



The eternal history of friendship between China and Pakistan is getting stronger with time

Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications  
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## Chinese military leadership reaffirms their unfettered commitment to support Pakistan on its territorial integrity & sovereignty

CJCSC General Sahir Shamshad Mirza hold separate meeting with General He Weidong & General Liu Zhenli in Beijing



RAWALPINDI: General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) on an official visit to People's Republic of China held separate meetings with General He

Weidong, Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) and General Liu Zhenli, Chief of CMC Joint Staff Department and delivered a talk in 11th Beijing Xiangshan Forum on the Role of Pakistan towards regional peace and stability.

According to the statement issued by the ISPR, during meetings, both sides appreciated deep and historic relationship of Pakistan and China in multiple domains and acknowledged assuring progress on the bilateral strategic cooperative partnership and defence cooperation. The Chinese leadership also reaffirmed their unfettered commitment to support Pakistan on its territorial integrity and sovereignty. PR

## FO Spokesperson responds to US decision to impose sanctions against commercial entities on allegations of links with Pak's ballistic missile programme

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch says Pakistan considers this action as biased & politically-motivated

ISLAMABAD: In response to media queries regarding the US decision to impose sanctions against commercial entities on allegations of links with Pakistan's ballistic missile programme, Spokesperson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch on Saturday said that Pakistan considers this action as biased and politically-motivated. She said that similar listings of commercial entities in the past were based on mere suspicion; involved items not listed under any export control regime and yet were considered sensitive under broad, catch-all provisions. Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that it is widely known that some countries, while claiming strict adherence to nonproliferation norms, have conveniently waived licensing requirements for advanced military technologies to their favoured states. Such double standards and discriminatory practices undermine the credibility of global nonproliferation regimes, increase military asymmetries, and endanger international peace and security. SABAH



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on the use of Electric Vehicles.

## Govt taking priority steps to promote electric vehicles in the country: PM Shehbaz

Our gov't commitment to constitutionalism, democracy, rule of law & human rights is firm & unwavering: PM

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed to finalize E-Vehicles policy by November after consultations with all the federating units and stakeholders. Chairing a meeting in Islamabad, PM Shehbaz Sharif directed to present a comprehensive financial model and improve licensing regulations regarding the manufacturing of electric vehicles in the country. PM Shehbaz Sharif said the government is taking priority steps to promote electric vehicles in the country, noting these vehicles will not only save valuable foreign exchange in terms of import of petrol and diesel but will also be environment friendly.

The Prime Minister announced to provide E-motorbikes to outstanding students of government schools on the pattern of lap-

top scheme. PM Shehbaz Sharif directed the Capital Development Authority to prepare a comprehensive plan for electric powered public transport in Islamabad.

The meeting was informed that since 2022, forty nine licenses have been issued for the production of two and three wheeled electric vehicles at the local level, of which twenty five factories have started manufacturing these vehicles.

It was informed that the first license for domestic production of four wheel electric vehicles was issued in September this year and first indigenously manufactured electric car will come in the market by December. The meeting was informed that recharging stations for electric vehicles will be set up on priority basis.

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has said that our government's commitment to constitutionalism, democracy, rule of law and human

rights is firm and unwavering. Adherence to these democratic values is our calling as a nation, he said.

This was stated by PM Shehbaz Sharif in his message on the International Day for Democracy being observed today (Sunday). "Today, on the International Day of Democracy, we reaffirm our commitment to democracy as a fundamental value of human society" PM Shehbaz Sharif said. PM Shehbaz Sharif said that our government's commitment to constitutionalism, democracy, rule of law and human rights is firm and unwavering. Adherence to these democratic values is our calling as a nation, he said.

"On this day, let us continue our efforts to build a more inclusive, just, and equal world for all. Together, we can strengthen the foundations of democracy and ensure that it serves as a beacon of hope and progress for future generations" PM Shehbaz Sharif said.

## Jam Kamal emphasizes for Pak-Sino strategic partnership



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Saturday emphasized the strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, often referred to as "iron brothers."

The Commerce Minister highlighted the importance of aligning the two countries' economic cooperation with their strong political and strategic ties. "While our economic partnership has grown significantly, particularly through initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA), there is still vast untapped potential," the minister noted. Federal Commerce Minister delivered a virtual keynote address at the Pakistan International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS), China's second-largest exhibition.

Organized by Pakistan's Embassy in Beijing in collaboration with China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) and the Beijing Municipal Government, the event aimed to bolster B2B exchanges and foster investment opportunities in Pakistan. Focusing on Phase II of CPEC, which emphasizes business-to-business (B2B) exchanges and win-win partnerships, the Commerce Minister stressed that since the Prime Minister's visit to China in June 2024, efforts to facilitate Chinese investments in Pakistan have gained momentum.

He assured Chinese businessmen of the Government of Pakistan's support, reaffirming its commitment to creating an environment conducive to investment and industrial growth. The Commerce Minister outlined the competitive advantages that Pakistan offers to Chinese businesses, including abundant economic resources, investor-friendly policies, and access to major regional and global markets. He particularly emphasized Pakistan's demographic strength, noting that with a population of over 240 million people and a median age of 21 years, the country offers both a vast consumer base and a cost-competitive, adaptable workforce.

