



Kuwait Approves Defence Cooperation Agreement with Pakistan Officially

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Kuwait has officially approved a defence cooperation agreement with Pakistan, marking a significant step towards expanding military collaboration between the two countries. According to Arab media reports, the approval was issued through Decree No. 73 of 2026, with the decision published in Kuwait's official gazette. The decree formally ratifies the defence agreement signed in Kuwait on June 11, 2023. The agreement is designed to enhance bilateral defence relations by creating a framework for cooperation in military training, professional education, logistics, exchanges of military personnel, scientific and technical collaboration, and military intelligence, in line with the laws of both nations and their international commitments. Under the agreement, both countries will develop annual implementation plans through executive protocols and joint programmes to ensure effective cooperation.



Modi Forms Exam Reform Task Force After Protests

Web Desk

NEW DELHI

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced the creation of a special task force to reform the country's examination system, a day after the resignation of the education minister amid growing criticism over exam-related issues. The announcement came following weeks of protests led by students and activists over alleged examination irregularities and concerns affecting young people across India. In a video message shared on social media platform X, Modi said the government had decided to establish a high-powered task force led by Nandan Nilekani, co-founder of Indian technology company Infosys, to focus on improving the examination process. The prime minister said the reforms would aim to make India's examination system more reliable, transparent, and technology-driven. The protests, organised through the social media-driven Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), attracted thousands of demonstrators at New Delhi's Jantar Mantar, becoming one of the country's most significant recent anti-government demonstrations.



Stagnant sewage water remains accumulated in the Bibi Pak Daman area, causing severe inconvenience to residents and highlighting the need for immediate attention from the concerned authorities

Pakistan Uncovers India-Linked Digital Disinformation Network: Atta Tarar

- Tarar said a person providing digital marketing services had recently been arrested by security agencies

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Sunday claimed that Pakistani security agencies had uncovered an India-linked digital disinformation network allegedly involved in spreading anti-Pakistan propaganda through social media. Speaking to the media, Tarar said a person providing digital marketing services had recently been arrested by security agencies. According to the minister, investigations revealed that the suspect's digital operations were linked to India and that payments for promoting anti-Pakistan content were allegedly made



from across the border. He alleged that a network of bot farms was being used to amplify misinformation targeting Pakistan, its sovereignty, the government, the armed forces, the Chief of Army Staff, and state institutions. Tarar said investigators also found that much of the content circulated by the suspect related to the

banned Joint Action Committee in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The minister accused the group of attempting to undermine the Kashmir cause, weaken the relationship between Pakistan and the people of Kashmir, and incite unrest through violent protests. He claimed the government possesses "irrefutable evidence" linking the group's activities to India. Tarar further alleged that artificial intelligence was used to manipulate old videos and falsely portray them as recent incidents from Kashmir to spread misinformation on social media. He said the investigation into the arrested suspect is ongoing and stressed that countering misinformation and protecting national security remain the government's responsibility. The minister also said Pakistan had (Continued on Page-4)

Uzma Bukhari Says Zardari Spared Embarrassment as PPP Lahore Rally Failed to Draw Crowd

- Punjab information minister criticizes PPP's strength in Punjab, calls Governor House gathering poorly attended and blames party leaders for misleading the leadership.

STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE

Punjab Information and Culture Minister Uzma Bukhari has criticized the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), saying former President Asif Ali Zardari was spared embarrassment after the party did not go ahead with its planned public gathering in Lahore on the occasion of his birthday. Speaking to the media, Bukhari congratulated Zardari on his birthday and remarked that he should be thankful for being "saved

from the embarrassment" of holding a public meeting at Minar-e-Pakistan. She said the PPP had initially announced a rally in Lahore to celebrate Zardari's birthday but later abandoned the plan. She claimed that organizing such an event with a poor turnout would have been disrespectful to the party's co-chairman. "Whoever advised the party leadership to hold a rally in Lahore should be held accountable," she said. The provincial minister also criticized the gathering held at the Governor House in Lahore on Saturday



night, alleging that it attracted only a small number of participants. According to Bukhari, around 2,000 chairs had been arranged for the event, but only about 150 people attended. She further alleged that the same individuals who had reduced the PPP to the fourth-largest political force in Punjab were continuing to provide the party leadership with misleading assessments about its popularity in the province. Bukhari said the Punjab leadership of the PPP appeared to be more focused on criticizing the Punjab government than strengthening its own political organization.

Iran war spreads to Red Sea and Caspian, Gulf quiet as US forgoes strikes

- Trump paused attacks on Iran to allow more room for diplomacy: US envoy to UN

WEB DESK

TEHRAN/WASHINGTON



energy supplies and the global economy. Vice President JD Vance and Gen. Dan Caine, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, both raised concerns about the U.S. munitions stockpile with Trump during a White House meeting on Friday, a U.S. official told CNN. Operations are "on a hold," a Department of Defense source told the broadcaster on Saturday. Despite the Gulf lull, Saturday's fighting between Iran's Houthi allies and Saudi Arabia showed that the war, which has already disrupted energy (Continued on Page-4) supplies through the Strait of Hormuz, could affect a second major shipping route and reignite Yemen's civil war. Separately, Iran's Foreign Ministry

IRNA said. The Iranian denunciation coincided with comments by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that Kyiv had noted Russia was passing on to Iran its satellite observations in the Middle East, to enable it to direct strikes in the region. Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree said the group struck sites belonging to Saudi state oil company Aramco in the cities of Jizan and Yanbu on Saturday. A large column of smoke rose from the direction of the Aramco refinery in Jizan, near the Yemeni border, video on social media verified by Reuters showed. The refinery can process up to 400,000 barrels of crude oil daily.

accused Ukraine of attacking an Iranian commercial vessel in the Caspian Sea, saying one sailor was killed and another injured. The ministry summoned Ukraine's chargé d'affaires in Tehran to protest over an attack it described as "hostile and criminal", state news agency

AJK Elections First Phase Begins Today in Mirpur Division

- First Phase of AJK General Elections to Begin in Mirpur Division Tomorrow

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The first phase of the three-stage general elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) will take place tomorrow in the Mirpur Division. The AJK government has announced a public holiday in the Mirpur Division on July 27 to facilitate voters and ensure smooth polling arrangements. Polling will be conducted for 13 legislative seats across the division, including four seats in Mirpur, three in Bhimber, and six in Kotli. A total of 287 candidates are participating in the electoral contest, representing political parties as well as independent groups. The Mirpur Division has around 1.4 million registered voters, including 725,811 male voters and 675,628 female voters. Election authorities have set up 2,454 polling stations with 3,701 polling booths to manage the voting process across the division. District Returning Officer Sardar Muhammad Akram said that all



preparations have been completed to conduct peaceful, transparent, and impartial elections. He warned that strict action would be taken against anyone violating the election code of conduct. Chief Election Commissioner Ghulam Mustafa Mughal appealed to citizens to actively participate in the democratic process and cast their votes for candidates of their choice. He assured that comprehensive security arrangements would be in place during polling. Security personnel and quick response teams will be deployed at polling stations, while authorities have warned of immediate action against individuals attempting to disrupt the electoral process.



Faisalabad: Caretaker Iqbal Stadium Naveed Nazir is presenting the T-shirt of Commissioner XI to the newly appointed Commissioner Imran Hamid Sheikh. While Public Relations Officer Radio Mast FM 103 Abdul Rauf Jatt (Raufi), and others are also present. Photo by Abdul Majid

Khyber Has Potential to Become Pakistan's Premier Tourism Destination, Says Press Club President

■ Journalists' study tour highlights district's rich historical heritage, calls for investment in tourism infrastructure and preservation of centuries-old landmarks.

