-Pack Warning Labels (FOPWL) in preventing non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Addressing the participants, PANAH Secretary General Sana Ullah Ghumman highlighted the growing risks of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and obesity associated with unhealthy diets. He said mandatory warning labels on packaged foods could help consumers identify excessive sugar, salt and unhealthy fats and make informed food choices.

He urged students to raise awareness among their families and communities and support evidence-based policies for healthier



food environments. PANAH Vice President Ghulam Abbas emphasised youth participation in promoting healthy lifestyles and called on students to support the association's campaign for mandatory front-of-pack warning labels. Representing the university, Professor X appreciated PANAH's public health awareness initiatives and stressed the importance of

engaging students in preventive healthcare efforts. The session concluded with a commitment to expanding youth-led awareness initiatives and promoting healthier dietary choices across Pakistan. PANAH reaffirmed its resolve to continue working with educational institutions to address the growing burden of non-communicable diseases.

Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gilani Calls for Stronger Pakistan-Germany Economic and Parliamentary Ties

BY: Hurish shah FT:

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has called for strengthening Pakistan-Germany relations through enhanced economic cooperation, investment, education and parliamentary engagement, describing 75 years of diplomatic ties as a strong foundation for a mutually beneficial partnership.

Addressing a gathering marking German Unity Day, attended by German Ambassador Ina Lepel, Federal Minister Musadaq Hussain Malik, Federal Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, diplomats and other dignitaries, Gilani conveyed greetings to the German leadership and people on behalf of Pakistan's Parliament, government and people.

He highlighted Germany's contributions to Pakistan in development cooperation, climate action, women's empowerment and human development. He identified special economic zones, renewable energy, information technology, industrial development and value-added manufacturing as promising areas for German investment.

The Senate chairman also appreciated the contributions of Pakistani



students at German universities and expressed hope that concerns over student and family-reunion visa delays would receive due attention. He stressed the importance of skilled labour mobility and cooperation in technology, research and industrial development.

Emphasising parliamentary diplo-

macy, Gilani called for regular exchanges between the parliaments of Pakistan and Germany and closer consultations on regional and international issues. He also invited the German leadership to visit Pakistan, expressing confidence that continued engagement would further strengthen bilateral relations.

Bilal Yasin Reviews Apni Chhat Apna Ghar Programme and Chahan Dam Water Supply Project in Rawalpindi

Report: Kiran Shehzadi/ANI

RAWALPINDI: On the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Provincial Minister for Housing and Urban Development Bilal Yasin visited Rawalpindi on October 16 to inspect houses being constructed under the Apni Chhat Apna Ghar programme and review the progress of ongoing development projects.

During the visit, Bilal Yasin said providing homes to middle-income families was a key priority of the Punjab government. He stated that financial assistance had been provided to 217,520 families under the programme, while 126,239 houses had been completed so far.

The provincial minister also visited the Chahan Dam Water



Supply Project and reviewed construction progress on the filtration plant. He described the project as a gift from Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for the people of Rawalpindi.

Bilal Yasin said the water treatment plant was expected to be completed next year and would benefit more than 250,000 people by improving access to clean drinking water and essential civic facilities.

The Pulpit in Chains: Concerns Over Restrictions on Friday Prayers and Religious Freedom in IIOJK

****Report: Qurat ul Ain Ali Khawaja/ ANI****

****MUZAFFARABAD:**** An investigative report has raised concerns over alleged restrictions on Friday prayers and religious activities in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir, claiming that government policies are increasingly affecting religious freedom and the autonomy of local religious institutions.

The report alleges that security restrictions, mosque closures and detentions have disrupted Friday congregations in parts of the region. It further raises concerns over a reported move by the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board to introduce centrally prepared Friday sermons, describing the initiative as an interference in religious affairs.

According to the report, the proposed uniform sermons have drawn objections from religious organisations and political leaders, who have questioned the board's authority to determine the content of religious teachings.

The report also cites figures concerning security operations, detentions, civilian casualties and internet shutdowns during 2026, attrib-



uting the data to Kashmir Media Service, All Parties Hurriyat Conference reports and local newspapers. These figures and the reported policy details require independent verification.

The report argues that restrictions on religious gatherings and freedom of expression could have wider social, political and economic consequences for the people of the region.

It calls on the international community, including the United

Nations Human Rights Council, to seek access for human rights investigators to Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir, review concerns regarding political detentions and religious freedom, and encourage measures to protect fundamental rights.

The report concludes that freedom of worship and the independence of religious institutions should be protected, allowing communities to practise their faith without undue interference.

Five Pakistani Youth Leaders Win QECT Award; Danish Sohail and Joshua Dilawar Meet King Charles III in London

Report: ANI Correspondent:

LONDON -- Five young leaders from Pakistan have received the Queen Elizabeth II Commonwealth Trust (QECT) 100 Young Leaders Award for their contributions to social change. Among them, Danish Sohail and Joshua Dilawar met King Charles III and Queen Camilla at St James's Palace, London, ahead of CHOGM 2026.

Pakistan's awardees include Danish Sohail, co-founder of The Young Changemakers; Joshua Dilawar, associated with Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA); Hassan Ashraf; Farah Gul Rahuja; and a fifth recipient whose name was not provided.

The awards recognise young changemakers aged 18 to 35 from across the 56 Commonwealth countries for their work in areas including education, health, climate action and social inclusion.

Both Danish and Joshua belong to Nishat Colony, and their achieve-



ment has brought pride to their community. Joshua described meeting the King and Queen as a profound honour, expressing pride in representing Pakistan's youth alongside Danish.

Rana Mashhood, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, also praised the Pakistani awardees, calling their selection a defining moment for the country's youth.