The conference featured top industrial park operators and companies from Pakistan, including representatives from the Pakistan Green Initiative (SIFC), Exports Processing Zones Authority, Dhabeji Special Economic Zone, Gwadar Free Zone, International Innovative Park (EPZ), Netsol, National Bank of Pakistan, JW Group, and Uqab Group. Each of these organizations showcased Pakistan's potential across sectors such as agriculture, industry, ICT, and banking. High-ranking Chinese officials also attended the event, including Ms. Liu Meiyang, Deputy Secretary General of Beijing Municipal People's Government; Mr. Li An, Deputy Director General of MOFCOM; Ms. Lin Changhua, Deputy Director of SCO Demonstration Area, Qingdao; and Mr. Zhang Yanqing, Deputy Secretary General of the People's Government of Pingdingshan City. APP

## 'Managing exports only way to achieve sustainable economic growth'



the country out of serious economic crises. The 5Es framework, approved by NEC in 2023, outlines national priorities in 5 key areas which will put Pakistan on a sustained growth trajectory. "Our first priority should be to see how fast we can grow exports from 30 billion dollars to 100 billion dollars," stated the minister while highlighting the importance of setting goal based plans.

Citing the example of how competitive Pakistan's economy was in 1960s, the Minister said that in 1960s Pakistan's manufactured exports were 200 Million Dollars, South Korea's were about 100 Million Dollars and Malaysia's Exports were about 60 to 70 million Dollars while Thailand was about 30 million Dollars. But due to political instability in the ensuing decades, Pakistan's economy started dwindling. Emphasizing on the current economic state, he said that economy needs to be improved by leveraging our national goals. He said that reasonable infrastructure had been laid down in 5 years of the government's previous tenure. APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, reforms and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal on Saturday said that managing exports are the only way to achieve sustainable economic growth in the country.

In a meeting with consultants from Kearney and officials from Public Private Partnership Authority, Minister Ahsan Iqbal discussed making a new economic vision in consideration with the 5Es framework, said a press release issued here.

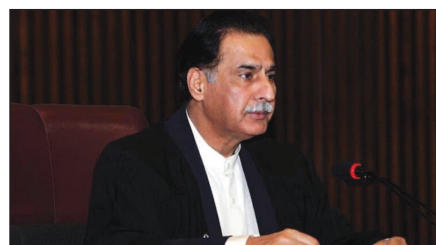
He said that the framework made during the 16 month tenure of PMLN was introduced to pull

## Mohsin Naqvi condemns blast near Police mobile on Bostan Road in Kuchlak

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the bomb blast on Saturday that took place near a police mobile on Bostan Road in Kuchlak, expressing deep sorrow over the tragic incident. The Interior Minister paid tribute to the two police officers who were martyred in the attack, acknowledging their sacrifice in the line of duty. Offering heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs, Naqvi expressed his deepest sympathies and prayed for the swift recovery of the injured officer. "We salute the sacrifice of the martyred officers," Naqvi said.

He further lauded the Balochistan police for their "unmatched sacrifices" in the fight against terrorism. Naqvi reaffirmed the nation's unwavering commitment to combating terrorism, stating, "The nation's resolve to defeat terrorism cannot be shaken." "This is a battle for the entire nation, and with the support of the people, it will continue until the last terrorist and their facilitators are eliminated," he added.

## Strengthening democratic institutions essential for prosperity of country: Ayaz



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Saturday emphasized that the strength of the democratic system and the stability of democratic institutions are pivotal for the development and prosperity of the country. He said that in democratic nations, people have the right to choose their leadership through their votes. "They elect their representatives to the assemblies, and these elected representatives legislate and make policies to protect the people's rights and ensure their welfare in line with the public's aspirations." He expressed these views in his message on the International Day of

Democracy, observed annually on September 15. The Speaker highlighted that democracy guarantees freedom of expression and other fundamental rights. "The country's progress and prosperity are closely tied to the continuity of the democratic system."

Ayaz Sadiq said that in a democratic system, people participate in the political, social, and economic systems of the country through their elected representatives. Democracy not only ensures freedom of opinion but also provides the public with the opportunity to choose their leadership. The Speaker stressed the importance of strengthening and promoting the democratic system to establish a strong and stable society. He urged all political parties to set aside their differences and work together for the country's development and the promotion of democratic values. He noted that in a democracy, resolutions to issues are found through mutual consultation, and our religion also emphasizes consultation, which is a fundamental aspect of democracy. APP

## Constitutional Bill in line with provisions of COD endorsed by all political parties: Dar

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in the Senate and Deputy Prime Minister, Senator Ishaq Dar on Saturday apprised the Upper House of the Parliament that the Constitutional Bill was in line with the provisions of the Charter of Democracy (COD) endorsed by all the political parties including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

The Leader of the House was addressing to the 10th meeting of the 342nd Senate session held under Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani.

Senator Ishaq Dar underlined that there was a disconnect between the Leader of the Opposition's party leadership in the Senate and the National Assembly.

"It was the third in camera meeting of the Special Parliamentary Committee in the Parliament which was participated by Chairman PTI, Barrister Gohar Ali and Opposition Leader in the National Assembly, Omar Ayub Khan who was absent in the previous two meetings.

There have been discussion on different agenda items," he said.

He added that the Opposition Leader should seek details from his colleagues on the special committee meetings.