News Desk

LANDIKOTAL

The Khyber district, home to the historic Khyber Pass and several centuries-old landmarks, has the potential to become one of Pakistan's leading tourism destinations, but official neglect and the lack of investment in tourism infrastructure continue to keep the region off the country's tourism map, District press club Khyber president Aman Ali Shinwari said on Sunday. He made the remarks during a one-day study and recreational tour of Khyber's historic sites organised by the District Press Club Khyber for its members to promote awareness of the district's historical and cultural heritage. The delegation visited the historic Ali Masjid Fort, the British-era underground hospital, the Khyber Rifles Mess and the Machni Post at the



Pakistan-Afghanistan Torkham border. During the visit, officials briefed journalists on the historical importance of the Khyber Pass, the battles fought in the region, military defence strategies and the strategic role of the historic gateway linking South and Central Asia. Speaking on the

occasion, Aman Ali Shinwari said Khyber possessed unmatched historical, geographical and cultural importance but had not received the attention it deserved from the Tourism Department and the provincial government. He said that preserving the district's historical heritage and

developing tourism infrastructure could transform Khyber into a major destination for both domestic and international visitors. He urged the government to protect historical sites, improve tourist facilities and promote the district's unique heritage to unlock its economic and tourism potential. He also called for creating more opportunities for young people to explore their own region and develop a better understanding of its history, culture and traditions. Shinwari said the district press club would continue organising educational and study tours aimed at enhancing the professional capacity of journalists and encouraging positive engagement with the district's rich heritage. Paying tribute to local journalists, he said media professionals in Khyber had continued to report under extremely difficult conditions during years of terrorism and insecurity, making significant sacrifices while contributing to peace

FFC Learning & Development Centre Showcases Its Role in Building Pakistan's Skilled Workforce

■ During his visit, WWF Secretary Mr. Zulfiqar Ahmed commends the Centre's efforts in equipping youth with modern technical skills and promoting industrial excellence.

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

The Secretary of the Workers Welfare Fund (WWF), Mr. Zulfiqar Ahmed, accompanied by representatives of the CBA Workers Union, visited the FFC Learning & Development Centre at Goth Machhi, Sadiqabad. Upon arrival, the distinguished guest and his delegation were warmly received by Unit Manager Mr. Asif Shafi. During the visit, Mr. Asif Shafi gave a comprehensive briefing on the Centre's training programmes, state-of-the-art facilities, and ongoing initiatives. In his presentation, he highlighted that the FFC Learning & Development Centre provides high-quality technical and vocational training not only to participants from Pakistan but also to trainees from several other countries. The briefing explained that the Centre offers a wide range of training programmes in Safety, Mechanical, Electrical, Instrumentation, and other technical disciplines, designed to meet



modern industrial requirements. Participants receive both theoretical knowledge and practical hands-on training. Upon successful completion of their courses, trainees return to their respective countries to serve in various industrial organisations, enhancing their professional capabilities and improving their employment prospects. It was further highlighted that the Centre is also playing a significant role in equipping local youth with modern technical skills through quality vocational training. Many graduates have secured positions as supervisors, engineers, and other key technical professionals in various industrial

organisations and manufacturing facilities. This reflects the success of the Centre's training strategy and its contribution to developing a skilled workforce while creating dignified employment opportunities for young people across the country. During the visit, the Secretary witnessed the Centre's various training units, workshops, laboratories, and practical training facilities. He was briefed on the latest machinery, training methodologies, and the facilities provided to trainees. Mr. Zulfiqar Ahmed appreciated the FFC Learning & Development Centre for its modern infrastructure, high standards of training, and overall performance. He commended the management and training staff for their dedication and professional efforts. He remarked that training institutions of this nature play a vital role in developing a skilled workforce, enhancing the technical capabilities of youth, and supporting the country's industrial growth. He also expressed confidence that FFC would continue its valuable contribution towards national development and professional workforce training with the same commitment and excellence in the future.

Dr. Pervez Iqbal Lohsar Urges One-Window Operation to Boost Overseas Investment

■ Speaking at the FDI Conference in Gujrat, he highlights the vital role of overseas Pakistanis in strengthening the national economy through record remittances and investments.

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Chairman of the EU-Pak Friendship Federation Europe, Dr. Pervez Iqbal Lohsar, has said that overseas Pakistanis are playing a key role in strengthening Pakistan's economy through their record-breaking remittances and investments. Their love and commitment to their homeland is commendable, as they work hard abroad but send their earnings to Pakistan, making a significant contribution to strengthening the national economy. He expressed these views while addressing



the "Conference on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan," which was held on July 25, 2026, in Gujrat. Dr. Pervez Iqbal Lohsar urged the

Government of Pakistan to establish an effective One-Window Operation system to promote investment by overseas Pakistanis, so that investors can be provided with the facility to complete NOCs and other legal and administrative requirements on a single platform. He said that overseas Pakistanis face severe difficulties due to having to go through various ministries and government departments and lengthy official procedures, while a One-Window system can prove to be an effective solution to these problems and will pave the way for more foreign investment. He said that last year, overseas Pakistanis sent remittances worth 38 billion US dollars to Pakistan, while this year the volume has increased to 42 billion US dollars, which is a new record in the country's history.



ICT Police crack down on illegal shisha cafés, Spa centre; 21 held

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police arrested 21 suspects during a major crackdown on illegal shisha cafés and spa centres operating in a private housing society on the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi. ICT Police crack down on illegal shisha cafés, Spa centre; 21 held

An official told APP on Sunday that the operation was carried out by Lohi Bher Police under the supervision of SHO Muhammad Yousaf Jutt as part of the ongoing drive against illegal businesses and immoral activities.

During the raid on a shisha café, police arrested 15 individuals and recovered eight shisha units, shisha pipes and various tobacco flavours. The recovered items were taken into custody and legal proceedings were initiated.

In the same crackdown, police also raided several spa centres in the private housing society and arrested six men and women allegedly involved in immoral activities. Cases have been registered against the suspects under relevant legal provisions, while further investigation is underway to identify and arrest other individuals linked to the network.



Director IT orders software upgrades across Islamabad Police offices

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

: Director Information Technology (IT) Atif Abbas chaired a meeting to review the performance of digital systems and directed the early completion of software upgradation and system improvement initiatives across Islamabad Police offices.

Director IT orders software upgrades across Islamabad Police offices

A police official told APP on Monday that the meeting reviewed the functioning of software applications currently being used in various police offices and discussed measures to enhance their efficiency and reliability.

Atif Abbas directed the officers concerned to expedite the renewal and upgradation of software, improve the overall performance of IT systems and ensure the timely completion of assigned targets.

He emphasized that modern, reliable and efficient digital systems are essential for improving administrative performance, strengthening service delivery and enhancing the overall operational efficiency of Islamabad Police.



Pakistan sees decline in environmental polio positivity rate to 13.1pc

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan recorded a sharp decline in the proportion of environmental samples testing positive for poliovirus in the first half of 2026, with the positivity rate dropping to 13.1 percent from 48.1 percent a year earlier, the National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC) said this week, reflecting gains in the country's campaign to interrupt transmission of the disease. Polio is a highly contagious viral disease that can cause irreversible paralysis and, in some cases, death, but can be prevented through repeated doses of oral vaccines. Pakistan and Afghanistan remain the only two countries worldwide where the disease is still endemic.

Pakistan has reduced polio cases by 99.8 percent – from 20,000 estimated cases in the early 1990s to 31 in 2025, and three so far in 2026, thanks to periodic nationwide vaccination campaigns.

However, Pakistan along with Afghanistan remains one of the last two countries where polio still remains endemic. The NEOC said this week that health authorities last month collected 127 environmental samples as part of virus surveillance across the country, out of which 117 were declared negative for polio virus, while the presence of poliovirus was confirmed in 10 samples.

Govt, oil tankers owners to hold talks in Islamabad

- PSX sees volatile trade, touching 166,382 high and 161,993 low; KSE-100 up 102 points. Global markets mixed as fragile Gulf truce, oil concerns keep investors cautious.



