



Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoyed deep-rooted and time-tested relations, marked by shared history, faith and values

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister  
**Ishaq Dar**

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## Pakistan on road to sustainable growth to materialise G20 dream: Dar

ISLAMABAD: "Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday citing the government's efforts for economic stability and existing huge potential for investment, said that the country's economy had been put on the road to sustainable growth to achieve the dream of joining the G20 club as soon as possible. The deputy prime minister, in his keynote address at the Pakistan-Saudi Business Forum held here, recalled that in 2017, the country had achieved the status of top 24th economy with 4% inflation, below 2% food inflation, 6% GDP, and highest foreign reserves, pursuing its journey to join the G20 which was derailed due to COVID pandemic and certain internal and external factors.

The Pakistan-Saudi Business Forum was held as a high-level Saudi delegation led by Minister for Investment Engineer Khalid Bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih is on a three-day visit to Pakistan comprising representatives from a wide spectrum of government agencies and private sector entities. The visit is aimed at exploring investment opportunities and signing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) across a variety of sectors.

Ishaq Dar said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoyed deep-rooted and time-tested relations, marked by shared history, faith and values. He thanked the Saudi leadership for unwavering support to Pakistan on multiple occasions, particularly during the recent economic challenges and reiterated that Pakistan was committed to the sovereignty and integrity of the Kingdom and stood shoulder to shoulder with it through thick and thin.

He said that 2.5 million Pakistani diaspora in the Kingdom was contributing to the Saudi development and Pakistan's foreign remittances. Calling it a "pivotal moment" in the history of bilateral ties, the deputy prime minister said the delegation's visit manifested the shared vision and enduring partnership between the two countries. He apprised the gathering that the incumbent government was making untiring efforts to bring in economic stability, through reforms, widening the tax base, enhancing productivity and competition, and promoting private sector investment besides carrying out the privatization of state-owned enterprises. Moreover, the government was also coming up with an IMF-backed home-grown economy program to regain macroeconomic stability. He said the difficult and unpopular decisions made by the government were yielding positive results as economic indicators were in the right direction showing reduced inflation, narrowing current account deficit and improved rating making Pakistan more attractive for foreign investment, and building a stronger, more stable economy for the future.

The deputy prime minister underscored Pakistan's potential in sectors such as mining, information technology, agriculture, and renewable energy, inviting Saudi investors to participate in these lucrative opportunities.

He expressed confidence that the engagements during this visit would lead to tangible outcomes, further strengthening the economic partnership between the two countries. DNA



ISLAMABAD: Key government officials including Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Saudi Investment Minister H.E. Khalid Al-Falih, and federal ministers Masadik Malik, Jam Kamal Khan, Muhammad Aurangzeb, and Abdul Aleem Khan, stand for the national anthems of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia at the Pak-Saudi Business Forum 2024.

## Pakistan, Saudi Arabia sign MoUs valuing \$2.2 bn in multiple sectors

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on Thursday signed 27 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) valuing US\$2.2 billion in various sectors including industry, agriculture, Information Technology (IT), food, education, mine & minerals, health, petroleum, energy and other areas of mutual cooperation.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif accompanied by Saudi Investment Minister Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Falih and Chief of Army Staff Lt. General Syed Asim Munir witnessed the exchange of the signed copies of the MoUs.

Addressing the occasion, the prime minister said the visit of Saudi business delegation was a true manifestation of great sincerity and affection for people of Pakistan from Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

He hoped that today's ceremony would lead to many more such events in times to come. He expressed the government's resolve to implement these MoUs and to transform them into agreements in future through "hard work and untiring efforts". "Our Saudi brothers led by Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Falih have done remarkable job to promote Saudi economy and with his presence here, we will have his full cooperation to promote bilateral investments and business opportunity," he remarked. The prime minister hoped that in future there would be many more such ceremonies both in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

He assured the Saudi delegation that the MoUs signed today would be fully materialized and there would be no delay or red tape-ism in the implementation process.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia led by Investment Minister H. E. Mr Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Falih called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Recently, he said that Pakistan had secured the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme which he hoped would be the last programme. He thanked the Saudi leadership for their support in having the programme as without their support, the programme could not have materialized. "Finally this programme is through, but we hope that this will be the last programme as we have already through a wonderful team work, managed to improve our economic indicators, inflation came down from 32% to 6.9% this month, our policy rate has come down from 23% to 17.5%, exports are

increasing, foreign remittances are also increasing", he said. Additionally, he said the government was moving towards deep rooted reforms in the country's economy through very stringent measures and there was no compromise on these decisions. The prime minister also conveyed his warm regards to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, acknowledging their leadership and support in enhancing bilateral ties.

## Saudi Minister with high-level govt cum business delegation calls on Army Chief



RAWALPINDI: "Minister of Investment, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Khalid Bin Abdulaziz Al Falih, accompanied by a high-level government cum business delegation, met with Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir here on Thursday.

The meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, particularly initiatives to strengthen ever growing brotherly bilateral cooperation in a variety of sectors, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The COAS expressed his profound appreciation and gratitude for unflinching support for Pakistan from King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and the Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman. "Manifestation of one of the largest business delegation's visit to Pakistan reaffirms the enduring and fraternal ties between Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," he said.

He underscored the deep respect and affection that the people of Pakistan hold for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The COAS further assured the delegation of Pakistan's full support and commitment and conveyed his optimism for the promising outcomes that would mutually benefit both nations. PR

## Chinese delegation discusses security issues with planning minister

ISLAMABAD: A Chinese delegation, led by China Power Resources Chairman, Zhong Huixiang and Port Qasim Project Chairman, He Shiyun on Wednesday met with Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal. According to press release issued by planning ministry, the delegation members discussed the recent attack on Chinese personnel in Karachi and security issues for Chinese workers.