Senator Dar informed the House that the issue emerged after Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari made a statement for joint efforts to restore the prestige of the Parliament and proposed a committee of all political parties on the arrest of some members of the lower house of the Parliament.

"I on behalf of the government instantly endorsed the suggestion and after the House resolution, a committee was formed and all political parties in the National Assembly have their representation. I would request that committee to give representation to the Senate as it's a special body on general issues and the resolution TORs entitled matters pertaining to the parliament, parliamentarians,



constitutions and rules and business of procedures," the Leader of the House said.

The issues pertaining to the Constitutional Bill have been discussed in the Special Committee, the Opposition Leader should get details from his colleagues, he said, adding, "Under the Charter of Democracy, the article four demanded a constitutional court in the country to hear constitutional petitions

and dispose of them. The elite class in the country gets swift petition hearings whereas 60,000 cases are pending in the Supreme Court including 25% constitutional petitions and 50% constitutional petitions in the High Courts."

The charter was not done by two political parties whereas after few weeks all political parties were convened, and they endorsed the document including the then PTI Chairman, and founder, he added.

"The Constitutional Court is not new but rather it was appreciated widely world over. The PTI founder and prime signatories have signed the document so there is nothing hidden. I am not privy to the Bill and it's the prerogative of the Law Minister," he added.

The Leader of the House said it was not something strange but rather a routine legislative procedure practice done in any government. "We all should unite to resolve the delay in dispensation of jus-

ture in constitutional petitions. The Opposition should support the government and I assure the opposition that there would be no surprise in the legislation as we have to resolve public issues and this country has potential to reemerge as a succeeding nation," he said.

He emphasised that the Opposition and Treasury benches should cooperate on the public and national interest matters as there would be nothing repugnant to it in the Bill. Earlier, Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani clarified that there was a court case against him in Karachi, where the court sought three queries from him pertaining to the numbers required for constitutional amendment, whether it was for the CJP, and the details of the Bill.

"I assured that if there was no majority then no bill would be tabled in the Parliament. Senator Farooq H Naik was with

me. They asked that was it for CJP I told them that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in his statement clarified that it was not person specific but in the interest of the nation and the country. However, I still do not know about the Bill. The law minister would provide his explanation after tabling the bill in the National Assembly," the Chairman Senate said.

He informed the House that the 1973 Constitution was passed by 128 votes of the House and the rest were in the east Pakistan. "After the restoration of the Constitution in its original form, it was bicameral system and not a unicameral system which was passed unanimously by 446 members of the Parliament. We ended 58 2(B) to establish supremacy of the Parliament then the then President SC Bar Aasma Jahangir told me that do not be glad on it as it would be exercised by the judiciary and I was disqualified graciously and then Mian Nawaz Sharif faced it," he said. INP

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## Pakistan's polio struggle

SADAF NAUSHAD

According to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, after more than 43 million children in Pakistan were vaccinated against polio in 2022, the country achieved the historic milestone of being declared polio-free on January 27, 2022. Unfortunately, on April 23 the same year, Pakistan reported its first case of polio after being rid of it for 15 months straight and the second nationwide Polio Campaign of 2022 was initiated by the then prime minister. In November (2022), a suicide bombing targeted a police van in Quetta, protecting polio workers. The attack killed three and injured 27 people.

As of June 28, 2024, it was reported by the Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme that the number of polio cases in the country has risen to.

While many countries have successfully eradicated polio, as the high-spread season approaches in Pakistan, a burning question remains in the minds of many: why, despite tireless and widespread polio drives by dedicated workers across the country, has polio returned? For those wondering what exactly the polio virus is and how such a tiny organism can paralyze a person, it belongs to the picornavirus family, consisting of a protein coat and an RNA genome.

### Why, despite widespread polio drives by dedicated workers across country, has polio returned?

The polio virus targets the brain stem or spinal cord, triggering paralysis once it spreads to the Central Nervous System (CNS). As the virus destroys motor neurons (nerve cells), skeletal muscles lose their ability to respond. This loss of mobility due to lack of innervation leads to a condition known as acute flaccid paralysis (AFP).

Usually, polio affects the leg muscles of the patient rather than the arm muscles, though extensive cases have also been recorded where quadriplegic effects were noticed, meaning that patients were found paralyzed neck down.

In extremely severe cases, also known as bulbar polio, the virus infects the brain stem of the human body, causing difficulty in swallowing, speaking and even breathing. As the body slowly gives up on providing respiratory support, bulbar polio can also result in death.

Pakistan has combated the polio virus with its efficient polio eradication initiatives and campaigns, having polio workers go door-to-door to vaccinate children.

Up until 2005, efforts to combat polio in Pakistan were progressing smoothly, and hopes for eradicating the disease were high. However, the onset of US drone attacks in Fata changed the situation. Military action against these strikes, including the killing of TTP leader Baitullah Mehsud in a 2005 strike on South Waziristan, and a sharp rise in attacks – peaking in 2010 with 122 strikes – made it extremely difficult for polio workers to access these areas for their campaigns. Mistrust in polio vaccination efforts also grew after a fake vaccination campaign, staged with the help of Dr Shakil Afridi, was used to gather intelligence on Osama bin Laden's location. This faux campaign caused severe outrage in many areas of northwest Afghanistan border, leading to the deaths of more than 200 polio workers.