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Oil Tankers Contractors Association's 72-hour ultimatum worked as the Federal Minister for Petroleum has contacted the association. In this regard President Abidullah Afridi has said that an important meeting will be held in Islamabad on Monday to discuss the demands. He said that if the government accepted our demands, it will be announced and if the government does not accept our demands, the

future course of action will also be announced.

Joint press conference of Pakistan oil tankers and contractors

Earlier, the government was given a 72-hour ultimatum in a joint press conference of Pakistan Oil Tankers Association.

They demanded for increase in quota of white oil pipeline.

Commercial loading should be ended immediately, tanker owners demanded.

Abidullah Afridi said oil tanker fares have not increased for three years.

Motorway and NHA toll tax have been increased by 180 percent, he said.

Freights should also be increased in proportion to the toll tax, he demanded.

He said negotiations and correspondence were ongoing for the past one and a half years.

OGRA and Petroleum Division forced them for strike, he added.

Abidullah said if the demands are not accepted, oil tankers will be stranded all over Pakistan.



A worker is busy in carving different designs on sheet in his workshop at Saidpur Road

FBR uncovers major fuel tax evasion as 8,348 metric tons of petrol go missing

- A major fuel tax evasion case has surfaced after 8,348 metric tons of petrol allegedly went missing from a bonded warehouse, causing an estimated Rs1.25 billion loss to the national exchequer.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

A major tax evasion scandal has surfaced in Pakistan's oil industry after thousands of metric tons of imported petrol allegedly went missing from a customs bonded warehouse, resulting in a significant loss to the national exchequer.

According to official documents, a private petroleum company secretly transferred petrol worth Rs2.38 billion from a customs bonded warehouse, allegedly causing an estimated Rs1.25 billion loss to the national treasury in unpaid duties, taxes



and levies.

The alleged tax evasion came to light during scrutiny of the company's imported petroleum consignments. A physical inspection of stock at the customs

bonded warehouse at Bin Qasim Port reportedly confirmed the discrepancy.

The documents state that the company imported 18,048 metric tons of petrol through three

consignments. However, a physical stock inspection found only 9,699 metric tons of petrol in the bonded warehouse, while 8,348 metric tons were reported missing from the company's inventory.

Investigations against the private company are ongoing. According to the documents, records have also been sought from PEPCO as part of the inquiry.

He development comes after another petroleum company previously faced a separate multi-billion-rupee tax evasion case, in which the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) recovered nearly Rs5 billion from the company.

AI boom exposes data centre gap across Southeast Asian economies

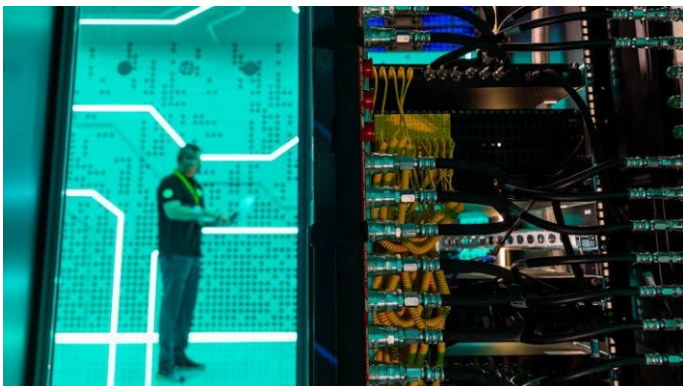
- Businesses are increasingly using AI to recommend products, respond to customer enquiries and detect fraudulent financial transactions.

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD

Companies across Southeast Asia are rapidly expanding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for everyday business operations, but limited computing infrastructure is emerging as one of the region's biggest barriers to sustained growth. Businesses are increasingly using AI to recommend products, respond to customer enquiries and detect fraudulent financial transactions.

A survey conducted in February by McKinsey, in partnership with Singapore's Economic Development Board and Tech in Asia, found that nearly half of the 330 companies surveyed across six regional markets had progressed beyond pilot projects. The respondents reported allocating between 11% and 40% of their technology budgets to AI



initiatives.

Despite the growing investment, the computing power needed to support AI remains in short supply. Indonesia's Directorate of Digital Infrastructure recorded around 185 data centres with a combined capacity of 274 megawatts at the end of last year, far below the government's target

of more than 2,000 megawatts by 2029. The country's data centre association estimates that only about 30% of existing capacity is capable of supporting AI workloads.

Singapore, the region's leading data centre hub, is also facing capacity constraints, prompting operators to look beyond the city-

state for opportunities to expand their infrastructure.

Industry experts note that AI services are no longer sold simply through access to machines or monthly subscriptions. Instead, usage is increasingly measured in "tokens" – the units representing the fragments of text that AI models process and generate. Simple customer service responses may consume only a few hundred tokens, while more complex tasks, such as summarising lengthy contracts, require several thousand.

Speaking at a forum in Shanghai, Liu Jian of the Energy Research Institute, which operates under China's state planning authority, said that unlike electricity, where the value of a kilowatt-hour is fixed, the value of a token varies depending on the AI model used to generate the output.

Expo Faisalabad 2026 key to unlocking Pakistan's MSME growth, Haroon Akhtar



NEWS DESK

LAHORE

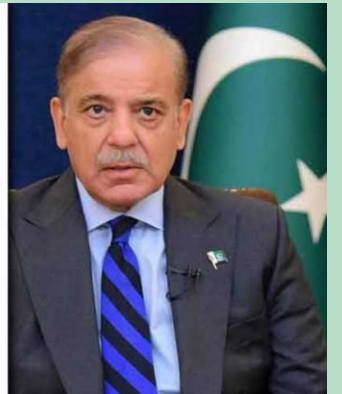
Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan has reaffirmed the government's commitment to building a stronger and more competitive ecosystem for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), describing the sector as a cornerstone of Pakistan's economic future.

The Expo Faisalabad 2026 has brought together leading manufacturers, exporters, investors, entrepreneurs and business support organisations, highlighting

Faisalabad's industrial excellence while creating fresh opportunities for trade, investment and business collaboration.

Addressing the exhibition, being held from July 24 to 26 at the Expo Center in Lahore, he said MSMEs remain central to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's vision for sustainable economic growth, industrial development and export promotion.

Haroon Akhtar Khan said Pakistan has demonstrated its military strength to the world and the time has now come to showcase the country's economic resilience and development.



Pakistan Business Forum urges PM Shehbaz to review daily fuel pricing mechanism

- Pakistan Business Forum urges Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to review daily fuel pricing and reduce levies to ease inflationary pressure.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has written to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, calling for an immediate review of the daily petroleum pricing mechanism and urging measures to reduce the burden on businesses and consumers.

PBF President Khawaja Mehboob ur Rehman said the existing pricing formula had created uncertainty for the business community and the public, adding that it had also led to arbitrary increases in the prices of everyday consumer goods.

According to the forum, petrol prices have increased by Rs24 per litre and diesel prices by Rs60 per litre over the past five days. It said the government's responsibility during difficult economic conditions is to provide relief to the public rather than shifting the entire burden onto consumers.

Khawaja Mehboob ur Rehman said

the economy requires immediate support and urged the prime minister to intervene, arguing that current government measures have failed to provide the needed relief.

The PBF also proposed capping the petroleum levy at a level equivalent to 18% general sales tax per litre and called for a reduction in the per-litre margins of oil marketing companies.

The forum opposed any increase in petroleum dealers' margins, stating that dealers already receive more than Rs8 per litre.

Khawaja Mehboob ur Rehman further urged the government not to pass any additional financial burden onto the public if the Ministry of Petroleum submits a proposal to increase dealers' margins. Browse Topics



Women labourers harvest mature green chilies during the peak picking season in a chili field on the outskirts of the city

Investing in Minds: Pakistan's Literacy Gains Must Be Matched by Greater Educational Commitment



By: **Samina Mustafa M.Phil. Scholar**

Pakistan's modest improvement in literacy rates, as highlighted in the Economic Survey 2025-26, offers a welcome sign of progress in the country's long struggle to expand educational opportunities.