They expressed deep concern over the tragic loss of two Chinese workers in the Karachi incident. Ahsan Iqbal condoled the deaths, offering condolences and sympathy from the Pakistani government. He assured the delegation of Pakistan's commitment to prioritizing Chinese citizens' security. Iqbal informed the delegation that local authorities were investigating the incident and those responsible will face justice soon. He emphasized that any security lapses will not be tolerated, and measures are being taken to strengthen security protocols. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to successfully completing CPEC projects and enhancing bilateral cooperation. APP

## Interior Minister represents Federal Govt at Grand Jirga in CM House



PESHAWAR: The grand jirga (peace council) here Thursday started at Chief Minister House where Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi represented the Federal Government. Besides others, the Jirga was attended by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, CM KP Ali Ameen Gandapur, Federal Minister Engr Amir Muqam, Speaker KP assembly Babar Salim Swati, political leaders including Aimal Wali Khan of ANP, Prof Ibrahim Khan of Jamat e Islami, Mian Iftikhar Hussain of ANP, Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha of PPP, Sikandr

Hayat Sherpao QWP, Dr Ebad Khan of PMLN, Mohsin Dawar and others. In his inaugural address, the Chief Minister Sardar Ali Ameen Gandapur thanked all the parliamentarians and political leadership for attending the jirga and reposing confidence in him besides accepting his invitation. He said that "we gathered here by looking above party politics for peace in KP". He said that protection of people whether they are civilians or security forces was our top priority. Expressing the hope that jirga would help find a way for peaceful solution of all major problems especially of unpleasant incident occurred recent at Khyber, he said that clash or torture was no solution to problem rather negotiation was best way to address all issues. The Chief Minister said for this purpose under Pashtoon tradition, the jirga has been convened at CM House with representations of all stakeholders, adding the recommendations and proposals of the participants would be respected. APP

## 4 Khwarij killed in two separate IBOs in KP



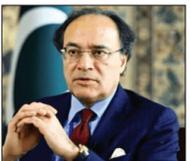
RAWALPINDI: The Security Forces on Thursday killed four Khwarij terrorists in two separate intelligence-based operations (IBOs) conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). On October 9, Forces conducted an IBO in general area Janikhel, Bannu District on reported presence of khwarij, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. During the conduct of the operation, after an intense exchange of fire, two khwarij were killed. 4 Khwarij killed in two separate IBOs in KP In another operation, conducted in general area Hassan Khel, North Waziristan District on October 10, the Army troops effectively engaged khwarij location and in ensuing fire exchange, two more khwarij were killed. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from killed khwarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as abductions and target killing of innocent civilians. "Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any other kharij found in the area as security forces are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country," the ISPR said. PR

## Pakistan on road to economic recovery, says Aurangzeb

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb has stated that Saudi Arabia's private sector will make investments in Pakistan.

Addressing the Pak-Saudi Arab Business Forum event, the finance minister said Pakistan was on the track of economic development and stability. He welcomed the Saudi investors in Pakistan and hailed their investment decision. He said work on Reko Diq would begin soon. Pakistan has been witnessing continuous economic stability under the leadership of PM Shehbaz Sharif for the last one year and reaping the benefits of a stable economy. Aurangzeb asserted that Pakistan saw reduction in current account deficit, decrease in inflation and stability in rupee besides surge in foreign exchange reserves. Reduction in interest rate was expected to restore economic activities, the minister said. He said the government was committed to undertaking economic reforms and microeco-

nomically stability. These measures would promote sustainable growth and tax reforms that would lead to a better position on the economic front, he added. The government wasn't supposed to do business but to provide facilities and conducive environment for business. Economy would grow in partnership with the private sector, he said. Earlier, Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal stated that Pakistan was a pivotal investment and trade partner for Saudi Arabia having multiple opportunities for investment. Saudi Arabia would invest in agriculture, mining and IT sectors and the business forum would boost investment in various sectors, he said. INP



## It is great honour for Pakistan to host the SCO Summit: Attaullah Tarar



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar Advocate says holding the SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting in Islamabad will pave way for strengthening regional cooperation and resolving common issues. Addressing a media workshop organized by a Chinese media group in Islamabad on Thursday, Attaullah Tarar said it is great honour for Pakistan to host the SCO Summit. The Information Minister said the SCO Summit is taking place at the time when our economy is on a positive trajectory and the economic indicators are showing positive trends. The Minister said the country received foreign remittances of worth 8.8 billion dollars during the past three months, while the number of tax

filers has also increased due to comprehensive reforms introduced by the government. He said Pakistan's IT exports have risen to 3.2 billion dollars, showing 14 percent increase in the overall exports of the country. About war on terror, Attaullah Tarar said Pakistan lost more than 80 thousand lives in war against terrorism. He said collective regional efforts are required to establish peace in the region. The Minister said regional cooperation is needed to cope with the impacts of climate change as Pakistan is among the few countries that have been badly affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, despite contributing less than one percent of the total global carbon emission. Attaullah Tarar emphasized the need to promote culture and people to people contacts among regional countries. He said there is need to focus on digital economy, and increasing trade and investment. SABAH

## Reduction in power tariff, provision of affordable electricity to consumers govt's top priorities: Awais

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Division Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Thursday said that reduction in power tariff and provision of electricity to the people at affordable price were government's top priorities. Addressing at press conference here, the minister said that various pragmatic measures were being taken to slash electricity prices in order to provide maximum relief to the masses. He said the electricity price should reduce Rs 10 per unit for which agreements with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) were mutually revised and reassessed. He said the prime minister set up a National Task Force to bring reforms in the power sector. Five IPPs were identified and negotiation were started with them, he added. He said every section of the agree-



ments were thoroughly studied and then mutually reached at an agreement to terminate the power purchase agreements with 5 IPPs. The Minister said that it would help save around Rs 60-70 billion annually and cumulative benefit of Rs 411 billion to the national kitty. He appreciated the owners of five IPPs to terminate the contracts in larger national interest. The Chief of Army Staff (COAS) also supported the National Task Force, he added.