As myths and doubts spread among the Pakistani population in response to these events, they eventually hardened into strong beliefs, fueling fear and refusal to vaccinate children against polio.

One of the myths surrounding the polio vaccine is that it is now allowed in Islam. To counter this, the Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme has stated that: "Oral polio vaccine (OPV) is safe and has been declared halal by Islamic leaders all over the world – the Grand Sheikh Tantawi of Al-Azhar University, the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia and the Majelis Council of Ulemmas in Indonesia as well as muftis from all sects in all provinces of Pakistan."

Another myth is that the vaccine affects the fertility of a person. To counter this, a test conducted by the National Control Laboratory for Biologicals, which was regulated by the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) in 2015, assured that the polio vaccine being used in Pakistan does not contain any hormones or chemicals that may affect the fertility or health of a person.

Unfortunately, despite rigorous efforts, local media sources recently reported that over 215,119 cases of refusal occurred in contrast to the 154,736 parents who agreed to vaccinate their children.

In recent updates, the Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme launched its latest house-to-house initiative in July, aiming to vaccinate over 9.5 million children. The campaign covers five districts in Punjab and Islamabad, eight districts in Sindh, 11 districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 16 districts in Balochistan. Given the complex history surrounding polio vaccinations and the persistence of myths and assumptions that have solidified into deep-rooted beliefs, it is time to couple vaccination drives with awareness campaigns. These efforts should target those who lack access to accurate information or have been swayed by misinformation, providing them with reassurance and understanding. While the world commends Pakistan's efforts to eradicate polio, without the discussion and implementation of new ideas and approaches, one can only hope Pakistan will not continue to be one of the last two countries where polio still poses a serious threat.

The writer is a sub-editor at Geo.tv, as well as an aspiring medical journalist and science enthusiast.



Mudassar Farooq

## The system is not clean

2011 and 2021, approximately nine workers died in Sindh, along with 11 in Punjab and one in Islamabad. In Pakistan, no law has been enacted so far to ban manual scavenging.

Sanitary workers in Punjab face dire working conditions, a lack of proper equipment, and inadequate job security, which collectively paints a grim picture of systemic neglect and exploitation. This not only jeopardizes their health but also violates basic labour rights. The absence of protective gear and adequate training means that these workers are frequently at risk of severe injuries, illnesses, and even fatalities.

The government heavily relies on Christian workers for sanitary work, as many Muslims have refused to do this job. According to WaterAid Pakistan, 80 per cent of sanitation workers in Pakistan are Christians, despite them making up just 2.0 per cent of the general population according to the 2023 census.

Economically, the situation is equally bleak. Many sanitary workers are employed on a daily wage basis without any formal employment contracts, which leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and job insecurity. In metropolitan cities, employment is being outsourced to third-party vendors and they are forced to work on the terms and conditions of those vendors. It is said that most public offices are going to eliminate regular vacancies for sanitation workers and are converting sanitation workers into 'contingency staff' category.

So instead of getting health, social security and other pensionary benefits, workers are compelled to work on compromised wages on a daily basis with 'thekedars', which is sheer violation of national labor laws. This exploitation does not end here; 'thekedars' further pressurize workers to bring their own equipment if they wish to be employed. This practice must be repudiated and their services must be regularized.

The Punjab Labour Policy should be revised to include a dedicated chapter on sanitation workers, or a separate law specifically for them should

be introduced. This precarious employment arrangement denies them the benefits usually linked with permanent jobs, such as health insurance, pensions, or paid leave. Moreover, the lack of regularization has trapped these workers in a cycle of poverty, as their meagre wages fail to keep up with the rising cost of living.

Sanitation workers are continuously demanding job security. Hundreds of workers from various districts in Punjab petitioned the Service Tribunal, which directed authorities to regularize their employment. In response, the local government granted them 'permanent workman' status instead of making them 'regular employees'. As permanent workmen, they remain ineligible for pension benefits.

The workers challenged this before the Lahore High Court, with nearly 20 writ petitions filed by hundreds of workers across the province, seeking their conversion from 'permanent workmen' to 'regular employees'. A representative of the secretary of local government appeared before the court, withdrew the earlier orders declaring them permanent workmen, and pledged to issue new directives.

Now, the workers are looking towards the local government authorities for deciding their fate; the response from local governments has been largely insufficient. Many municipalities have not fully complied with these court orders, continuing to employ sanitary workers on a temporary basis without the benefits or protections that come with regular employment.

This non-compliance perpetuates the cycle of exploitation and financial instability among sanitary workers. The reluctance of the government and municipal bodies to regularize the services of these workers also violates the fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution of Pakistan. Pakistan is a signatory to various international conventions, including ILO conventions that advocate for safe working environments

and the rights of workers to decent work. The continued neglect and mistreatment of sanitary workers is contrary to these international commitments, reflecting a broader disregard for global labour standards and human rights obligations.

The treatment of sanitary workers in Punjab also stands in stark violation of constitutional guarantees and fair labour practices. Specifically, Article 9 of the constitution ensures the right to life and liberty, while Article 14 upholds the dignity of the individual and Article 25 prohibits any form of discrimination and exploitation. By failing to provide sanitary workers with safe working conditions and regular employment, the government is failing to uphold these constitutional guarantees on all fronts.

