

DAILY MIRROR

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CM Bugti pays tribute to PM, Field Marshal Asim Munir for establishment of ceasefire between US & Iran

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday paid tribute to the national leadership, Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for the establishment of a ceasefire between the United States and Iran.

He said that Pakistan, as a responsible state, has played an effective and decisive role in ending tensions in the region and establishing a ceasefire.

In a message on social networking site X, he said that Pakistan's thoughtful national leadership not only took timely and wise

decisions but also further strengthened the country's diplomatic reputation at the global level.

The Chief Minister said that Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's professional strategy and timely actions played an important role in protecting the entire region from a possible major disaster.

He said that Pakistan's balanced and active diplomacy has given a clear message

to the international community that peace, stability and dialogue are our top priorities. He said that this success achieved as a result of this balanced diplomatic strategy is an important milestone towards establishing permanent peace in the region.

The CM expressed hope that as a result of these efforts, not only a complete ceasefire would be

possible but also the path to establishing lasting peace will be paved.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that this success is a manifestation of Pakistan's effective narrative, wise decisions and global trust, which would have a prominent place in history.

He said that Pakistan's continuous efforts to promote peace and stability in the region have become an exemplary one and the country has played a responsible and active role in establishing peace at the global level and has contributed to saving the world from a major conflict.

Mr. Bugti expressed his determination that the ongoing diplomatic efforts led by Pakistan would continue to pave the way for peaceful.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs Federal Cabinet Meeting in Islamabad.

US, Iran agree to two-week ceasefire with reopening of Strait of Hormuz

'Islamabad talks' see success as PM Shehbaz invites

US, Iran delegations to Islamabad on April 10

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: PM Shehbaz, early Wednesday morning, announced that Iran and the United States "along with their allies have agreed to an immediate ceasefire everywhere, including Lebanon and elsewhere, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY."

In a post on X, PM Shehbaz further invited the US and Iran's "delegations to Islamabad on Friday, April 10 2026, to further negotiate for a conclusive agreement to settle all disputes."

US President Donald Trump agreed to the two-week ceasefire with less than two hours before his deadline for Tehran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz or face devastating attacks on its civilian infrastructure.

"A big day for World Peace! Iran wants it to happen, they've had enough! Likewise, so has everyone else!" he said on Truth Social.

The post added that "The United States of America will be helping with the traffic buildup in the Strait of Hormuz."

Trump's announcement on social media represented an abrupt turnaround from earlier in the day, when he issued an extraordinary warning that "a

whole civilisation will die tonight" if his demands were not met.

Trump said the last-minute deal was subject to Iran's agreement to pause its blockade of oil and gas supplies through the strait, which typically handles about one-fifth of global oil shipments. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in a statement that Tehran would stop counter-attacks and provide safe passage through the waterway.

"This will be a double-sided CEASEFIRE!" Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. "The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning Longterm PEACE with Iran, and PEACE in the Middle East."

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt claimed, "This is a victory for the United States that President Trump and our incredible military made happen."

"The success of our military created maximum leverage, allowing President Trump and the team to engage in tough negotiations that have now created an opening for a diplomatic solution and long-term peace," she said in a post on X.

PM thanks global partners for praising Pakistan's peace efforts

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has thanked all partners and friends across the globe who have reached out and acknowledged Pakistan's sincere efforts for the global peace.

In a post on his X handle, he said as we proceed to Islamabad Talks, I wish to extend our deepest and sincere gratitude to our brotherly countries China, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Egypt and Qatar for extending invaluable and all out support towards reaching the ceasefire.

Shehbaz Sharif also expressed gratitude to these countries for giving peaceful

diplomatic efforts a chance to seek a comprehensive and conclusive end to the conflict.

The Prime Minister said he would also like to deeply appreciate and thank brotherly countries of Gulf Cooperation Council, whose consistent support and commitment to peace and stability in the region remains quintessential for our efforts. He said the leadership of all brotherly countries and United States of America demonstrated exceptional strategic foresight, sagacity and patience in giving peace a chance.

The Prime Minister said let us all work together to forge a lasting peace in the region and beyond.

Friday to be observed as 'Day of Prayer' for peace: Senate told

APP

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Wednesday apprised the Senate that Friday would be observed as the country as a "Day of Prayer" to express gratitude and seek continued peace in the region.

Speaking in the House, the minister said it was a historic moment for Pakistan, as the country's diplomatic efforts had contributed to de-escalation in the region.