According to the latest figures, the literacy rate among individuals aged 10 years and above has reached 63 percent, reflecting a two-percentage-point increase from previous years. While the rise may appear small, it represents millions of Pakistanis gaining access to the fundamental skills needed to participate in a rapidly changing and increasingly knowledge-driven world. The survey reveals encouraging trends, particularly regarding female education. Male literacy currently stands at 73 percent, while female literacy has reached 54 percent. Urban areas continue to outperform rural regions, yet one of the most promising developments is the steady growth of literacy among rural women. Punjab has recorded the highest rural female literacy rate at 68 percent, demonstrating that focused interventions and community engagement can yield meaningful results.

Equally encouraging is the reported decline in the number of out-of-school children, which remains alarmingly high at an estimated 25 to 26 million but is lower than the figures recorded in 2023.

Despite these positive indicators, serious challenges persist. Pakistan continues to allocate one of the lowest percentages of GDP to education in South Asia. Public spending on education has declined in recent years, raising concerns that hard-earned gains may be difficult to sustain.

According to UNICEF, education financing in Pakistan remains "chronically low," limiting the country's ability to improve school infrastructure, recruit qualified teachers, expand digital learning opportunities, and address regional disparities in educational access.

The importance of education extends far beyond literacy statistics. Education is directly linked to economic growth, poverty reduction, social mobility, public health, and national stability.

International research consistently shows that every additional year of schooling increases individual earnings and contributes to higher national productivity.

Countries that have successfully transformed their economies — including South Korea, Singapore, and China — did so by making substantial investments in education and human capital development.

For Pakistan, the stakes could not be higher. With nearly two-thirds of its population under the age of 30, the country possesses a vast reservoir of youthful energy, talent, and potential.

This demographic dividend presents a unique opportunity to accelerate economic growth,

innovation, and social development. However, this potential can only be realized if young people are equipped with quality education, relevant skills, and meaningful opportunities.

Without adequate investment in education and human capital, millions of youth risk being left behind, contributing to unemployment, poverty, and social instability. The choices made today regarding educational access and quality will determine whether Pakistan's young population becomes its greatest asset or its most pressing challenge.

Ultimately, the nation's future prosperity depends on how effectively it empowers the next generation to thrive in an increasingly competitive and knowledge-driven world. As former South African President Nelson Mandela famously observed, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." His words remain profoundly relevant for Pakistan, where millions of children still face barriers to learning due to poverty, inadequate facilities, gender discrimination, and geographic isolation.

Similarly, UNESCO has long emphasized that "Education is a fundamental human right and the foundation for sustainable development." Without ensuring quality education for all, achieving broader national goals such as economic prosperity, technological innovation, and social cohesion will remain difficult.

The government's efforts to reduce the number of out-of-school children deserve recognition, but enrollment alone is not enough.

Attention must also be paid to learning outcomes, teacher training, curriculum modernization, and digital literacy.

Schools must equip students not only with basic reading and writing skills but also with critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and technological competencies required in the twenty-first century.

Particular emphasis should continue to be placed on girls' education. Numerous studies demonstrate that educated women contribute significantly to family well-being, workforce participation, and community development. Investing in girls' education generates benefits that extend across generations, improving health outcomes, reducing poverty, and strengthening economic resilience.

At a time of fiscal constraints and economic uncertainty, increasing education spending may appear challenging. Yet the true challenge lies in continuing to underinvest in the country's future. Policymakers must reassess national priorities, eliminate wasteful expenditures, improve governance, and channel greater resources toward education.

Every classroom built, every teacher trained, and every child educated represents an investment in Pakistan's long-term prosperity. The recent improvement in Pakistan's literacy rate offers a hopeful indication that progress is possible when education receives sustained attention. However, statistics alone cannot tell the full story.

Millions of children, particularly girls and those living in rural and marginalized communities, still face significant barriers to accessing quality education.



By: **Muhammad Ubaid ur Rehman**

The Newest Old Problem: How Pakistan's Young Have Learned to Read the Fine Print of Governance

There is a scene that recurs in the political life of this country with the regularity of a monsoon: a minister, flanked by cameras, announces a transformative initiative.

Roads will be built. Curriculum will be reformed. Hospitals will be

loading.

Pakistan does not suffer from a shortage of policy. It suffers from a shortage of implementation.

The IMF's Governance and Corruption Diagnostic Assessment, finalised in late 2025, documented what has long been

They do not, by and large, believe that the next election will be different. They do not believe that a new party with old personnel will behave differently in power.

They have watched the PTI promise accountability and then fall into the same institutional patterns as its predecessors. They have watched the PDM promise stability and then preside over inflation that eroded whatever economic cushion the middle class still possessed.

What is being lost, in this accretion of disappointment, is something more than electoral enthusiasm. It is civic faith — the foundational belief that the state, however imperfect, is basically oriented toward the public good.

When that faith is gone, what replaces it is a transactional cynicism: you extract what you can from the system, you protect your family, you do not waste moral energy on the collective.

This is not radicalism. It is rational adaptation to a system that has consistently failed to reward civic engagement.

The answer is not for the young to simply trust more patiently. The answer is for the state to begin, for the first time in a systematic and verifiable way, to close the gap between announcement and delivery.

This requires independent monitoring mechanisms with actual authority, legislative timelines with automatic fiscal consequences for non-compliance, and civil service rules that reward continuity and penalise political disruption.

Pakistan's young people have read the old propaganda. They are, this time, keeping score.



equipped. Electricity will be regularised. Corruption will be rooted out. The press conference ends, the cameras leave, the initiative is allocated a budget line, the budget line is redirected, and the initiative does not happen.

A few years later — under a new government with different ministers and identical language — the scene repeats. The sets change. The script does not.

What is remarkable about Pakistan in 2026 is not that this is happening. It has always been happening.

What is remarkable is that the young — the sixty-two million Pakistanis between fifteen and twenty-nine — can now see it happening in real time and name it precisely. They know what 'Vision 2025' was. They know what happened to the National Action Plan. They know that Pakistan has entered twenty-five IMF programmes since 1958.

They know because, unlike their parents, they can cross-reference official announcements against independent assessments before the press release has finished



By: **Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai**

From Resolution to Reality: Why Implementation Defines the Credibility of the United Nations

The Arria-Formula Meeting of the United Nations Security Council on "Bridging the Implementation Gap: Security Council Resolutions and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security", held at UN Headquarters in New York on 23 June 2026, highlighted a fundamental truth about the international system: resolutions matter only when they are implemented.

The concept note for the meeting correctly observed that the significance of Security Council resolutions lies not merely in their adoption but in their implementation. A resolution that is ignored, selectively applied, or left without follow-up weakens not only the authority of the Security Council but also confidence in the United Nations Charter itself. If the Council is entrusted with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, then its decisions must be treated as more than diplomatic statements. They must be translated into action.

The remarkable feature of the debate was the breadth of agreement. Thirty-six member states took the floor, representing diverse regions, political systems, and strategic interests. Yet there was overwhelming consensus on one central principle: implementation is indispensable to the credibility of the Security Council.

Delegates repeatedly referred to Article 25 of the UN Charter, under which member states agree to accept and carry out Security Council decisions. Many also cited Article 2(2), which requires all members to fulfill their Charter obligations in good faith. Several speakers emphasized that when Council resolutions become dead letters, the consequences are not merely procedural. Delayed or selective implementation can prolong conflicts, facilitate violations of international law, obstruct humanitarian relief, and cost human lives.

Ambassador Fu Chong of



China, co-chairing the meeting, warned that ineffective implementation undermines the authority of the Security Council and may contribute to worsening crises m, respect for international law, and conflict-prevention efforts. Shamala Kandiah Thompson of Security Council Report argued that the effectiveness of the Council should be measured not only by the resolutions it adopts but by whether those resolutions achieve their intended objectives. Richard Gowan of the International Crisis Group offered an even starker assessment, observing that many states now believe they can ignore Council decisions and broader international law with impunity.

and escalating conflicts. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General, similarly noted that selective implementation weakens multilateralism, respect for international law, and conflict-prevention efforts. Shamala Kandiah Thompson of Security Council Report argued that the effectiveness of the Council should be measured not only by the resolutions it adopts but by whether those resolutions achieve their intended objectives. Richard Gowan of the International Crisis Group offered an even starker assessment, observing that many states now believe they can ignore Council decisions and broader international law with impunity.