The chief minister of Punjab has publicly acknowledged the matchless performance of sanitary workers by calling them 'heroes of the nation' and giving them letters of appreciation; though this does not seem to extend to providing them with job security. Despite supportive statements, the implementation of promised reforms and court directives has been slow, and many sanitary workers continue to face the same challenges.

The Suthra Punjab Campaign must be redefined with clear goals, timelines, and accountability mechanisms to ensure its promises are met. The efforts of local governments, though well-intentioned, have not been translated into significant improvements for the workers on the ground.

It is time activists and rights-based organizations, striving to protect the dignity of the marginalized classes, initiate campaigns and hold policy dialogues to play a constructive role in the formulation of a unified service policy and service structures for sanitation workers so as to protect and ensure their basic rights to life, livelihood, and equality.

The writer is an advocate. He can be reached at: mudassar.clc@gmail.com

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

## Today in History

### Pakistan

The British Government, after its last attempt to save the Cabinet Mission Plan in December 1946, also moved towards a scheme for the partition of India. The last British Viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, came with a clear mandate to draft a plan for the transfer of power. After holding talks with political leaders and parties, he prepared a Partition Plan for the transfer of power, which, after approval of the British Government, was announced on June 3, 1947. Both the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the Plan. Two large Muslim majority provinces, Bengal and Punjab, were

partitioned. The Assemblies of West Punjab, East Bengal and Sindh and in Balochistan, the Quetta Municipality, and the Shahi Jirga voted for Pakistan. Referenda were held in the North-West Frontier Province and the District of Sylhet in Assam, which resulted in an overwhelming vote for Pakistan. As a result, on August 14th, 1947, the new state of Pakistan came into existence.

Organized under the banner of the All-India Muslim League. Branches of the party were opened even in the remote corners of the subcontinent. Literature in the form of pamphlets, books, magazines and newspapers was produced to explain the Pakistan demand and distributed widely. The support gained by the All-India Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan was tested after the failure of the Simla Conference, convened by the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, in 1945. Elections were called to determine the respective strength of the political parties. The All-India Muslim League election campaign was based on the Pakistan demand. The Muslim community responded to this call in an unprecedented way. Numerous Muslim parties were formed making united parliamentary board at the

behest of the Congress to oppose the Muslim League. But the All-India Muslim League swept all the thirty seats in the Central Legislature and in the provincial elections also, its victory was outstanding. After the elections, on April 8-9, 1946, the All-India Muslim League called a convention of the newly-elected League members in the Central and Provincial Legislatures at Delhi. This convention, which constituted virtually a representative assembly of the Muslims of South Asia, on a motion by the Chief Minister of Bengal,

To be continued....

## Showbiz

### Yolanda Adams returns after 17 years with new album 'unny Days'

Yolanda Adams reflects on music journey and new album 'Sunny Days'



Gospel music legend Yolanda Adams has made her highly anticipated return after a 17-year hiatus with the release of her new album, Sunny Days. This marks her first record in 13 years and her first major label release in 17 years, according to People magazine. The album features 15 tracks, including two remixes of the lead single Church Doors. Yolanda, 63, continues to shine in contemporary gospel with her powerful vocals and inspirational lyrics. Her previous album, Mountain High...Valley Low, released in 1999, was a massive success and solidified her status as a gospel icon. Reflecting on the creation of her previous album, Yolanda told the outlet, "[I] just [loved] the process of getting those songs out of my head and heart onto a computer and into the ears and the hearts of people, because that's what music should do. Music should always get into the heads, the hearts and the hands of people and their feet as well, because there should be some dancing because I love to dance." Yolanda's journey to complete Sunny Days faced delays due to scheduling conflicts and the pandemic. She recalled, "So between getting back in the saddle with the music at the end of 2023, we had everything. And then Sylvia Rhone was like, 'We need two more songs.'

TEHRAN: Iran on Saturday blasted a new research satellite into orbit, state media said, in the latest such development for an aerospace programme that has long faced Western criticism. "The Chamran-1 research satellite was successfully launched and put into orbit by the Ghaem-100 carrier," state television said. The satellite, which weighs around 60 kilograms (132 pounds), is designed to test hardware and software systems for orbital manoeuvre technology, the TV report said. The device was designed and built by Iranian Electronics Industries affiliated with the defence ministry, state TV said. Western governments including the United States have repeatedly warned Iran against such launches, saying the same technology can be used for ballistic missiles, including ones designed to deliver a nuclear warhead. Iran has countered that it is not seeking nuclear weapons and that its satellite and rocket launches are for civil or defence purposes only.