He said that under acumen leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan played an active role in promoting peace and preventing a wider conflict.

The minister said the Federal Cabinet, in its meeting chaired by the Prime Minister, had decided that the entire nation would offer collective prayers on Friday as a mark of gratitude and for lasting peace.

He said Pakistan had been honoured to host key engagements related to the peace process and expressed hope that the ongoing ceasefire and dialogue between Iran and the United States of America (USA) would succeed.

Azam Nazeer Tarar said both the United States and Iran had acknowledged Pakistan's efforts and agreed to move forward through dialogue, adding that the country would continue to play a constructive role.

Trump threatens 50pc tariffs on countries arming Iran, bans uranium enrichment

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has issued a strong warning against any country supplying weapons to Iran, threatening immediate 50 percent tariffs on all goods exported to the United States.

"A country supplying military weapons to Iran will be immediately tariffed at 50 percent, with no exclusions or exemptions," Trump said on his Truth Social platform.

US President Donald Trump has said that the United States will "work closely with Iran" following what he described as a "productive regime change," while firmly ruling out any uranium enrichment under future arrangements.

In a post on Truth Social,

Trump stated that there will be no enrichment of uranium and claimed that the US, in coordination with Iran,

will remove deeply buried nuclear material created after B-2 bomber strikes, adding that the sites have been under strict satellite surveillance and remain untouched since the attack.

He also revealed that talks are ongoing with Iran regarding tariff reductions and sanctions relief, indicating a broader diplomatic engagement.

Trump further noted that significant progress has already been made,

with many points from a 15-point US proposal agreed upon, suggesting movement toward a potential agreement between the two sides.



Iranians react after a ceasefire announcement at the Enqelab square, in Tehran.

Tarar calls ceasefire role a historic moment for Pakistan

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Wednesday described the day as one of the most important in Pakistan's history, following the country's diplomatic role in helping broker a ceasefire between Iran and the United States.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said the nation is thankful to Almighty Allah for giving Pakistan, its leadership and its people this honour.

He expressed hope that Pakistan will continue to succeed in promoting peace and that its flag will remain high in a peaceful world.

Tarar said the situation had been very serious a day earlier as tensions between the two countries increased, but improved due to Pakistan's active diplomacy.

He credited Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for their continuous efforts, which led to the ceasefire and brought global attention to Pakistan's role.

He congratulated the nation, President Asif Ali Zardari, and PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif for their leadership and support in ensuring a focused diplomatic approach.

The minister also appreciated the unity shown by all political parties, including the opposition, saying the whole nation spoke with one voice for peace.

He stressed that peace is the only way forward for the region and the world, especially at a time of rising tensions.

The Minister said the Prime Minister will also brief the National Assembly on the matter.

Calling for unity, he urged political parties to set aside differences and send a clear message that Pakistan stands for peace and stability. He also asked opposition parties to reconsider protest plans, stressing the need for national unity as the world watches closely.

President welcomes ceasefire in Gulf conflict, urges vigilance against spoilers, calls for sustained path to peace

APP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday welcomed the cease-fire reached this morning between the United States and Iran, terming it a timely step that offers space for dialogue, restraint and a more stable regional environment.

The president, in a statement said that Pakistan had consistently worked, in good faith, for de-escalation. "We did it for the region and in the greater good of humanity at large, when the world was perilously close to a grave disaster," he remarked, adding that peace remains essential for security, economic stability and the well-being of people across interconnected regions.

He said Pakistan is proud to have led with wisdom, resolve and a steadfast commitment to peace, and expressed appreciation for the leadership of Iran and the United States for stepping back from the brink and choosing dialogue over devastation. He also commended the tireless efforts of the leadership in Washington, Tehran and Islamabad and Gulf countries specially Saudi Arabia in creating the space for de-escalation and diplomacy to prevail.

The president also commended the relentless efforts of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, COAS & Chief of Defence Forces, and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar for their initiative, leadership and sustained diplomatic engagement that contributed to advancing Pakistan's efforts for de-escalation and peace.

The president appreciated all concerned for demonstrating pragmatism, flexibility and statesmanship in reaching this understanding, noting that such outcomes require political will and a willingness to prioritise engagement over confrontation.

He also acknowledged and thanked brotherly countries, including China, Egypt, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation for their support and constructive role in encouraging calm and dialogue during a difficult period.