The message was echoed by representatives from France, Denmark, the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, the European Union, Qatar, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Nepal,

Panama; Liberia; Greece; Columbia, DRC; Switzerland; Angola; Mexico; Oman; Zimbabwe; Azerbaijan; Australia; Algeria; Lebanon; Morocco; Cuba; Cambodia; Nepal; Liechtenstein; Serbia; and Venezuela, Latvia, Iran, Bahrain, and Somalia. Their wording differed, but the conclusion was the same: the authority of the Security Council depends upon faithful, timely, and non-selective implementation of its resolutions. Against this backdrop, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar of Pakistan, Co-Chair of the meeting raised the issue of Jammu and Kashmir as an example of what he described as a longstanding case of non-implementation. He argued that Security Council resolutions concerning Kashmir remain unfulfilled decades after their adoption and that selective approaches to implementation undermine both the Charter and the Council's credibility. In his view, the continued failure to resolve the dispute demonstrates the costs of allowing Security Council decisions to remain unimplemented.

The Indian representative, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, emphasized that the Security Council is the principal organ responsible for maintaining international peace and security and argued for greater review of Security Council mandates under broader UN reform efforts. He also reiterated India's longstanding position that Jammu and Kashmir is an internal matter of India. Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish is undoubtedly aware that Security Council resolutions concerning disputes addressed under Chapter VI of the UN Charter do not simply disappear through the passage of time.

THE DESTINATION

Editor's Mail

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Mudasser Iqbal
Chief Editor

Tahir Chudhary
Resident Editor Lahore

Pakistan Uncovers India-Linked Digital Disinformation Network: Atta Tarar

achieved success against India on both military and diplomatic fronts and reaffirmed that the country would continue its path toward peace, stability, and development under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir.

IRGC Claims Heavy US Losses as Trump Pauses Strikes

■ Iran Claims Major Damage to US Forces as Trump Pauses Military Strikes



WEB DESK

NEW DELHI

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) says its latest military operations killed more than 200 American military personnel. It also claimed to have targeted eight US military installations across the Middle East.

The IRGC said its attacks destroyed 20 fortified military shelters. It also claimed to have shot down or destroyed 17 drones, one F-15 fighter jet, one C-17 military transport aircraft, and eight aerial refuelling planes.

Independent sources have not verified these claims.

Meanwhile, Axios, quoted by a private news channel, reported that US President Donald Trump ordered a temporary pause in new military strikes on Iran. The pause came after nearly two weeks of continuous operations.

According to the report, Trump declined to approve another round of strikes on Friday. He had authorised military action over the previous 13 days.

US officials have not said whether the pause is temporary or part of a broader policy shift. The report says Trump wants to create

more space for diplomacy. It also says he wants to reduce the risk of a wider regional conflict.

Despite the pause, the US military remains on high alert. It continues to prepare for any possible escalation.

Speaking at the White House, President Trump said all military options remain available. However, he stressed that diplomacy remains the preferred path.

Trump said, "We're talking to the Iranians right now. I think they're getting more and more serious as the days go by. We're locked and loaded and ready to go, but we're talking to them."

Later, at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner, Trump said he was not convinced Iran was ready to reach an agreement. However, he added that he remained open to negotiations.

The reported pause came as an Omani delegation arrived in Tehran. The delegation is holding talks on a possible arrangement to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Regional sources say the discussions have made progress. They also say both sides could reach an agreement soon. If negotiators finalise a proposal, President Trump will decide whether the United States will support the deal.



Pralhad Joshi Takes Charge of India's Education Ministry

■ Pralhad Joshi Gets Additional Education Ministry Charge After Dharmendra Pradhan Resignation

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI

Indian Union Minister for Food Pralhad Joshi has taken additional charge of the Ministry of Education following the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan.

According to Indian media reports, the President's office formally accepted Pradhan's resignation and approved the appointment of Joshi as the new Education Minister.

After assuming the responsibility,

Joshi said he accepted the new role with humility and a strong sense of duty. He thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and highlighted the government's achievements over the past 12 years.

Joshi also acknowledged Dharmendra Pradhan's contribution to the education sector, particularly his efforts in implementing the National Education Policy and advancing reforms within India's education system.



DPM/FM Dar departs to Pakistan after concluding his official visits abroad

Iran war spreads to Red Sea and Caspian, Gulf quiet as US forgoes strikes

■ Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree said the group struck sites belonging to Saudi state oil company Aramco in the cities of Jizan and Yanbu

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON/ATHENS

he Iran war broadened over the weekend despite a pause in U.S. strikes, as Yemen's Houthis attacked Saudi oil installations along the Red Sea coast and Iran accused Ukraine of targeting one of its vessels in the Caspian Sea.

The U.S. military said on Saturday its naval blockade against Iran "remains in full effect" but did not explain why it halted a streak of 13 nights of escalating strikes.

There were also no weekend reports of attacks by Iran on neighbors, similar to its daily rejoinders to the U.S. attacks.

Asked about the pause, a senior official in President Donald Trump's administration said Trump "has always been clear that his preference is diplomacy, but he has shown Iran what will happen if they fail to come to the table in a serious way."



Caine, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, both raised concerns about the U.S. munitions stockpile with Trump during a White House meeting on Friday, a U.S. official told CNN.

Operations are "on a hold," a Department of Defense source told the broadcaster on Saturday.

Despite the Gulf lull, Saturday's fighting between

Iran's Houthi allies and Saudi Arabia showed that the war, which has already disrupted energy supplies through the Strait of Hormuz, could affect a second major shipping route and reignite Yemen's civil war.

Separately, Iran's Foreign Ministry accused Ukraine of attacking an Iranian commercial vessel in the Caspian Sea, saying one sailor was killed and another injured.

Trump has decided, for now, to back away from plans to ramp up attacks on Iran, the New York Times said on Saturday, citing two people briefed on the discussion.

The president and his advisers, the newspaper said, have concerns about expanding the conflict, depleting defense stockpiles, alienating Middle East Gulf allies and affecting energy supplies and the global economy.

Vice President JD Vance and Gen. Dan

Twelve dead in attack on holiday camp in Russian-held part of Ukraine, officials say

■ Russian-installed officials said a Ukrainian drone strike killed 12 people, including five children, at a holiday camp in occupied Zaporizhzhia. Kyiv did not comment.

WEB DESK

Twelve

Twelve people were killed, including five children, in an overnight drone attack on a holiday camp in a Russian-held part of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region, Russian-installed local authorities said on Saturday, accusing Ukraine of deliberately attacking civilians.

Kyiv did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Both Russia and Ukraine deny targeting civilians in the war launched by Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Nineteen people were wounded in the attack on the resort area of Kyrlyivka, located on the coast of the Sea of Azov



near the town of Melitopol, said Russian-appointed governor Yevgeny Balitsky.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said Ukrainian drones carried out the attack on "sleeping people" at the camp. She denounced "inhuman crimes", also referring to an attack on a factory in Russia's Kirov region on Thursday which killed six people.

A video posted online of the holiday camp showed shattered buildings, burned-out cars and a pile of rubble next to a swimming pool.

Balitsky said crews from Russia's Emergencies Ministry had extracted two survivors, including a child, and recovered another body from the rubble. He added that rescue operations had been completed.

"The enemy saw and understood who it was targeting," he said on the Telegram messaging app.

Balitsky said authorities in Kyiv were "ignoring any norms of morality and deliberately destroying the civilian population — adults and children".

Russia's Investigative Committee opened a terrorism case in response to the attack, the Russian state news agency RIA said.