## Tech

### Iran says new research satellite launched into orbit

The Ghaem-100 rocket which carried the latest satellite is manufactured by the aerospace organisation of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, an arm of the military. The carrier is the country's first three-stage solid-fuel satellite launcher, and official media reported its use in January to send a satellite for the first time into an orbit above 500 kilometres (310 miles). Iran has for years been advancing its aerospace activities, insisting they are peaceful and in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions. In February, Russia put into orbit an Iranian remote sensing and imaging satellite, drawing condemnation from the United States. At the time, Iran's telecommunications minister said Iran had carried out a dozen satellite launches over the previous two years. Iran in January said it simultaneously sent three satellites into orbit, nearly a week after the launch of a research satellite by the Guards. AFP

Health

## Al-Shifa screens 175000 children at free eye camps, says Dy GM ACCO

RAWALPINDI: Al-Shifa Trust has screened about 1,75,000 students in one year during its 550 free eye camps which were organized in the under-served areas of the country. Dr. Hasan Raza, Deputy General Manager of Al-Shifa Center for Community Ophthalmology (ACCO), said 50% of the kids with eye issues had hazy vision, while many had congenital cataracts. 13,000 cases were referred to Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, he said. Talking to media here on Wednesday, he said that 50 per cent of the children were found with the issue of blurry vision, which is convergence insufficiency. "It happens when the nerves controlling eye muscles don't work correctly, one eye turns out when people with convergence insufficiency look at something up close", he said while elaborating on the causes and effects of the disease.

The second-largest disease found during the free eye camps, he said, was myopia, as almost thirty per cent of the children had near-sightedness. He informed that Myopia is a common vision condition in which light rays that should be focused on nerve tissue at the back of the eye are focused in front of the retina instead. Dr. Hasan said that the number of congenital cataracts was alarming. He underlined the need to spot cataracts in children quickly as an essential measure because early treatment can reduce the risk of long-term vision problems. He further informed that ACCO refers such children to Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, Rawalpindi, providing them with transport and meals. He highlighted that free eye camps were organized in the remote areas of districts Rawalpindi, Sukkur, Kohat, Muzaffarabad, and Chakwal.

He informed that the children were also found suffering from eye problems, such as blepharitis, hyperopia, squint, corneal opacity, traumatic cataracts, astigmatism, and conjunctivitis. "All public and private concerned quarters should boost their efforts to combat this menace", he added. Dr. Hasan informed that ACCO's main objective is to organize school screening eye camps to help children facing eye diseases at an early age and educate them about preventive measures to keep their eyes healthy. Responding to a question, he said that the trust began its outreach project in 1992. Its free eye camps are established all over Pakistan. Dr. Hasan added that the camps were being increased to help people in far-flung areas, where most patients lack the resources to access quality healthcare. APP





## President Zardari calls for strengthening democratic institutions on World Democracy Day

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has urged the need to strengthen democratic institutions, undertake essential reforms, and work collectively to consolidate democracy in Pakistan. Highlighting the importance of democracy as the cornerstone of a just and inclusive society, he emphasized that the resolution to the nation's contemporary challenges was in a vibrant and resilient democratic process.

President Asif Ali Zardari expressed these views in his message on World Democracy Day, being observed today (Sunday). This year, the global theme highlights the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in advancing good governance. Highlighting the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the President noted that AI could help enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public administration, while also providing data-driven insights that make the democratic process more accessible to voters.

The President underscored the essential role of Pakistan's Parliament in safeguarding democracy, addressing public grievances, and formulating policies to ensure inclusivity. "Our future depends on our collective efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and ensure that democracy flourishes for generations to come," he stressed.

The President said that the protection of fundamental rights and the political, economic, and social inclusion of all citizens was at the heart of democracy. The President also paid tribute to the sacrifices of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, recognizing their pivotal roles in restoring and strengthening democracy in Pakistan. Their legacies, he said, serve as enduring reminders of the continuous struggle to uphold democratic values in the face of challenges. SABAH

## State encourages youth to start own businesses: Musadik Malik

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, said on Saturday that the state encourages the youth of the country to start their own businesses. Responding to a calling attention notice regarding the proposed privatization of the Pakistan Minerals Development Corporation (PMDC), he explained that the government aimed to exit business ventures and focus on promoting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the country. He emphasized that the government wants educated youth to start their own businesses rather than rely on government employment.

Dr. Musadik Malik further said that Pakistan's state-owned companies have cost the country billions of dollars. Regarding PMDC, the minister mentioned that around 70 people have lost their lives in various incidents, and currently, PMDC employs about 2,000 people, none of whom are engaged in mining activities.

He added that the privatization of loss-making state enterprises is a positive step and should be continued in the best interest of the country. APP



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam along with others inaugurating 14 Islamabad Expo Exhibition. INP

## Pakistan-China Investment Conference yields \$350m in MoUs

BELJING: Pakistan Embassy in China Organizes "Pakistan Investment Conference: Together for a Shared Future" at the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS)

The Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing hosted the "Pakistan Investment Conference - Together for a Shared Future" today, on the sidelines of the prestigious China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS). The conference was aimed at attracting foreign investment in Pakistan across multiple sectors.

The event brought together key figures from both the Pakistani and Chinese business communities, highlighting investment opportunities in strategic sectors such as agriculture, industry, ICT, and banking. Pakistani organizations participating in the event showcased their potential to capitalize on these sectors' growth, emphasizing Pakistan's increasingly favorable business environment.