He further noted that prayers and goodwill from people across the world, reflected a shared human desire for peace.

"This collective voice matters and should continue to guide leaders towards responsible choices," he said.

The president emphasised that the cease-fire offers a critical opening for the region to breathe, recover and turn away from the shadow of a wider war.



QUETTA: CM Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti in a meeting with Provincial Minister Mir Zia Langov and Mir Asim Kurd Galo.

CJP chairs NJPMC meeting, pushes reforms for faster justice and institutional strengthening

APP

ISLAMABAD: The National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee (NJPMC), reiterated its commitment to strengthening institutional capacity, improving access to justice and ensuring efficient case disposal remain top priorities, as the 59th meeting of the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee (NJPMC) reviewed key reforms and policy initiatives.

The meeting, chaired by Chief Justice of Pakistan on April 6, was attended by the Chief Justice of the Federal Shariat Court, chief justices of all high courts, the Attorney General for Pakistan and senior officials of the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan.

The committee reviewed progress on decisions taken in its earlier session and reiterated its commitment to an effective and responsive justice system.

On enforced disappearances, the Attorney General informed the forum that the federal government has approved the

nomination of a former Supreme Court judge to head a commission as part of a redressal mechanism, with a formal notification expected soon. The committee directed that it be regularly updated on progress.

The NJPMC expressed satisfaction over the establishment of designated benches in high courts to deal with foreign arbitral awards and related matters, including cases under tariff and anti-dumping laws. It noted that specialization would improve consistency in judicial decisions and enhance the ease of doing business.

Reviewing case disposal timelines, the committee appreciated the performance of high courts in clearing priority and old cases.

Data presented showed that over 1.03 million cases were disposed of out of approximately 1.22 million pending cases between September 2025 and March 2026. District judiciary in Punjab and Balochistan achieved disposal rates of 92 per cent and 88 per cent respectively.

Gilani terms Iran-US ceasefire a milestone for regional peace

APP

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, has warmly welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran, describing it as a significant and encouraging step toward peace, stability, and de-escalation in the Middle East and beyond.

Addressing the Senate, the Chairman underscored that Pakistan has consistently championed dialogue, diplomacy, and peaceful engagement as the only sustainable means of resolving international conflicts.

He said that the ceasefire stands as a testament to the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts and reflects the shared resolve of responsible global leadership to prevent further escalation.

The Chairman Senate paid tribute to the leadership of Pakistan for its proactive and constructive diplomatic

engagement.

He particularly appreciated the role of the President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, and Chief of the Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, for their coordinated efforts and outreach, which contributed to building positive momentum toward peace.

He also acknowledged the willingness demonstrated by both the United States and Iran to engage in dialogue, emphasizing that such engagement is indispensable for fostering mutual understanding, regional stability, and long-term peace.

Highlighting Pakistan's diplomatic excellence, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani commended the professionalism, dedication, and tireless efforts of Pakistan's diplomatic corps, stating that their role has been instrumental in facilitating meaningful progress toward de-escalation.

While welcoming the development, the Chairman cautioned that the path ahead requires sustained commitment, patience, and cooperation from all stakeholders. He expressed optimism that the upcoming talks in Islamabad would serve as a foundation for durable peace, economic stability, and regional cooperation, with the support of friendly nations and the international community.

He further urged the global community to extend full support to ongoing diplomatic initiatives aimed at consolidating peace and ensuring a stable and prosperous future for the region. Before the commencement of formal proceedings, the Chairman Senate informed the House of a significant cultural and diplomatic moment, announcing the presentation of Pakistan's National Anthem in a refined choral arrangement by the National Chamber Choir of Romania.

Achakzai pledges full support to government, urges unity among leaders

APP

ISLAMABAD: Opposition leader in the National Assembly Mehmood Khan Achakzai on Wednesday offered unconditional support to the government.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said, "We support the government for work that unites the people and benefits the world." He called on Pakistan's top political leaders to rise above party differences and focus on the country's democratic priorities.

Achakzai stressed that despite major disagreements, leaders should find common ground on national issues.

"Some may see this as irrational, but anyone ignoring the opportunity Pakistan has received is ignoring reality," he

said. He urged leaders to learn from past mistakes and take collective responsibility.

He emphasized the need for unity and mutual support during critical regional situations.

Referring to the Quran, he highlighted its guidance to cooperate in good deeds, saying that such efforts are essential for the nation.