He said that the agreement would be materialized in next few days. He paid rich tribute to entire Task Force, National Coordinator Lt Gen Zafar, Special Advisor to Prime Minister on Power (SAPM), representative of CPPA, PPIB, NEPRA for doing this job to provide relief to the masses. Awais also announced setting up of Independent Market Operator System in the power sector. A full-fledged institution was being set up which would be fully operational in January 2025, he said. He said it would not only promote competition but also boost the entire power sector to the new heights. He said National Transmission and Despatched Company (NTDC) was also being fully transformed into new shape and CPPA would have also its own role in the sector.

A comprehensive programme was also being devised to enhance consumption of electricity in winter, he added. He said reforms were also being introduced in distribution companies (DISCOs) by taking into confidence all development partners. Visible reduction was witnessed in losses of DISCOs in last three months, he added. He expressed the hope that a target to reduce Rs 8-10 per unit in power tariff would be achieved in few months. The minister said the consumption of electricity would increase with reduction of power tariff and it would also help grow the industry. He said that new shops and Charging Stations would be opened for charging of electric vehicles and batteries. It would also pave way for creating more employment opportunities in the country, he added. APP

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## A case for gendered mobility

FURQAN ALI

The continuum of the present is always marred by the hues of the past. Right from the Greeks, women have been otherised by their so-called 'stronger' male counterparts. According to the 2024 SDG Gender Index, a girl born today will have to wait until her 97th birthday – beyond her expected lifespan – to see gender equality. The report further asserts that no country is on track to achieve gender equality by 2030. Countering this egregious, perennial impasse entails a multi-faceted approach, including revamping public consciousness, and reforming and applying equality laws and policies. What is also needed is to enhance empowerment programmes – especially covering the peripheries, where this ailment is mushroomed by outlandish poverty and extremist religiosity – and increase public-sector spending on services and social infrastructure to support women's participation in society, among other things. In short, there is an unflinching need to reconfigure societal DNA: to morph the global outlook towards women.

Pakistan, a 77-year-old country, grapples – like many other countries – with the pathological and incessant dominance of a uni-gender and repressive current in all realms of affairs: Economic participation: According to the newly published Global Gender Gap Report 2024 by the World Economic Forum (WEF), Pakistan has plummeted from 112th place in 2006 to 145th (out of 146 countries) in 2024. Labour force participation: The country's female labour force participation is 24 per cent, significantly lower than Bangladesh (43 per cent) and Malaysia (55 per cent). And further, the National Commission on the Status of Women reports that of those who are participating 70 per cent of women have vulnerable jobs, characterized by low earnings, unsafe conditions, and job insecurity. Digital accessibility: Pakistan ranks second to last (133rd out of 134) on SDG 5, gender equality in internet usage, with half of the women unable to access the internet and only 15 per cent utilizing it. Financial inclusion: A Karandaaz Financial Inclusion Survey posits that only 13 per cent of adult women have access to financial institutions, and of this number, only two-thirds are active users. Basic rights: In access to justice, according to the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017-18, around 56 per cent of women never sought help or told anyone after experiencing violence. The figures on out-of-school children (OOSC) show a similar gloomy picture: girls are 7.0 per cent less likely to finish school than boys. Meanwhile, poor maternity healthcare, transcendental harassment, rape attempts (including marital), and horrific acid attacks paint a grim mosaic of poor basic rights dispensation for women in Pakistan. All of this points to the hegemony of a single gender over the canvas of our society. Recently, surprisingly, there has been a silver lining – illustrated best by a picture of a girl riding a bicycle in Peshawar; the photo recently went viral. Many netizens praised it, underscoring the changing perspective regarding gender acceptability within broader society. The stigma attached to certain audacious behaviours is perhaps decimating. This is the context against which I present my case for fare-free gendered mobility. Peshawar, the city I call home, recently introduced the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system in the backdrop of rapid population growth and urbanization resulting in severe mobility issues for people who also face poverty, inequality and poor delivery of amenities. Although it has problematic supply-side issues like astronomical construction and maintenance costs, mutilation of the beauty of the old gated city and a flawed implementation of the advertisement business model, it has made strides on the demand side. For example, a record commuter level of 280,000 passengers per day, with over 30 per cent female participation juxtaposed to the pre-BRT meagre female-public-transport-ridership of 2.0 per cent, reduction in travel time along the city's east-west corridor by over 60 per cent, increase in cycling trips, promotion of sustainable transportation modes, and a reduction of 31,000 tons of CO2 emissions in a single year. Urban mobility plays a major role in economic participation. Women often spend more on safer forms of transport, commonly referred to as the 'pink tax'. These factors deter women from using public buses, pushing them towards more expensive, time-consuming, and less convenient options, such as taking taxis or walking long distances. Women's access to mobility affects their presence in the public sphere, which in turn limits their economic participation, access to opportunities, and holistic autonomy. Urban spaces and transport systems are not usually designed with women's needs in mind, making access to public transport a feminist issue. It's not just about getting from point A to B; it's about reclaiming space, ensuring equal access, and reshaping our cities to serve everyone, not just to elite capture. So, what do we need now? The government should introduce something like a 'pink card' allowing women, transgender persons, and the physically challenged to travel across the city pro bono. This would cost no more than peanuts vis-a-vis the butterfly effect it could have on the economy as a whole. As UNDP suggested: Pakistan's GDP could rise by 30 per cent if it creates an enabling environment for women to participate in economic activities. Further, many women who travel from the outskirts of Peshawar for economic activities currently rely on informal mobility to access BRT. There is a need for a secondary transport structure to connect people from far-flung areas to the primary infrastructure, enabling the full benefits of this major infrastructural project. Achieving gender equality in mobility is not just a matter of transportation policy; it is a question of fundamental rights, economic empowerment, and societal progress. The barriers women face in accessing safe and affordable transport are symbolic of the broader gender inequalities that permeate every aspect of life in Pakistan. By rethinking urban mobility through a gendered lens, we can dismantle the invisible barriers that limit women's opportunities and create a more inclusive society. Ergo, fare-free gendered mobility is the need of the day.

The writer is a Peshawar-based researcher who works in the financial sector.