Among the attendees were several high-ranking Chinese officials, including Ms. Liu Meiying, Deputy Secretary General of Beijing, Mr. Han Bin, President of the Dekezhou City Council for the Promotion of International Trade, Mr. Zhang Yanqing, Deputy Secretary General of the People's Government of Pingdingshan City, and Mr. Li An, Deputy Director General, MOFCOM.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi underscored Pakistan's strong commitment to deepening economic engagement with China. He noted the enduring momentum of B2B engagements that began with



Business Conference in Shenzhen in June 2024. The Ambassador highlighted the significance of this conference as the Embassy's initiative to engage Pakistani enterprises and connect them with Chinese counterparts and to showcase success stories of previous investments. He also shared the Embassy's roadmap for future B2B conferences being planned in the months ahead, encouraging Chinese investors to avail these opportunities. Ambassador Hashmi expressed confidence that the interactions at CIFTIS would not only strengthen Pakistan's service exports but also enhance economic integration between the two nations. Liu Meiying echoed these sentiments in her

remarks, welcoming the participation of Pakistani businesses in CIFTIS. She emphasized the complementary nature of the two economies and expressed optimism that Pakistani and Chinese enterprises would mutually benefit from the opportunities created through these exchanges.

The conference also featured keynote video messages from Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan and Federal Minister for Investment, Privatization, and Communication Aleem Khan. Both Ministers reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast commitment to facilitating Chinese investments in the country's key economic sectors. They expressed optimism that the conference would serve as a platform to unlock new opportunities for Pakistani businesses, particularly in accessing the vast Chinese market.

The event featured presentations by Pakistani and Chinese enterprises on the range of investment opportunities and successful examples of Chinese investors. The Conference also included panel discussions on specific sectors. The event concluded with discussions on the future of trade, investment, and industrial partnerships, with a focus on creating mutually beneficial business ecosystems. Notably, two Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between Pakistani and Chinese companies valuing over 350 million US dollars, signifying the growing interest in bilateral business ventures and paving the way for enhanced investment and trade cooperation between Pakistan and China. Beijing - 14th September, 2024. DNA

## PTI founder attempted to target the sitting Chief Justice of Pakistan & Chief of the Army Staff: Bilawal Bhutto

Khawaja Asif says the real face of Pakistan Tehreek e-Insaf was exposed within 48 hours

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has termed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder's statement as an attack on the democracy. Taking the floor of the National Assembly on Saturday, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said Friday's statement of PTI's founder is an attack on every constitutional institute. He, however, proposed that the PTI should probe the matter whether it was a statement from the PTI founder or from anyone else.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the PTI founder attempted to target the sitting Chief Justice of Pakistan and the Chief of the Army Staff. He said the PTI founder will have to face the consequences of his provocative statement. The PPP Chairman also congratulated the newly elected Member of the National Assembly Makhdoom Tahir Rasheeduddin from Rahim Yar Khan. He thanked the people of Rahim Yar Khan and coalition parties for supporting Makhdoom Tahir Rasheeduddin and rejecting the politics of conspiracies, abuses, and the 'prisoner number 804'.

Earlier, the newly elected member of the National Assembly Makhdoom Tahir Rasheeduddin took oath as member of the Lower House on Saturday. Deputy Speaker Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah administered the oath. Meanwhile Minister for Energy Senator Dr. Musadik Masood Malik said the government intends to privatize all the loss-making State-Owned Enterprises, including the Pakistan Minerals Development Corporation, in a gradual manner.

Replying to a Calling Attention Notice, moved by Asad Qaisar and others, regarding the proposed privatization of the Pakistan Minerals Development Corporation, he said there are 2000 employees working in the PMDC and none of them is doing mining job. He, however, made it clear that it is prerogative of the provinces either to continue or privatize their companies under their command.

Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif said the real face of Pakistan Tehreek e-Insaf was exposed within 48 hours and proposed that the Special Committee set up by the Speaker National Assembly for restoring the prestige of Parliament, should be abolished. He said the PTI founder's controversial tweet vitiated the entire political environment. He said PTI needs to investigate the tweet. Minister for States and Frontier Regions Engineer Amir Muqam urged the opposition to refrain from attacking the armed forces and their leadership. PPP leader Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said 250 million people of Pakistan are firmly standing behind our Chief Justice and the Chief of Army Staff. He said we will not let you make our institutions controversial. He said your politics of hatred and abuse is harming democracy. Those who spoke on the occasion include Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Syed Mustafa Kamal, Awais Haider Jakhar, Syed Ahmad Ali Shah, Shazia Atta Mari and Muhammad Hanif Abbasi. The House will now meet today (Sunday) at 11:30 AM. SABAH



KARACHI: Secretary-General of International Maritime Organization Antonio Dominguez Velasco addressing the press Conference during the Closing Ceremony of International Maritime Sustainability Exhibition and Conference Pakistan IMSEC 2024.

## SC warns ECP of consequences over non-compliance with reserved seats judgment



ISLAMABAD: A majority bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan on Saturday warned the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) that non-implementation of its judgment on reserved seats would result in serious consequences. The clarification comes after the electoral watchdog and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) filed petitions regarding the court's July 12 decision on the matter.

The eight-member bench, led by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and comprising Justices Athar Minalah, Ayesha Malik, Ali Mazhar, Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Shahid Waheed, and Irfan Saadat Khan, reiterated that there was no ambiguity in the original ruling. According to the judges, the short order issued on July 12 was clear, and the Election Commission had unnecessarily complicated its interpretation.

"The judgment leaves no room for confusion, and any attempt to obscure the matter is rejected outright," read the court's explanatory statement. The statement further emphasized that failure to comply with the court's ruling would carry "serious consequences."

Recognition of PTI leadership  
In the clarification, the court also acknowledged Barrister Gauhar Ali Khan as the legitimate Chairman of PTI, while Umar Ayub was recognized as the party's General Secretary.