Achakzai also praised Iran for safeguarding the interests of the Muslim world, calling it an example of responsible leadership. He condemned divisive rhetoric and personal attacks, urging political actors to focus on constructive measures rather than conflicts that weaken Pakistan. He stressed that cooperation among Pakistan's leaders is crucial to uphold both national and Islamic values in challenging times.

CM Punjab Commends PM Shehbaz Sharif on Successful Iran-US Ceasefire

By Maqsood Khalid

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has paid rich tribute to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for his commendable leadership and efforts in achieving a ceasefire between Iran and the United States.

The Chief Minister also lauded the contributions of Field Marshal Asim Munir for his significant role in facilitating the ceasefire. She remarked that Pakistan's efforts in averting a major conflict will be remembered in history with great honor and recognition.

CM Punjab stated that Pakistan's success in promoting peace and preventing large-scale devastation would be written in golden words and has already become a proud chapter in global history.



She termed the international acknowledgment of Pakistan's role in regional peace as a great diplomatic achievement. She further noted that Pakistan has demonstrated exceptional diplomatic balance in global and regional affairs, earning widespread appreciation.

The Chief Minister credited the joint efforts of the political and military leadership for safeguarding the region from potential destruction.

Expressing optimism, Maryam Nawaz Sharif stated that ongoing efforts for peace negotiations within Pakistan will also reach a successful conclusion. She emphasized that Pakistan's contributions towards global peace and preservation of civilizations will always be remembered.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Justice (Retd.) Yar Muhammad, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

HEC awards 98 undergraduate scholarships to students from coastal regions of Balochistan

ISLAMABAD, Apr 08 (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan, has awarded 98 undergraduate scholarships to students from coastal regions of Balochistan, while the process for selection of more recipients from the coastal region is underway.

According to details, HEC is executing the Coastal Region Higher Education Scholarships for Undergraduate Programmes for Balochistan.

The programme, launched in 2022-23 under the Government of Pakistan's Southern Balochistan Development Package, expands access to quality undergraduate education for students holding domicile/local certificate of the Gwadar, Lasbela, Kech (Turbat) or Awaran districts of Balochistan.

The core objective of the scholarship programme is to provide higher education opportunities to the students of the region by sponsoring 200 students for BS studies in the HEC-recognised universities of Pakistan.

So far, HEC has awarded 98 scholarships across three batches. Over 800 applicants have now applied against HEC's call for applications in batch-IV of the programme, which reflects the high interest of youth from that area of the country. The programme that covers all academic disciplines has increased access to higher education for students from

World saved from major disaster due to joint efforts of PM & military leadership: Karim

APP

Quetta: Focal Person Prime Minister Youth Program (PMYP) Chaudhry Naeem Karim On Wednesday said that the world was saved from a major disaster due to the joint efforts of the Prime Minister and the military leadership.

Senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has welcomed the ceasefire between Iran and the US and said that this development is a positive step towards peace and stability in the region.

In his statement issued here, he said that after the ceasefire announcement, Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shahbaz

Sharif, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir have emerged as heroes of the Islamic world and support all the decisions of the federal government to establish peace. He said that the world was saved from a major disaster due to the joint efforts of the Prime Minister and the military leadership, Pakistan played an important and effective role in establishing peace in the region by establishing a ceasefire between Iran and the US, which saved the country from a major disaster. He said that positive and constructive diplomacy of the country has proven to be effective at the global level and Pakistan should receive the Nobel Prize for promot-

ing world peace and positive diplomacy. He said that the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Field Marshal made efforts to stop the war between Iran and America and Allah Almighty made Pakistan a leader and the flag of the divine state of Pakistan was raised all over the world. He said that due to Pakistan's constructive diplomacy and wise leadership, tensions in the region are decreasing and the path to peace is being paved, we hope that the talks facilitated by Pakistan would end the war. He said that a two-week ceasefire could become the basis for permanent peace, while Pakistan's military and political leadership.

Pakistan's diplomacy averts wider war: Masood Khan

APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's decisive diplomatic intervention has helped bring a halt to a dangerous 40-day conflict involving the United States, Iran, and Israel, preventing what could have escalated into a full-scale regional and global war, Sardar Masood Khan, former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Nations said Wednesday.