Murtaza Talpur

## Pakistan's green energy leap

Energy plays a vital role in sustainable economic growth and development. Over the last couple of years, climate change has played havoc socio-economically and so Pakistan has started a major shift to green energy, accepting the need for sustainable energy sources to fuel its economic growth and meet accelerating climate challenges. This shift is driven by several factors, including rising fossil fuel costs, increasing energy demands, and the global push to mitigate climate change impacts. As Pakistan moves forward with its green energy agenda, there is much to analyze in terms of private-sector collaboration, government policy, and the challenges that persist.

The positive aspect is that the government has made green energy a key component of its long-term energy strategy. One of the most notable steps has been the State Bank of Pakistan's introduction of more favourable financing options for renewable energy projects. This initiative has been crucial in encouraging investments in wind and solar energy, making it easier for businesses and households to transition away from traditional energy sources.

The government has also reduced interest rates on loans for renewable energy installations, opening the door for small businesses and households to adopt clean energy technologies.

Besides financial incentives, the government is directing statutory reforms that will boost green energy use. Policies such as net metering permit households with solar panels to sell extra energy back to the national grid. It helps to build a stronger case for investing in solar power. Pakistan is self-assured

meaningfully to increase its share of renewable energy in the overall energy mix with these incentives in place. It helps to meet the target of 30 per cent renewable energy by 2030. Green energy initiatives have proactively and equally been accepted by the private sector. The previous year, a consortium of oil companies made a landmark move by pledging to renewable energy investments in Pakistan. These old-fashioned energy companies are expanding their portfolios, exploring solar and wind energy projects that bring them into line with the national energy transition strategy. These companies have historically been dependent on fossil fuels, and are now venturing into green energy – highlighting the substantial shift in business dynamics and the recognition of lasting sustainability.

Solar energy has, in particular, come out as a fast-growing sector in Pakistan. The geographic location of the country gives plenty of sunshine, making it an ideal place for solar power generation. Just recently, there has been an obvious increase in the installation of rooftop solar systems, especially in urban areas where power shortages and rising electricity prices are grave issues. Both residential and business consumers are turning to solar power – not just for energy cost savings, but also for the dependability it offers among recurrent power disruption. Wind energy is another area where substantial progress has been made in the last couple of years. The coastal areas of Sindh and Balochistan, where wind speeds are consistently high, have been the focus of wind energy projects. Wind development farms have been seen in these areas that contribute to the national grid while offering a cleaner alternative to natural gas and coal. Besides, the cost of solar and wind technologies continues to fall. These are becoming more cost-effective with conventional energy sources, and increase their appeal to both public and private-sector investors. Regardless of all this progress made, several challenges towards Pakistan's transition to green energy

ought to be addressed for long-term success. One of the key issues is the outdated energy infrastructure. Pakistan's national grid has been designed around traditional energy sources, which is not compatible to accommodate the variable output from renewable sources like wind and solar. This generates blockages, mainly during peak demand hours when renewable energy production may not align perfectly with consumption needs. Without modernizing the grid, the potential of renewable energy to provide a significant share of Pakistan's electricity will remain limited.

While green energy-supporting policies are in place, their implementation is often very slow and inconsistent. For instance, the net metering system, which was introduced to encourage solar power use, has been met with resistance from some power distribution companies. These companies fear the loss of revenue as more consumers become energy producers. This resistance slows the adoption of renewable energy technologies, primarily in provinces where the execution of federal policies is frail.

Another challenge lies in the financial barrier to entry. While the State Bank's financing options have lowered costs, the upfront investment for solar and wind installations remains high for many households and small businesses. Awareness campaigns and further financial incentives will be critical in overcoming this obstacle and promoting broader adoption of renewable energy solutions.

The geographic diversity of Pakistan also offers substantial hydropower potential but it remains mainly underused. The northern regions, with their many rivers and streams, offer huge opportunities for both large- and small-scale hydropower projects. Not long ago, small hydropower plants were developed in rural areas; they provide clean energy to off-grid communities. These schemes not only help address the rural energy crisis but also lessen the stress on the national grid.

However, large-scale hydropower projects have been slow to develop because of high initial costs and long approval procedures. Major projects like the Diamer-Bhasha and Mohmand dams, when completed, are expected to significantly boost Pakistan's hydropower capacity. These projects will not only provide a reliable source of energy but also address water storage issues, helping Pakistan cope with the increasing frequency of droughts and floods due to climate change.

The green energy projects not only bring environmental benefits but also provide economic opportunities. Renewable energy projects, particularly solar and wind create jobs in manufacturing, construction, and project management industries. These industries further are ready to grow as demand for clean energy technologies increases. Moreover, by reducing its dependence on imported fossil fuels, Pakistan can improve its trade balance and reduce the financial stress caused by changing global oil prices.

Environmental benefits are equally significant. By expanding the use of renewable energy, Pakistan can decrease its carbon emissions and improve air quality – mostly in urban areas. This will have long-term benefits for public health, reducing the occurrence of respiratory diseases and other pollution-related health issues. Besides, meeting the country's international climate commitments, as outlined in the Paris Agreement, will become more achievable as Pakistan increases its green energy projects.

The journey of Pakistan's renewable energy is yet in its early stages, but the progress made in the last couple of years seems promising. The supportive policies of the government together with growing private-sector investments have set the stage for a future where green energy can play an essential role in powering the nation.

The writer is an assistant director, Climate Change Adaptation at the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Islamabad.