Pakistan and Kazakhstan Agree to Establish Kazakhstan-Pakistan Research Centre to Deepen Academic and Scientific Cooperation.

Australia to raise concerns over new tariffs with Trump, PM Albanese says

■ The Albanese-led Labor government has described the tariffs as unjustified and says it wants them removed.

WEB DESK

SYDNEY

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said on Sunday he would seek to raise the issue of tariffs with U.S. President Donald Trump, after Washington this week imposed new tariffs on its trading partners including Australia. The United States on Friday imposed new tariffs on goods from 60 trading partners, alleging those countries failed to curb the trade of goods made by forced labour, just as a temporary 10% global tariff expired. The Albanese-led Labor government has described the tariffs as unjustified and says it wants them removed. Albanese, asked on Sunday if he would seek to discuss the issue with Trump, said "absolutely". "We'll raise it at every level in the Australia-U.S. relationship, we've already done so," he said in televised



remarks. Australia has very strong provisions on modern slavery and was "strengthening those even further by going through the supply chain issues and making sure that indeed substantial fines and penalties can be paid", Albanese said.

Under the new Trump administration measures, imports from Australia, along with 37 other nations, are subject to a tariff of 12.5%. Seventeen nations are subject to a 10% rate, while five nations are subject to a mixed rate.

Dananeer's fresh summer look turns heads



■ Pakistani actress and digital creator Dananeer Mobeen has turned heads with her fresh summer look, embracing the colours and vibrant energy of the season through a playful fruit-inspired photoshoot.

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Pakistani actress and digital creator Dananeer Mobeen has turned heads with her fresh summer look, embracing the colours and vibrant energy of the season through a playful fruit-inspired photoshoot. Taking to Instagram, Dananeer Mobeen shared a carousel of photos and captioned the post, "Serving energy all summer long!" She also revealed that her outfit was from Sapphire Pakistan, giving a stylish nod to the popular fashion brand. For the photoshoot, Dananeer wore a jet-black maxi dress featuring delicate floral embroidery across the bodice in

shades of pink, purple, and green. The outfit combined a simple silhouette with colourful detailing, creating a soft cottagecore-inspired summer look that perfectly complemented the bright spirit of the season. She completed her appearance with a vibrant red printed bandana tied around her head, white floral earrings, a classic tan leather-strap watch, and a green gemstone ring. Her soft-glam makeup and natural hairstyle added to the effortless charm of the outdoor shoot.

The photos were captured on a grassy lawn, where Dananeer posed on a white picnic blanket alongside a

woven wicker basket while holding fresh fruit and flowers. Creative fruit-themed collage elements featuring apples, pomegranates, lemons, watermelons, and berries were also incorporated into the visuals, reinforcing the playful concept behind her caption. Dananeer's caption reflected the freshness, colour, and joyful energy of summer. More than just showcasing a fashionable outfit, the post celebrated the season through vibrant fruit-inspired visuals, a relaxed picnic setting, and a light-hearted aesthetic that resonated with her followers.

Hiba Bukhari's fun BTS singing video leaves fans smiling

■ Pakistani actress Hiba Bukhari has left fans smiling after sharing a fun BTS singing video from the set of her upcoming drama Rutba.

Web desk

ISLAMABAD

Pakistani actress Hiba Bukhari has left fans smiling after sharing a fun BTS singing video from the set of her upcoming drama Rutba. Taking to Instagram, Hiba Bukhari shared a fun video of herself singing the popular song "Slow Motion Angreza" from the Bollywood film Bhaag Milkha Bhaag, giving fans a candid look at the joyful moments shared on set.

The actress appeared relaxed and full of energy as she enjoyed the playful moment alongside veteran actress Irsa Ghazal during a break



from filming.

Sharing the clip, Hiba captioned the post, "Wasn't planning on

posting this one, but couldn't resist for its raw and cool. Right from the sets of #Rutba with this

wonderful lady with me @irsaaghazal."

Her caption suggested that the video was a spontaneous moment captured naturally on the drama set. Rather than sharing a carefully planned BTS clip, Hiba decided to post the candid recording because she felt its raw and genuine charm was simply too good not to share.

She also expressed her admiration for her co-star Irsa Ghazal, highlighting the warm friendship the two have developed while working together.

In the video, Hiba can be seen singing the lively track in a playful mood, while Irsa Ghazal joins in with smiles and laughter.

Shabana Azmi diagnosed with swine flu after joining Delhi protests

■ Azmi said doctors had advised her to remain in isolation and take complete bed rest for five days, preventing her from attending protest at Shivaji Park

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

Veteran Indian actor Shabana Azmi has been diagnosed with swine flu (H1N1) after spending three days with students protesting at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, forcing her to miss a planned demonstration in Mumbai.

In a social media post on Saturday, Azmi said doctors had advised her to remain in isolation and take complete bed rest for five days, preventing her from attending Friday's protest at Shivaji Park.

"My dear Mumbaiikars, I was meant to join your protest yesterday, but I've come down with H1N1 and need to remain in isolation for the next five days," she wrote.

Despite her illness, the actor expressed solidarity with the student movement, saying she continued to receive updates from protesters on the ground.

"I continue to be inspired by your courage and commitment and stand by you in solidarity," she said, adding that many young participants were experiencing the power of public protest for the first time.



Azmi also shared Naujawan, a poem written by her father, renowned poet Kaifi Azmi, on her social media account in support of the movement. The H1N1 diagnosis marks the latest health setback for the veteran actor during the protests.

Earlier, she suffered an asthma attack after tear gas was used during one of the demonstrations.

Azmi has been among the first prominent Bollywood figures to openly back the student movement.

She not only voiced support on social media but also joined the Chalo Sansad march in New Delhi, walking alongside thousands of demonstrators heading towards Parliament.

She had previously said that she and her husband, lyricist Javed Akhtar, initially wrote to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the students' demands.

After receiving no response, she decided to join the protests in person.

The student agitation has gathered momentum in recent weeks following environmentalist and educator Sonam Wangchuk's indefinite hunger strike, which ended on Thursday after nearly a month.

The protests intensified on July 20, the opening day of Parliament's monsoon session, when students from across India assembled in New Delhi for the 'Chalo Sansad march' organised by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP).

The protesters are demanding the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the NEET-UG examination paper leak, reforms to the education system, compensation for families of NEET aspirants who died by suicide and withdrawal of criminal cases against students.

The CJP representatives are scheduled to hold talks with the government later on Saturday in an effort to resolve the impasse.



Sangeeta faces online criticism over viral film set video

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

Veteran Pakistani actress and director Sangeeta has come under social media scrutiny after a behind-the-scenes video from the set of her upcoming film Makkho went viral online.

Sangeeta is making her return to filmmaking with Makkho, which features Saima Noor, Meera and Moammar Rana in leading roles. Several videos from the film's set have been circulating on social media. In one recently shared clip, Sangeeta can be seen giving Moammar Rana directions while

filming a romantic scene.

The video has generated mixed reactions online, with many users criticizing the style of the instructions and describing them as unnecessary, while others posted sarcastic comments.

At the same time, some social media users argued that it is inappropriate to judge the film or the director's work based on a short video clip, noting that providing actors with different forms of guidance during filming is a normal part of the filmmaking process.

Her release date of Makkho has not yet been officially announced.

Katy Perry upset at White House post on Iran strikes featuring her music

Web Desk

KARACHI

Katy Perry has slammed the White House over its use of her hit song 'Fireworks' in a video showing US military strikes in Iran.

The White House's official TikTok page posted a video on July 23 using the 2010 song as a backing track, using the lyrics "boom boom boom" over the visuals of military strikes and the caption "Iran has been warned."

The pop star condemned the use of "Fireworks" on X on July 25, writing that she was "deeply appalled and angry," and clarifying that she "did not approve this, I was not asked, and I absolutely do not condone it."

"I wrote this song to be an anthem of hope, healing, and inner strength for people going through their darkest personal moments.