The outcome, increasingly being referred to as the "Islamabad Accords," reflects Pakistan's emergence as a credible peacemaker and a net stability provider at a moment of unprecedented geopolitical volatility, he said.

Khan, who also served as Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States and China, has underscored that while the conflict rapidly intensified among major powers, Pakistan remained steadfastly engaged in shuttle diplomacy, maintaining contact with all key stakeholders, including Tehran, Washington, and Gulf capitals.

These sustained efforts, backed by support from major international actors including China, Russia, and European partners, created the conditions necessary for a ceasefire and a pathway to structured negotiations.

Ambassador Khan highlighted that wars of such magnitude often expand beyond their initial scope, citing historical precedents where limited conflicts spiralled into prolonged global crises.

In this instance, timely diplomatic intervention by Pakistan curtailed further escalation, preventing deeper involvement by additional global and regional powers and safeguarding the fragile stability of the Middle East.

He noted that the ceasefire, currently holding as a temporary truce, provides a critical window for addressing complex issues through dialogue.

Key areas of negotiation include Iran's nuclear program, regional security dynamics, sanctions relief, and the future governance and navigation of the Strait of Hormuz. These discussions are expected to be intensive and sensitive, requiring guarantees and oversight from major powers and international institutions.

Uniformed development cornerstone of KP Govt policy: CM

INP

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi here Wednesday said that uniformed development of all districts of the province was the top priority of the Provincial Government.

He was addressing a meeting of the Planning and Development Department held under his chairmanship.

According to the spokesperson of the Chief Minister House Peshawar, the meeting reviewed new projects for the Annual Development Program 2026-27 in the sectors of social welfare, sports, tourism, relief, and transport.

The Chief Minister directed that the availability of rescue stations be ensured in all tehsils. He also instructed that the province's socio-economic registry be completed by December.

Pakistan's diplomacy shapes US-Iran truce, Islamabad in global spotlight: Amir Muqam

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, and President of PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Amir Muqam, on Wednesday lauded Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir for Pakistan's decisive diplomatic role in securing a ceasefire between the United States and Iran, stating that the breakthrough averted a potentially dangerous escalation and underscored Islamabad's growing influence on the global stage.

In a statement, Mr Muqam said he "wholeheartedly congratulates" the Prime Minister and the Army Chief for ensuring the ceasefire, describing it as a major diplomatic success for Pakistan.

He emphasised that Pakistan's constructive and proactive diplomacy had once again proven effective at the international level.

Calling the development a "remarkable diplomatic achievement," the minister said the ceasefire between Washington and Tehran reflected Pakistan's responsible and stabilising role in regional and global affairs.



QUETTA: Traffic police personal seeing the document of vehicle at chaking pint.



Favourites tag means nothing, says PSG's Enrique ahead of Liverpool clash

SPORTS DESK

POISSY: Paris St-Germain manager Luis Enrique has played down suggestions his side are favourites ahead of Wednesday's Champions League quarter-final first leg at home to out-of-form Liverpool.

The English champions, fifth in the Premier League, have suffered 15 defeats across all competitions this season — their most in a single campaign since losing 18 matches in 2014-15.

PSG, meanwhile, lead Ligue 1 and are well placed to defend their Champions League crown.

"It's difficult to talk about Liverpool," Enrique told reporters on Tuesday. "Liverpool manager Arne Slot speaks very well about them."

"My view is that it's both the same team and a different team. Everyone is trying to work out who the favourites are, but in this sort of match that means nothing. It will be tough for both teams."

"Showing that we're still in the running every year and playing against Liverpool is always a positive thing. We want to reach the semi-finals; we know how difficult it will be, but we're very motivated."

The tie is a repeat of last season's round-of-16 meeting, when PSG knocked Liverpool out on penalties.

"Last year, everyone said it was Liverpool, and PSG went through," Spaniard Luis Enrique said.

This time, it will also see Liverpool striker Hugo Ekitike come up against his former club.

The 23-year-old France international has enjoyed an impressive first season in England, scoring 17 goals and providing six assists in 43 appearances.

Ekitike spent a brief spell at PSG between 2023 and 2024 but found minutes hard to come by in a squad featuring Lionel Messi, Neymar and Kylian Mbappe.

Spanish midfielder Fabian Ruiz did not train with the squad on Monday due to injury, but French winger Bradley Barcola did following an ankle problem.

ISAK RETURNS

On the other hand, Alexander Isak has been included in the Liverpool squad as the Sweden striker returns from a lengthy injury absence.