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

### History of Pakistan

Shortly thereafter, Sharif's brother was also returned to his position, and the ruling that banned Sharif from holding office was lifted in May. Meanwhile, against the backdrop of the political drama of 2008, there were also developments on the foreign relations front. That year the United States expanded its campaign of targeted killings by remotely piloted drones in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (now part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), a region known to be a haven for Pashtun militants waging a guerilla war against international forces and the Afghan

government in Afghanistan. The drone strikes, which had begun in 2004 under the direction of the Central Intelligence Agency with the silent approval of the Pakistani government, stirred up widespread public outrage in Pakistan as they increased in frequency and caused increasing numbers of civilian deaths and injuries. Although Pakistani leaders decried the strikes as violations of Pakistan's sovereignty, there continued to be reports of the government's secret cooperation. Later that year, limited trade between the Pakistani and Indian-administered portions of Kashmir resumed. It was the first

such commerce in more than 60 years and signaled improved relations between the two countries. In the summer of 2010 Pakistan faced the most destructive floods in the country's recorded history. Swollen by unusually heavy monsoon rains, the Indus River—which in a typical monsoon season can expand to more than half a mile (one kilometre) by the time it reaches the provinces of Punjab and Sindh—grew to some 15 times its normal breadth. By mid-August more than 1,500 Pakistanis had died as a result of the river's extraordinary flooding, and, with some one-fourth of the country touched by the floods, many millions

To be continued.....

## Tom Cruise concerned about his luxury penthouse in Florida, skips 'MI 8' shoot?

'Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning 2' starring Tom Cruise is scheduled to release in 2025

Hollywood's top notch star Tom Cruise went deeply concerned for his luxury penthouse located in Florida amid Hurricane Milton. Cruise, who have been busy shooting for Mission Impossible 8, reportedly skipped the shoot of the film to pay a visit via helicopter to his penthouse in Florida to check if there has been any damage to the property. According to Daily Mail, the 62-year-old actor was seen arriving the Battersea heliport this Thursday looking all worried and concerned. He was spotted wearing a black sweater and denim jeans. Cruise's Florida penthouse, worth multi-million dollar, features a 39-foot



lap pool. The house also has an entire room for a flight simulator. Other than that, the penthouse has a private entrance with a car elevator and a private garage carrying a space of nine cars. The Top Gun actor was living at his luxurious penthouse with son Connor, who later moved to Scientology's religious retreat, 'The Sandcastle'. Tom went down to Florida to see if there was any damage to his property after Hurricane Milton hit the city. Meanwhile, action star Tom Cruise is currently filming the second part of Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning. The first part released on July 12, 2023.

## Showbiz

## Tech

### 'Pakistan's first 800GB WDM system' rolled out for faster connectivity

Achieving a major milestone for faster and more efficient connectivity, the PTCL group, Pakistan's top integrated ICT provider, launched the country's first 800 Gbps per wavelength Super C+L Wavelength Division Multiplexing (WDM) system. This advanced technology enables a data transmission capacity of 64 Tbps per fibre, with the potential to reach up to 96 Tbps, marking a significant step forward for Pakistan's digital infrastructure, according to the company's statement. Developed in collaboration with Huawei, the Super C+L system supports a broader optical spectrum of up to 12 THz, compared to the 4.8 THz provided by traditional systems. It combines high-speed 800 Gbps per wavelength, ultra-wide Super C+L spectrum, and advanced Flexible Grid optical switching. This breakthrough positions PTCL at the forefront of the country's digital transformation, preparing the network for future technologies like Fixed 5.5G (F5.5G) and enabling faster, smarter, and more efficient

connectivity. Jafar Khalid, the group's chief technology and information officer commented: "Our focus is on advancing cutting-edge technology while maintaining sustainability. This upgrade will improve service quality, lower latency, and enhance the overall user experience for both consumers and enterprises while reducing our environmental footprint." "It will also help us manage the growing demand for data traffic across different customer segments with reliable, cost-effective solutions," he added. Victor Zhou, President of Huawei's Optical Domain, stated: "We are proud to support PTCL in building this high-speed optical network, which will boost Pakistan's digital growth and sustainability efforts." "It will strengthen data center connections, reduce carbon emissions, and set the stage for future advancements like F5.5G. This technology investment will underpin Pakistan's digital economy for years to come," added Zhou. APP

## KMU to set up 10 diabetes care centres

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Medical University, Peshawar, on Wednesday said it was going to establish 10 diabetes care centres for managing high blood sugar levels and ensuring early diagnosis and treatment of heart problems. "These centres will be linked with the KMU's General Hospital after its opening to combat diabetes, which has affected every fourth person in our country," KMU vice-chancellor Prof Ziaul Haq told a workshop held here to mark the World Heart Day on Wednesday. Prof Haq said diabetes could be prevented through better public awareness and early diagnosis. He stressed the need for controlling the increasing prevalence of heart diseases, educating people about preventive measures, encouraging regular heart check-ups, and promoting healthy lifestyle and balanced diets.

This year's theme for World Heart Day was "Use Heart for Action," according to a news release issued by the KMU. The VC said over 20 million people died worldwide every year due to heart-related conditions, with 85 per cent of those deaths resulting from heart attacks and strokes. He added that the remaining fatalities happened due to other cardiovascular diseases. Prof Haq said Pakistan ranked 30th in the world in terms of deaths caused by heart diseases, with a sharp increase in the incidence of cardiovascular conditions. He noted that more than five million people in the region suffered from high blood pressure. Health expert Prof Hafizullah, who was the chief guest on the occasion, said people should identify the risk factors present in their own surroundings, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, cholesterol, and obesity, to prevent

heart problems. "If heart diseases are diagnosed early, they can be prevented. The risk of heart attacks and strokes increases significantly after the age of 40 due to aging and an unhealthy lifestyle, making prevention crucial," he said. Cardiologists Prof Malik Faisal, Prof Mahmoodul Hassan, and Prof Amber Ashraf said that the World Health Organisation's statistics indicated that 400,000 people in Pakistan died annually from heart diseases, accounting for 29 per cent of all deaths from various diseases. They said a report by the National Institute of Health revealed that more than 50 people in Pakistan died of heart diseases every hour compared to just 12 deaths per hour five years ago. The cardiologists said among those who died from heart diseases, 50 per cent were between the ages of 40 and 50 years.



## Health

# دی اینٹینسٹی گراف

اسلام آباد

**وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے سعودی وزیر سرمایہ کاری کی ملاقات**

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو...



اسلام آباد، وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو...