To see a message of self-worth and upliftment weaponized to soundtrack destruction and violence is a complete violation of everything my song stands for," she wrote. "My music is for bringing people together, not celebrating warfare."

USA TODAY has reached out to the White House for comment.

Kaelan Dorc, Deputy Assistant to President Trump, responded to Perry's post by sharing a clip of her 2012 music "Part of Me" in which the singer is portrayed in US military boot camp. "This you?" Door wrote.

Qudsia Ali opens up about insecurity, emotional validation

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Emerging Pakistani actress Qudsia Ali has said that women who grow up without receiving adequate love and affection from their parents may become emotionally insecure and mistake temporary affection for genuine love.

Speaking in a recent magazine interview alongside actor Abbas Ashraf, both actors shared their views on the attitudes and behaviour of men and women in today's society.

During the conversation, Abbas Ashraf said he believes arrogance and a sense of superiority among some men often stem from the way they are raised by their parents.

He said many parents make their sons feel they are superior to others, the true heirs of the family and entitled to greater rights. According to Abbas Ashraf, parents should raise sons and



daughters equally if they want to prevent their sons from developing narcissistic or self-centred personalities.

Responding to a question about why some women neglect their own well-being in relationships, Qudsia Ali said many women who are deprived of parental love during childhood become vulnerable to emotional insecurity.

She said that when such women receive even a small amount of affection, they may tolerate unhealthy behaviour and accept temporary love as genuine because they are seeking emotional security.



Pakistani actress and television host Mathira has sparked a new social media debate after expressing criticism over a viral behind-the-scenes moment featuring actress Momina Iqbal, her husband Hamza, and actor Sohail Sameer.

Pakistan make two changes to Test squad for West Indies,

■ Abdullah Shafique replaces injured Abdullah Fazal, Saud Shakeel also included in 17-member squad



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Sunday announced two changes to the national men's Test squad for the ongoing two-match series against the West Indies and the upcoming three-Test tour of England. Left-handed batter Abdullah Fazal has

been ruled out of the remainder of the West Indies Test series after sustaining an injury on the eve of the opening Test. The PCB has named right-handed batter Abdullah Shafique as Fazal's replacement, while middle-order batter Saud Shakeel has also been added to the squad to strengthen the batting department. According to the details, the 23-year-old picked up a lower-back injury

during the Green Shirts' training session here at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba, hosting the series opener until July 29. Fazal consequently underwent an MRI scan, following which the left-handed opener was advised to start his rehabilitation and was deemed unfit for the upcoming series against West Indies and the subsequent Test tour of England, comprising three matches, set to be played from August 19 to

September 3. Pakistan are currently touring the West Indies, where they are playing the first of a two-Test series against the hosts. Following the conclusion of the Caribbean tour, Pakistan will travel to England for a three-match Test series scheduled from August 19 to September 13. All five Tests across the West Indies and England tours will count towards the ICC World Test Championship 2025–27.

Anum Uzair wins Pakistan's first Galiyat Mountain Trail Ultra Marathon

● Anum dedicated her victory to the women of Pakistan, especially female runners

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Pakistani mountaineer and trail runner Anum Uzair has achieved another major milestone by winning the country's first-ever 100-kilometre Galiyat Mountain Trail Ultra Marathon, one of the toughest endurance races held in Pakistan. The demanding event challenged runners with steep mountain terrain, dense forests and the constant threat of wildlife. Despite the difficult conditions, Anum completed the gruelling race with determination and endurance.

Talking to a private TV channel, Anum dedicated her victory to the women of Pakistan, especially female runners. She said she hoped to represent the country



internationally by taking on more challenging and unconventional competitions in the future. Reflecting on the risks involved, Anum said she knew the race would



be far from easy. She pointed to the possibility of lightning strikes and compared the danger to the threat of snowstorms faced during mountaineering expeditions.

Wildlife, she added, was another major concern.

Anum recalled encountering a leopard during a training run for a 40-kilometre race. She said the animal was sitting around 200 feet ahead of her on the trail. The experience, she explained, eventually helped her overcome her fears and become more confident. "Once I overcame the fear, I focused entirely on my goal — and achieved it," she said.

Comparing mountaineering with trail running, Anum said the two disciplines presented very different challenges and risks. However, she noted that trail-running events generally require less time, allowing her to balance her sporting ambitions with her responsibilities as a mother.

Ramsay-Peaty ponders future after 100m breaststroke bronze



WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

Adam Ramsay-Peaty's hopes of winning a third Commonwealth Games gold medal in the 100 metres breaststroke were dashed as the Englishman as forced to settle for bronze behind Australia's Sam Williamson. Ramsay-Peaty finished third in Glasgow with an effort of 59.65, behind Williamson (59.17) and Jersey's Filip Nowacki (59.34). "I work a lot harder than what it says on the scoreboard," Ramsay-Peaty, a two-times Olympic gold medallist in the event, told the BBC. "It hurts too much. I have got to approach training differently now because it hurts too much." The 31-year-old is also scheduled to compete in the Commonwealth Games' 50m breaststroke, which is among the sprints added to the programme for the 2028 Los Angeles Games. "Is the 100 even viable any more? I don't know," said Ramsay-Peaty, the world record holder in the 50. "The 50 is probably my super strength with my power. With the Olympics, that's probably going to be more realistic, but it's too early to tell."



WNBA announces launch of central replay booth

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD

The WNBA announced that it will launch a centralized replay center for the start of the 2027 season. The league already uses replay, but shifting to a centralized system aims to speed up and enhance the review process.

A state-of-the-art replay center in Secaucus, N.J., has been used by the NBA since 2014. The WNBA will now use the same facility as its centralized hub for all reviewable game situations. The center will give on-court officials quick access to multiple camera angles and guidance from officials in New Jersey to make fast and accurate calls. "As the WNBA continues its extraordinary growth, we're committed to investing in every aspect of the game, including the technology and resources that support players, teams, and officials," head of WNBA league operations Bethany Donaphin said. "Leveraging the NBA's state-of-the-art replay center is an important step in the continued evolution of our game."

PCB makes two squad changes ahead of West Indies and England Test series

■ Abdullah Fazal ruled out of the Test series after being declared unfit: Abdullah Shafique and Saud Shakeel added to strengthen Pakistan's batting options



SPORTS REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has announced two changes to the national Test squad for the ongoing series against the West Indies and the upcoming three-match Test tour of England. The PCB said opening batter Abdullah Fazal has been ruled out of the remainder of the Test campaign after being declared unfit. Abdullah Shafique has been named as his replacement in the squad.

provide greater depth and strengthen Pakistan's batting options for the forthcoming matches. Pakistan are currently playing a two-match Test series against the West Indies. Following its conclusion, the national team will travel to England for a three-match Test series. The England series forms part of the ICC World Test Championship, making it an important assignment for Pakistan in the competition.

Hiltz wins US championships 1,500m title once again

■ Nikki Hiltz won a fourth straight U.S. 1,500m title in a thrilling finish, while Dalilah Muhammad advanced in the 400m hurdles at the U.S. championships in New York.

SPORTS DESK

NEW YORK

Nikki Hiltz survived a three-way sprint finish to win a fourth successive outdoor U.S. national 1,500 meters title on Saturday, draping the trans flag around their shoulders as a pioneer for non-binary athletes, while New York's home hope Dalilah Muhammad easily advanced in the women's 400m hurdles. Nearly full stands were a welcome sight after two days of muted attendances at Icahn Stadium, as the national championships lacked drama in an off year without the Olympics or world championships. Hiltz, who uses they/them pronouns, delivered the most exciting performance of the night in the women's metric mile, breaking the tape after a superb tactical run in four minutes and 6.92 seconds. Stuck in second around the final turn, Hiltz slipped around the outside of Addy (4:06.96) down the final



straight and held off a late charge from Emily Mackay (4:06.98) before basking in the roar of the crowd.