Isak has only made 16 appearances for Liverpool since his British record move from Newcastle United last year after struggling with a series of fitness issues.

After 15 weeks on the sidelines, the 26-year-old is finally ready to feature in a Liverpool squad again.

"Alexander Isak is among the players that departed John Lennon Airport for Paris this afternoon, ahead of Wednesday night's quarter-final first leg at Parc des Princes," Liverpool said on their website.

Isak returned to group training last Thursday and worked with his team-mates on Tuesday morning before jetting off to France.

Isak's absence has been keenly felt and his place in the 21-man

squad for the trip to Paris could be a major boost for Slot's spluttering side.

Pressure is mounting on Slot and his team after Saturday's dismal 4-0 loss at Manchester City in the FA Cup quarter-finals.



MILAN: Napoli's Matteo Politano (C) shoots to score against AC Milan during their Serie A match at Stadio Diego Armando Maradona.

Napoli's Serie A title defence boosted by beating Milan

SPORTS DESK

MILAN: Napoli are still in the hunt to retain their Serie A title after the champions beat Scud-etto rivals AC Milan 1-0 on Monday.

Matteo Politano came off the bench and lashed home the only goal of the game with 11 minutes remaining in front of delighted fans in Naples as the hosts racked up a fifth straight win.

Napoli leapfrogged Milan into second place but still have a battle on their hands to deny Inter a 21st league crown as they sit seven points off the pace with seven matches remaining.

Antonio Conte's team were superior at the Stadio Diego Ar-ma-ndo Maradona, where Politano's second goal of the season decided a largely stodgy contest not helped by Milan only being able to select star attackers Rafael Leao and Christian Pulisic.

"It's a happy moment for us because we're back in second place, I thanked the boys for what they've done this season as it could have finished badly," said Conte of an injury-ravaged season. "We've got back to what we're were like last season, we've got to keep going without getting ahead of ourselves."

Milan now trail their local rivals Inter by nine points and will in all likelihood have to content themselves with a return to the Champions League.

"I think we're done with the Scudetto race. We're nine behind Inter and Napoli are ahead of us now," said Allegri.

"We've got an advantage of a few points for the Champions League, let's try to keep it that way by winning some matches."

Napoli's win came without Romelu Lukaku who has

incur-red the wrath of the club hierarchy after staying in Belgium for treatment for a hip injury, while Denmark striker Rasmus Hojl-und ruled out with a stomach bug.

Winter signing Giovane forced Maignan into the best save of the match in the 50th minute with a stinging drive from distance and there was little more goalmouth action until Politano pounced on Koni De Winter's weak headed clearance with a powerful, and decisive, first-time finish.

JUVE EYE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Juventus moved to within a point of Serie A's Champions League places with a 2-0 win over Genoa, as the top four battle heats up.

Taking advantage of fourth-placed Como's goalless draw at Udinese earlier in the day, Juve notched the three points in Turin thanks to Gleison Bremer's fourth-minute header and a 17th-minute strike from the ever-reliable Weston McKennie.

American McKennie's fine finish took his Serie A tally to five, equalling his best-ever haul in a single league season back in his first campaign with Juve in 2020/21.

But he showed no interest in that personal statistic when speaking with DAZN after the match, saying "the important thing is getting into the Champions League".

Home fans had to thank goalkeeper Michele Di Gregorio for a superb double save which stopped spirited Genoa from getting back into the game, first pawing away Aaron Martin's penalty and then keeping out Vitinha's volley.

Di Gregorio has had a tough second season at Juve, dropped from the first team in

February following a series of clangers and only in goal on Monday due to Mattia Perin being substituted at half-time with a calf injury.

Kingsmen seek turnaround as PSL arrives in Karachi

By Maqsood Khalid

KARACHI: Hyderabad Kingsmen will look to arrest their disappointing start to the HBL Pakistan Super League when they take on Peshawar Zalmi at the National Bank Stadium on Wednesday, marking the start of the league's Karachi leg. The city is set to host matches until April 28.

The Kingsmen, one of the two new franchises in the expanded 11th edition of the PSL, has lost all three of their opening matches and sit at the bottom of the points table.

Peshawar Zalmi have played the least number of games so far — only two — registering one win against Rawalpindiz while their match against Islamabad United was washed out without a ball being bowled. Zalmi will be returning to action after a gap of nearly a week.