## وفاقی کابینہ، 5 آئی پی پیز کیساتھ معاہدے ختم کرنے کی منظوری دیدی

کابینہ کے تمام اراکین کے ساتھ پاکستان کے عوام کا شکر یہ جنہوں نے صبر اور تحمل کے ساتھ یہ مشکلات کاٹیں، انور شریف کی بھی اس پر پوری نظر ہے، آئی پی جف جزل عام منبری کی ذمہ داری کو نبھانے والے ہیں۔

اسلام آباد (ڈی پی سی) وفاقی کابینہ نے 5 آئی پی پیز کے معاہدے ختم کرنے کی منظوری دے دی ہے۔ وفاقی کابینہ نے 5 آئی پی پیز کے معاہدے ختم کرنے کی منظوری دے دی ہے۔ وفاقی کابینہ نے 5 آئی پی پیز کے معاہدے ختم کرنے کی منظوری دے دی ہے۔

## آئینی ترمیم کے معاملے پر پاکستان مسلم لیگ اور پاکستان پیپلز پارٹی کے درمیان اتفاق

لیگ صدر میاں نواز شریف نے کہا کہ ملک کی بہتری کے لئے پاکستان پیپلز پارٹی کی ہر تجویز کے ساتھ کھڑے ہیں۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو...

## ایس سی واجلاس، اسلام آباد، راولپنڈی میں 5 روز کیلئے شادی ہال، ریسٹورنٹس بند کر دیا گیا

شہر میں سیکورٹی ختم کرنے کا فیصلہ کیا گیا ہے۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) ایس سی واجلاس، اسلام آباد، راولپنڈی میں 5 روز کیلئے شادی ہال، ریسٹورنٹس بند کر دیا گیا ہے۔ ایس سی واجلاس، اسلام آباد، راولپنڈی میں 5 روز کیلئے شادی ہال، ریسٹورنٹس بند کر دیا گیا ہے۔

## سعودی وزیر کی صدر مملکت اور آرمی چیف سے الگ الگ ملاقاتیں

پاکستان اور سعودی عرب کے درمیان طویل المدتی اور آرمی چیف سے الگ الگ ملاقاتیں۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) سعودی وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو...



وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے ملاقات کی۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو...

## پیٹرولیم مصنوعات کی قیمتوں میں اضافے کا امکان

اسلام آباد (خلاف رپورٹ) مشرق وسطیٰ میں جاری بحران کی وجہ سے بین الاقوامی مارکیٹ میں خام تیل کی قیمتوں میں اضافے کے باعث پاکستان میں پیٹرولیم مصنوعات کی قیمتوں میں اضافے کا امکان ہے۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو...

## مولانا کی مرضی کے بغیر کسی قسم کی ترمیم آنا مشکل، نواز چوہدری

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) سابق وفاقی وزیر نواز چوہدری نے کہا کہ مولانا کی مرضی کے بغیر کسی قسم کی ترمیم آنا مشکل ہے۔

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## معاشی مسائل پر بہترین پوزیشن میں آگئے، محمد اورنگزیب

توقع ہے شرح سود میں مزید کمی ہوگی جس سے معاشی سرگرمیاں بحال ہوں گی۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو شہباز شریف سے سعودی عرب کے وزیر سرمایہ کاری کاہلہ باستان نے پرامتھانہ ملاقات کی جو...

## ہر مشکل گھڑی میں سعودی تعاون بے مثال ہے، مریم نواز

لاہور (یورپورٹ) وزیر اعلیٰ پنجاب مریم نواز شریف نے پاکستان آنے والے سعودی عرب کے تجارتنے وفد کا شکریہ ادا کیا ہے۔

لاہور (یورپورٹ) وزیر اعلیٰ پنجاب مریم نواز شریف نے پاکستان آنے والے سعودی عرب کے تجارتنے وفد کا شکریہ ادا کیا ہے۔

## آئینی ترمیم کیلئے ہمارے لوگ نہیں ٹوٹیں گے، علی محمد

ہم ہر قدم کو احتیاط سے لے رہے ہیں اور اس وقت ہمیں ہر اقدام سے احتیاط برتنے کی ضرورت ہے۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) آئی پی جف جزل نے کہا کہ آئینی ترمیم کیلئے ہمارے لوگ نہیں ٹوٹیں گے۔

## حکومت چینی شہریوں کی حفاظت کو اولین ترجیح دیتی، احسن اقبال

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وفاقی وزیر برائے منصوبہ بندی و ترقی احسن اقبال نے کہا کہ حکومت پاکستان چینی شہریوں کی حفاظت کو اولین ترجیح دیتی ہے۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وفاقی وزیر برائے منصوبہ بندی و ترقی احسن اقبال نے کہا کہ حکومت پاکستان چینی شہریوں کی حفاظت کو اولین ترجیح دیتی ہے۔

## پاکستان جلد دوبارہ دنیا کی 24 ویں معیشت بن کر ابھرے گا، وزیر خارجہ

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وزیر خارجہ شہباز شریف نے کہا کہ پاکستان جلد دوبارہ دنیا کی 24 ویں معیشت بن کر ابھرے گا۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وزیر خارجہ شہباز شریف نے کہا کہ پاکستان جلد دوبارہ دنیا کی 24 ویں معیشت بن کر ابھرے گا۔

## سلاطین کو نسل بھارت میں جوہری مواد کی فروخت کی تحقیقات کرے، پاکستان

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) آئی پی جف جزل نے کہا کہ سلاطین کو نسل بھارت میں جوہری مواد کی فروخت کی تحقیقات کرے۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) آئی پی جف جزل نے کہا کہ سلاطین کو نسل بھارت میں جوہری مواد کی فروخت کی تحقیقات کرے۔

## سننے پر پروگرام پر عملدرآمد کیلئے مضبوط پالیسیاں ناگزیر، آئی ایف

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) آئی ایف کے مطابق سلاطین کو نسل بھارت میں جوہری مواد کی فروخت کی تحقیقات کرے۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) آئی ایف کے مطابق سلاطین کو نسل بھارت میں جوہری مواد کی فروخت کی تحقیقات کرے۔