"My mom's from Long Island so I feel like a little part of me is from here," said Hiltz, with the trans pride flag wrapped around their shoulders. Nathan Green won the men's 1,500 meters in 3:50.27. NEW YORK CHEERS HOME HOPE

The championships came to New York for the first time in more than three decades this

year and the city's Mayor Zohran Mamdani was in attendance to celebrate the occasion, holding the tape for the women's 100m ambulatory final, which Brittni Mason won in 12.16. Queens-born-and-raised Olympic gold medallist Muhammad did enough to win her 400m hurdles heat in 54.80, a year after she was widely expected to call time on her career. "This is actually first time ever I've had the opportunity (to be)

tracing here as a pro," said Muhammad, who won gold at the 2016 Olympics. "I just had to be here."

Aaliyah Butler got out fast and was all by herself going around the final turn of the women's 400m flat, crossing the line more than a half-second faster than Alexis Holmes in 49.93 for her first national title. The 2025 indoor champion Chris Bailey won the men's race in 44.39 with Khaleb McRae (44.41) second.

Alia Armstrong won the women's 100m hurdles with her best performance of the season in 12.38, in the absence of Olympic champion Masai Russell, who has lit up the Diamond League circuit this season.

A day after clinching the men's 100m title, Noah Lyles ran a comfortable 20.51 seconds to win his 200m heat 0.20 seconds ahead of Kyree King. (This story has been refilled to fix the pronoun of Hiltz to 'their' instead of 'her' in paragraph 1)



Six more killed in KP as monsoon rains and flash floods continue

- Six more people have died and 26 houses were damaged in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as monsoon rains and flash floods continue to cause widespread destruction.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

At least six more people have lost their lives and six others have been injured in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa since July 24, as heavy monsoon rains and flash floods continue to batter the province, according to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA).

PDMA said the latest casualties occurred in separate incidents involving the collapse of roofs and walls. The deceased included three men and three children, while the injured comprised three men and three women.

According to the latest damage assessment, 26 houses were affected by heavy rains and flash floods during the reporting period. Of these, 19 sustained partial damage, while seven were completely destroyed. The authority said that between July

19 and July 26, the overall death toll from rain-related incidents across 25 districts of the province had risen to 32, with 35 people injured.

The deceased included 13 men, three women and 16 children, while the injured comprised 16 men, 12 women and seven children, the report added.

The PDMA further reported that 72 houses had been damaged during the ongoing spell of monsoon rains, including 55 partially damaged and 17 completely destroyed homes. In addition, 46 livestock animals were killed in various weather-related incidents.

Among the affected districts are Peshawar, Nowshera, Khyber, Mardan, Buner, Bajaur, Shangla, Swabi, Chitral, Upper and Lower Dir, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Upper Kohistan, Tank, Torgar, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan, along with several other areas.



Lahore traffic police to replace uniform again after just one year

- Traffic wardens will replace current white shirts and blue trousers with bluish-grey uniforms: Punjab Highway Patrol will continue using its existing uniform design

Staff Reporter

LAHORE

The Punjab Police have decided to change the Lahore traffic police uniform once again, less than a year after the current design was introduced. According to police sources, traffic wardens will stop wearing the existing white shirt and blue trousers and will instead be issued a bluish-grey uniform. The decision marks another revision to the force's dress code following last year's changes.

The previous uniform was introduced under former Chief Traffic Officer Athar Waheed. At the time, each traffic

warden was provided with Rs5,000 to purchase the revised uniform.

Police sources said the decision was discussed during a meeting chaired by the Deputy Inspector General of Logistics and Procurement.

The meeting was attended by the assistant inspector general of logistics, the superintendent of police for the resource management programme and the superintendent of Punjab Highway Patrol. Under the new arrangements, the Punjab Highway Patrol will continue to wear its existing uniform pattern. The report also said that officers and personnel of the Highway Patrol would be provided with a standardised uniform.



A young vendor is making bubbles with a bubble-making toy to attract children and sell the toy at the famous picnic point, Daman-e-Koh

Indian-funded propaganda network exposed, banned JAAC facilitator held



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

A major facilitator involved in spreading false news and anti-Pakistan propaganda funded by the Indian intelligence agency has been arrested, according to media reports.

According to details, the facilitator operated under the guise of digital marketing and services, where fake social media accounts and followers were purchased to promote an anti-state agenda.

The primary objective of this organized propaganda network was to target the strong bond between the Pakistan Army and the public, creating misunderstandings among the citizens against the state.

Sindh will never be divided, says PPP minister

- Sindh Local Government Minister Nasir Hussain Shah dismissed speculation about the province's division, saying the government remains focused on development and public

Staff Reporter

KARACHI

Sindh Local Government Minister Nasir Hussain Shah has dismissed speculation about the division of Sindh, saying such claims are not taken seriously and that the province will never be divided.

Speaking alongside Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab at the inauguration of the Munawar Chowranghi Underpass in Karachi, Shah said the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) had carried out more development work in the city than any other government.

He said the PPP had constructed numerous underpasses and bridges across Karachi, adding that several marriage halls built on public playgrounds had been demolished under the city administration led by Mayor Wahab to restore public spaces.



Rejecting claims that Karachi had become one of the world's worst cities, Shah said the city's continued population growth reflected its economic importance and attractiveness. "If Karachi were in such poor condition, people would not continue to move here," he said, describing the metropolis as a "Mini Pakistan" where citizens from all parts of the country are welcome to live and work.

The provincial minister said the

mayor and town chairmen were working around the clock to improve civic infrastructure and municipal services. He added that complaints received from residents were being addressed promptly through immediate administrative action.

Responding to a question about reports suggesting the division of Sindh, Shah reiterated that the province would never be divided.

Karachi reports rain for second day as countrywide monsoon spell continues

- Monsoon spell continues to hit parts of country, with warning of flashfloods and urban flooding in low-lying areas

STAFF REPORTER

KARACHI

Light to moderate rain with strong winds was reported in several areas here on Saturday, marking the second consecutive day of shower during the current monsoon spell.

A brief but relatively heavy spell of rain was reported in 4K Chowranghi in Surjani Town and Lyari, while light to moderate rainfall was recorded in Scheme 33, Gulshan-i-Maymar and adjoining areas. Hassan Square received light drizzle.

Gulistan-i-Jauhar, Airport, Sachal Goth, Mausamiyat and surrounding areas also received



a brief spell of rain. Light rainfall was reported in Saddar and adjoining areas, while Sea View and Defence Housing Authority (DHA) experienced only light drizzle.

Earlier, Weather turned pleasant after rain in Sukkur and its surrounding areas, with Met office predicted more rain in coming days.

According to reports, Sukkur

and its surrounding areas suddenly received heavy rain accompanied by strong winds, after which the weather turned pleasant.

According to sources, several SEPCO feeders tripped after the rain. Meteorological Department said other spells of rain were expected after this spell of rain.

PDMA has also issued a warning of urban flooding, after which the district administration became active. The Sukkur mayor said the district administration drained the rainwater from several areas of the city as soon as the rain stopped.



An artist gives finishing touches to a golden relief mural of the Founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on a pillar beneath the Kachehry Chowk flyover ahead of Independence Day celebrations in the city

Orange line, metro bus end token and card system in Lahore

STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE

The Lahore Mass Transit Authority has discontinued the token and card payment system for the Orange Line Train, Speedo buses and Metro Bus services, replacing it with digital payment methods.

Mass Transit Authority In-charge Uzair Shah said commuters will no longer be able to use the old transit cards, adding that any remaining balance on those cards will not be refunded.

He said passengers can now pay fares using the T-Cash Card, the official mobile application and ATM cards while travelling on the city's mass transit network.

Uzair Shah further stated that



commuters returning their old transit cards will receive only the Rs130 security deposit. He advised passengers to submit their old cards at the relevant transit stations.

Meanwhile, some commuters complained that despite the decision to discontinue the old cards, they were still being asked to recharge them. They also said no prior notice had been issued regarding the withdrawal of the card system.