Kingsmen all-rounder Hassan Khan, speaking on the sidelines of the team's training session at the venue on Tuesday, acknowledged the slow beginning but highlighted the positive team environment.

"The start wasn't as good as it should have been, but the environment is very good," he said. "All the boys are together, gelling well and practicing. We spend time together in the hotel as well. So it's a good atmosphere, and we hope that things will change."

The move to Karachi offers the Kingsmen a change of scenery, though the match will be played behind closed doors due to the government's ongoing austerity drive.

The National Bank Stadium has traditionally provided good batting conditions in T20 cricket, with first-innings scores often hovering around 170-180, though dew and spin can influence the second half of the game.

A talking point for Hyderabad has been Marnus Labuschagne's captaining the side despite his relatively limited T20 experience and the challenge of leading a new franchise.

Hassan defended the choice and expressed confidence that Labuschagne has now settled in.

"Marcus is an experienced player, a seasoned player," said the 27-year-old. "As you know, he's a big name in world cricket. Okay, his T20 experience may not be that much, but he plays Big Bash regularly and plays his cricket in Australia."



KARACHI: Peshawar Zalmi's Aamer Jamal bowls during a net practice session at the National Bank Stadium.

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Apocalyptic threats

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump's threats to Iran are getting more menacing by the day, raising serious questions about his fitness to hold office. Dangerous and provocative remarks posted on social media are not uncommon. But when such statements emanate from the leader of the world's most powerful nation, backed by the firepower of the US military machine, the international community must take notice and act to check America's rogue behaviour. Mr Trump is doubling down on his threats to Iran, and followed up his earlier insults with a chilling warning on Tuesday: referring to the Islamic Republic, he threatened that "a whole civilisation will die tonight". Earlier, he had called Iranians "animals". This language is not too different from the genocidal terms used by America's close ally Israel, and perhaps Mr Trump has been inspired by his friends in Tel Aviv to do to Iran what they have done to Gaza and are now doing to Lebanon.

Although ceasefire efforts were continuing at the time of writing, with Pakistan playing a key role, if Mr Trump is willing to back up his shocking threats with action, diplomacy may be dead for the foreseeable future in this conflict. Soon after the dire Trumpian threats, there were reports of attacks on Kharg Island, which hosts major Iranian oil facilities. It appears the US administration is not interested in a ceasefire or a peaceful resolution. It wants total surrender from Iran, which is something Tehran is not willing to comply with. Meanwhile, Israel has been wreaking havoc in Lebanon, as it tries unsuccessfully to neutralise Iran's ally Hezbollah. In the process, hundreds of Lebanese civilians have been murdered, and over a million displaced. It would not be incorrect to state that since the US and Israel began their campaign on Feb 28, while they have caused immense destruction throughout the region, they have failed to achieve their goals, particularly the fall of the Iranian system, and the defeat of Tehran's regional allies. Now, seemingly in desperation, they are planning to set the entire region on fire to hide their failures. The world needs to stop the US and Israel from proceeding on their path of open-ended aggression.

Far too many people have been killed in this senseless war, and the global economy is in a fragile state. It seems that the US has been emboldened by its rescue last week of two soldiers who had been downed over Iranian territory while violating that country's sovereignty. The gung-ho rescue operation may have convinced the US president and his pugnacious war chief to attempt a ground invasion. This would be a blunder of massive proportions. It is hoped that Mr Trump walks back his destructive threats and an immediate cessation of hostilities is announced.

By Rihab Khalid

Shift to electric

PAKISTAN'S cooking fuel economy is under pressure from global gas shocks. The Israel-Iran conflict has disrupted LNG shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, and Qatar — the world's second-largest LNG exporter — has declared force majeure on its gas plants. Nearly all of Pakistan's LNG imports come from Qatar, and Senate briefings warned of cuts in March shipments and possible disruptions in April. Although officials have said households will be prioritised, the disruption underscores the vulnerability of any household energy system built on insecure imported fuels to geopolitical shocks beyond the control of ordinary citizens.

Yet Pakistan's cooking crisis did not begin with this war. For years, domestic gas reserves have been shrinking. In 2021, the government banned new household gas connections amid depleting reserves, leaving many households reliant on pricey LPG cylinders or solid fuels. Although the ban was lifted last year, prior restrictions mean many developments, including high-end residential sectors such as DHA Islamabad, still lack gas lines. This marks a structural shift: piped gas can no longer be treated as the inevitable cooking fuel of Pakistan's urban future. For many homes, electric stoves may present the only clean cooking pathway if gas remains scarce.