## اسرائیل خبردار ہے، ہماری انگلیاں ٹریگر ہو رہی ہیں، ایرانی جنرل کی

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) ایرانی جنرل نے کہا کہ اسرائیل خبردار ہے، ہماری انگلیاں ٹریگر ہو رہی ہیں۔

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) ایرانی جنرل نے کہا کہ اسرائیل خبردار ہے، ہماری انگلیاں ٹریگر ہو رہی ہیں۔

## عظیم سوانی کو جوڈیشل ریمائنڈر پر جیل بھیج دیا گیا

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) عظیم سوانی کو جوڈیشل ریمائنڈر پر جیل بھیج دیا گیا۔

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## Pak-Saudi Business Forum drives IT sector collaboration through B2B partnerships



ISLAMABAD: The Pak-Saudi Business Forum, attended by Saudi Minister of Investment Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih, took place on Thursday, bringing together government officials and business leaders from both nations to explore key areas of collaboration. A high-level Saudi delegation, consisting of 135 members and led by Minister Al-Falih arrived on Wednesday.

The visit is expected to result in business agreements worth \$2 billion, marking a significant milestone in strengthening economic ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

The Business Forum spearheaded by the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), provided a prime opportunity for businesses from both countries to engage and collaborate.

The Pakistan's IT sector briefing, part of the forum's agenda, was co-chaired by Pakistan's Minister of State for IT and Telecom, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, and Fahad Abdulrahman Alshabanah, General Manager of Information Communications and Technology at the Saudi Ministry of Investment.

During the briefing, Secretary IT and Telecom, Zarrar Hasham, presented an in-depth overview of Pakistan's IT landscape, highlighting the country's growing role as a global technology player and showcasing new opportunities for investment and collaboration.

Discussions between both sides explored several avenues for enhanced cooperation. Representatives from Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) expressed keen interest in Pakistan's rapid IT advancements, stressing the importance of accelerating these developments. A B2B session during the forum facilitated direct engagement between leading companies from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, focusing on partnership opportunities in the IT and telecommunications sectors. The session underscored promising areas for collaboration, particularly in digital transformation, software development, and emerging technologies, with several investment proposals currently under discussion.

This forum marks a pivotal step in deepening the strategic partnership between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, with both nations committed to fostering innovation and accelerating growth in the IT and telecommunications sectors.

The continued collaboration promises to unlock new avenues of economic prosperity and technological advancement for both countries.

## IHC orders to de-seal KP House

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Thursday ordered to de-seal Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House (KP) House in Islamabad. Through the Secretary Administration, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government filed a petition against the sealing of the KP House, requesting to de-seal it until the final decision of the case.

The petitioner argued that the sealing of the KP House, which is a provincial government property, is illegal. Additionally, the petitioner has stated that taking official vehicles into custody after sealing the KP House is also illegal.

Chief Justice IHC Justice Aamer Farooq heard the plea. The court after hearing initial arguments ordered de-sealing of the KP House. It is important to note here that the Capital Development Authority (CDA) sealed different blocks of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) House Islamabad.

The sealing operation was led by Special Magistrate Sardar Muhammad Asif. During the operation the CDA, sealed KP House blocks A and B. INP

## FO advises foreign diplomats to restrict their movements during SCO summit

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) has advised foreign diplomats to limit their movements during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) summit to be held in Islamabad on October 15 and October 16.

In a letter, the FO has conveyed to them that the government of Pakistan has made strict security arrangements for the heads of the government and other foreign delegates who would attend the summit.

Diplomats have been urged to confine themselves to the Red Zone and the Diplomatic Enclave during the SCO sessions. They have also been asked to follow the traffic plan issued by the Traffic Police. The FO has said it is looking forward to cooperation from foreign diplomats in order to make the event a success.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal meeting with delegation from the China Asia Economic Development Association (CAEDA).

## President Zardari reiterates Pakistan's unwavering commitment to stand in solidarity with Saudi Arabia

Pakistan & Saudi Arabia reaffirm their commitment to enhancing cooperation in key areas



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing cooperation in key areas such as the economy, agriculture, mining and information technology. Both sides underlined the need to work together to build a prosperous and peaceful future for the region as well as for the Islamic World.

This was discussed during a meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari and the visiting delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), led by Saudi Minister for Investment, Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Welcoming the delegation, President

Asif Ali Zardari emphasized the longstanding and time-tested relationship between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). He expressed Pakistan's desire to elevate these ties into a long-term strategic and economic partnership, underscoring that such collaboration would bring the two brotherly nations further closer.

The President reaffirmed Pakistan's deep respect for the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and reiterated Pakistan's unwavering commitment to stand in solidarity with Saudi Arabia. The President also praised the visionary leadership of Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud. He highly commended the remarkable

progress Saudi Arabia was making under Vision 2030 and expressed gratitude for the Kingdom's continued support to Pakistan during challenging times. The President said that he was happy to witness the progress and prosperity of Saudi Arabia.

Engineer Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih said that Saudi Arabia recognised the strategic geographical significance of Pakistan and its potential of natural resources and renewable energy. He informed that Saudi Arabia had planned to invest in the infrastructure and mining sectors of Pakistan and, in this regard, his delegation would sign 25 agreements in different sectors that would boost economic cooperations between the two brotherly nations. He expressed the hope that the signing of the agreements would mark a new era of economic cooperation between the two countries. Both sides emphasized to increase collaboration in the areas of Agriculture and Information Technology.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Petroleum, Senator Musadik Masood Malik, Minister for Commerce, Mir Jam Kamal Khan, Minister for Privatization, Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister for Interior, Senator Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Minister for Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Senator Saleem Mandviwalla. The Saudi Ambassador, Nawaf Saeed Al Malki was also present in the meeting.