This recognition has important implications for the ongoing political landscape, as it affirms PTI's current leadership amid internal disputes. The bench clarified that any seat won in the election would immediately be considered as belonging to the political party to which the candidate was affiliated at the time of the election, and no further action could alter this agreement.

The court emphasized that the Election Commission's issuance of a list of elected members is an administrative process meant to inform the public and all stakeholders. Failure to fulfill legal obligations, it warned, could lead to severe consequences for the ECP.

Directive for immediate implementation  
In a strongly worded statement, the court directed the Election Commissioner to immediately implement the decision. The bench rejected attempts by the ECP to delay or seek further clarification, stating that the deprivation of an election symbol does not strip a political party of its rights. PTI, it reaffirmed, remains a registered political entity and holds seats in both the national and provincial assemblies.

The court's explanation underscored that the Election Commission's recognition of Barrister Gauhar as PTI's Chairman is final, and any attempt to alter this recognition would be considered obstruction of justice.

"The Election Commission must act without delay. Asking for further explanation is tantamount to obstructing the court's decision," the judges stated, making clear that PTI's status as a political party remains intact. The majority decision was delivered by a bench consisting of Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Athar Minalah, Justice Ayesha Malik, Justice M Ali Mazhar, Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Shahid Waheed, and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan. DNA

## Six killed as bus plunges into ditch in Balochistan's Sherani

QUETTA: At least six people were killed and several others injured after a passenger bus fell into a ditch in district Sherani's Danasar area of Balochistan's Zhob. The ill-fated bus was going from Islamabad to Quetta, said Levies. Those injured in the accident have been transferred to the hospital.

Meanwhile, the Balochistan government has ordered probe into the deadly accident. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the tragic traffic accident in Sherani district of Balochistan.

In a similar incident on May 21, at least 20 persons died and 21 more were wounded when a bus fell into a deep ravine in Diamer, a city in Gilgit-Baltistan province.

The accident occurred on the Karakoram Highway in Yashukhaldas area of Diamer. The bus was travelling to Hunza from Rawalpindi when it fell into a gorge after the driver lost control. The bus was carrying more than 35 passengers to Hunza. INP

## Punjab Governor, Azerbaijan Envoy discuss cooperation in education sector

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in Islamabad today.

They discussed various matters of mutual interest.

It was decided to enhance educational cooperation between Azerbaijan and Punjab, including the exchange of delegations between universities in Azerbaijan and Punjab. They also discussed the possibility of declaring Lahore and the Nakhchivan region of Azerbaijan as sister cities.

The Governor said Azerbaijan and Pakistan have longstanding relations as brotherly Islamic nations. He highlighted that both coun-



tries have always supported each other in times of difficulty. The Governor also mentioned that the relationship between the two brotherly countries is becoming more robust, and there should be increased exchanges of trade and cultural delegations.

## Business Forum at ICCI highlights UAE-Pakistan Investment Potential

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Hamad Obaid Alzaabi of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) highlighted the deep-rooted bilateral relationship between Pakistan and the UAE, built on mutual respect, cultural ties and strong economic cooperation. Addressing the UAE-Pakistan Business Forum, themed "Invest Emirates: An Opportunity for Inbound and Outbound Investments," he emphasized the growing trust-worthy strategic partnership between the two nations.

Alzaabi showcased multiple investment opportunities in the UAE, encouraging business-to-business collaboration between Pakistani and Emirati entrepreneurs. He praised the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) for its support in organizing the Forum, which aims to enhance linkages between the business communities of both countries.



ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari acknowledged the UAE as Pakistan's third largest trading partner and a significant source of remittances, contributing to Pakistan's economic stability. He highlighted the robust and mutually ben-

eficial relationship between the two countries, encompassing various sectors such as investment, infrastructure development, and regional cooperation. Bakhtawari described the UAE as the most favorite destination of Pakistani businessmen and invited the UAE business community to explore lucrative investment opportunities in Pakistan, particularly in tourism adding that he himself led a delegation of over 160 businessmen to UAE in the beginning of this year and organized a successful Business

Opportunities Conference to explore the investment panoramas in that country.

ICCI President said that the Pakistani diaspora is enthusiastically contributing to the development of the UAE and that its skill development will be a value addition in its performance enabling it to have reasonable wages.

Chairman Founder Group ICCI Khalid Iqbal Malik said that UAE with its robust economy, innovative spirit and global hub for trade and commerce offers immense potential

for Pakistani businesses and investors. He went on to say that together we can create a future where both the nations can thrive, grow and prosper.

The Forum featured a presentation on investment opportunities and incentives offered by the UAE government to foreign investors. Head of Economic Division UAE Embassy Mr. Mohammad Alkaiatob also addressed the gathering.

ICCI Vice President Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar in his vote of thanks by mentioning the close relationship between the two countries expressed the hope that the Forum will go a long way in further strengthening this relationship.

Earlier ICCI member Ms. Naeema Ansari apprised the attendees about the purpose of the Forum. Those prominent among the participants included Ambassador of Iraq, Hamid Abbas Lafta DHM Palestine, Nader K. Alturk, United Business Group Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, former Presidents ICCI Mian Akram Farid, Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi, Mian Shaikat Masood, business community leaders, ICCI Executives and members. PR