## President Zardari condoles killing of Chinese citizens in Karachi

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari visited the Embassy of the People's Republic of China on Thursday and offered his heartfelt condolences on behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan over the tragic killing of Chinese citizens in a terrorist attack in Karachi on 7th October 2024. Strongly condemning the terrorist attack, the President reiterated the resolve to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice. He expressed Pakistan's solidarity with Chinese brothers and sisters in this hour of grief.

Talking to the Chinese Ambassador, Jiang Zaidong, President Asif Ali Zardari said that the Chinese government and people had contributed to the socio-economic development of Pakistan and the enemies of both countries could not want to see the growing partnership between the two states. He stated that such cowardly acts by the hostile elements could not weaken the bonds of friendship between the two time-tested friends. The President reiterated Pakistan's commitment to ensure the safety and security of the Chinese nationals residing in our country. SABAH

## NA Speaker stresses collective efforts for thriving Pakistan

Senate Chairman assumes charge of Acting President

ISLAMABAD: "National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq on Thursday reaffirmed the government's commitment to achieving a healthy and prosperous Pakistan through collective efforts and divine guidance.

"We will soon achieve this mission with Allah's guidance and our collective efforts," the speaker stated in his message on World Mental Health Day being observed on Oct 10 (Thursday). He stressed the importance of taking proactive steps to curb the rise of mental health issues, adding, "Now, more than ever, there is an urgent need for comprehensive and effective action to tackle mental health challenges."

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq emphasized the critical role of mental health in national development, stating, "A healthy mind is the cornerstone of a prosperous nation." He highlighted the impact of supportive workplace environments in alleviating stress and anxiety. He also noted that health is a divine blessing and that mental well-

being is essential for personal growth, adding, "It is through a healthy mind that individuals are able to think, understand, and innovate."

Citing the World Health Organization (WHO), Speaker Sadiq pointed out that over one billion people globally suffer from mental health disorders. He also outlined the key contributing factors, including injustice, mistreatment, loneliness, intolerance, anxiety, unemployment, poverty, and insufficient healthcare. Meanwhile, Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has assumed the charge of acting President of Pakistan after President Asif Ali Zardari departed for a two-day visit to Turkmenistan. The notification has also been issued in this regard, a statement issued by the Senate Secretary on Thursday said.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani will perform the duties of Acting President under the article 49 (2) of the Constitution till return of President Asif Ali Zardari.

## Pakistan wants to transform ties with SA into development partnership



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, said on Thursday that Pakistan aims to transform its longstanding historical and cultural ties with Saudi Arabia (SA) into a partnership focused on growth and development.

Addressing the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Business Forum, he emphasized the importance of strengthening bilateral relations and Pakistan's desire to foster closer cooperation with Saudi Arabia to promote mutual economic and developmental

boost exports, diversify its economy, increase remittances, create employment, and enhance productivity. He said that Pakistan is focusing on improving ease of doing business, shifting from "red tape to red carpet," and working on reducing poverty through a higher tax-to-GDP ratio. Referring to Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, Dr. Musadik Malik highlighted the Kingdom's goals of achieving growth, diversification, indigenization, and innovation-driven, energy-intensive development.

He also spoke about Pakistan's robust strategic and implementation framework, the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), which

aims to ensure collective success for both countries. "The synergies between our visions can be realized by leveraging asset-building infrastructure, ensuring food security, and sharing cultures," he said. He said that Pakistan requires significant development in roads, railways, and infrastructure, areas where Saudi Arabia can offer substantial support.

He further elaborated on Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, which focuses on 13 strategic sectors including aviation, automotive, construction, consumer retail, entertainment, financial services, food and agriculture, mining, real estate, telecom, media and technology, transport, healthcare, and energy. He expressed Pakistan's interest in collaborating on many of these sectors.

He said that investments in these sectors will be aimed at delivering high returns and creating strategic value, particularly in technology and capability development. Dr. Musadik Malik thanked the Saudi Arabian delegation for visiting Pakistan, stating, "Our success is your success; together, we will bring about a revolution."

## Mushaal urges India to honor Kashmiri aspirations, end occupation

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussain Mullick, wife of unlawfully incarcerated senior Hurriyat leader Mohammad Yasin Malik, declared that the recent sham elections in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) were nothing but a blatant attempt by India to legitimize its illegal occupation and undermine the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination. Mushaal Mullick, who is also a Chairperson, Peace and Culture Organisation, made these remarks during her keynote address at a seminar titled "Farcical elections in IIOJK and the way forward" organised by Islamabad High Court Bar Association here on Thursday. She stated that these farcical polls were a mere spectacle, designed to deceive the international community into believing that democracy exists in the scenic valley converted into a garrison city and a killing field to stifle the dissenting voices. The Hurriyat leader highlighted that India being an imperialist power had disregarded UN resolutions for decades, which unequivocally stated that Kashmiris must decide their future through a fair and impartial plebiscite under United Nations auspices.

However, the Chairperson said that instead, India has employed various unlawful, unconditional and coercive tactics to consolidate and prolonged its illegitimate hold in the occupied valley, including manipulating elections and altering the demographic landscape. Mushaal Mullick noted that notorious Modi regime introduced new domicile laws and elec-

toral changes to change IIOJK's demographic fabric, granting temporary voting rights to thousands of outsider Hindus eroding the political autonomy of Kashmiris. The Hurriyat leader went on to say that all senior Hurriyat leadership including her husband were languishing in jails for years, besides a reign of terror was unleashed, hence hold polls under shadows of guns were a charade because India's primary goal was to strengthen its illegal occupation by imposing puppets instead of empowering the Kashmiri people. The Hurriyat leader pressed that the global community must recognize the gravity of the situation and must intervene to stop human rights violations and support the Kashmiri people's just struggle for freedom.

She urged that the world powers should acknowledge the bitter reality that elections cannot replace the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination. Mushaal Mullick demanded that India must hold a plebiscite under UN supervision to resolve the Kashmir dispute once and for all. The chairperson vowed that Kashmiri people would continue their just struggle, and they would not rest until breaking the shackles of Indian slavery. SABAH