This fragility exists within an already unequal cooking landscape. According to the World Bank's Pakistan Energy Survey, about 55.7 per cent of households rely on traditional or open-fire stoves as their primary cooking source, especially in the rural areas, while 33.8pc use collected wood. Only about 44pc of households cook with clean fuels (38.6pc use piped gas, 5.7pc LPG). The current LNG shocks therefore risk reinforcing existing energy poverty.

The emerging case for electric cooking: This situation shows why electric cooking deserves serious attention now. Not because it can replace gas for everyone overnight, but because the conditions that once made it seem unrealistic have changed dramatically.

In 2021, according to the UK aid-funded Modern Energy Cooking Services

Programme's Global Market Assessment, Pakistan ranked 83rd out of 130 countries on electric cooking readiness (compared to India at ninth place).

By 2023, Pakistan had moved up to 63rd position. Although this does not make Pakistan a leading market, it does show movement. More importantly, the country of today is not the country of 2021. Reuters has reported that rooftop solar has surged to more than 20 GW across Pakistan, while 74pc of electricity generation comes from domestic sources. What looked marginal a few years ago now looks increasingly strategic.

Could electric cooking be Pakistan's answer to a war-driven gas crisis?

There is also growing evidence that the appliance market is beginning to catch up. Retailers such as Carrefour and Al-Fatah list induction and infrared stoves from Rs4,000 to over Rs15,000. Daraz carries multiple electric stoves, some with instalment plans, while Lahore Centre explicitly advertises "easy instalment plans" on hot plates. This matters since electric cooking cannot scale if appliances remain niche, inaccessible or incompatible with cooking needs. Their growing visibility in mainstream retail and e-commerce suggests that an urban consumer market is emerging.

The electric-cooking market has been developing even more rapidly across South Asia. Reuters reported that Indian induction sales increased 30 times in March amid gas shortages. India launched its National Efficient Cooking Programme in 2023 to subsidise induction stoves, targeting the distribution of two million to reduce LPG reliance. Nepal aims to raise the share of households cooking primarily with electricity from 0.5pc to 25pc by 2030.

Bangladesh has trialled carbon financing, whereby ATEC's 'Cook-to-Earn' pilot pays women for each kilowatt hour of electric cooking used, yielding a 38pc to 56pc jump in stove usage. These examples show that when gas supplies tighten, electric cooking can gain traction if appliances and financing are available. In Pakistan too, necessity has often driven household energy innovation — first through UPS systems during early load-shedding, and more recently through

rooftop solar. Electric cooking may well follow a similar path.

Towards a viable and fair transition: Still, the transition to electric cooking will require a strategic effort. The most feasible shift is likely among middle- and upper-income urban households, especially those already benefiting from rooftop solar. Pakistan's residential solar boom can act as a key enabler, allowing households with solar panels to run induction stoves at near-zero marginal cost during daylight hours. Better-off flat-owners also typically have three-phase power and modern wiring, making installation easier. Recent data shows about 39pc of Pakistanis live in urban areas with near-universal electricity access. However, for lower-income households, renters, residents of informal settlements and many rural communities, the situation is more challenging. The latest Household Integrated Economic Survey shows that electricity already accounts for the largest share of household fuel and lighting expenditure (55.91pc), and the shift towards modern fuels rises sharply with income. Left entirely to the market, electric cooking could thus deepen inequality rather than reduce it.

The question, then, is not whether electric cooking is the future — it almost certainly is. The real issue is whether Pakistan will shape that transition deliberately or allow it to unfold unevenly and by default. A serious response would include targeted appliance finance, dedicated electric cooking tariffs, links to rooftop solar packages, quality and safety standards and pilots for low-income communities backed by concessional or carbon finance.

Pakistan's gas crisis should be seen not only as a shortage challenge; it's also an opportunity for transition. The old assumption that cooking gas would continue expanding quietly into new homes and future transitions no longer holds. Electric cooking will not solve every problem, and it will not do so for everyone at once. But in a country experiencing a rooftop solar boom, mounting gas insecurity and renewed pressure for self-sufficient energy systems, it may now offer one of the clearest pathways towards a more resilient cooking future.

By Nasira Habib

Life in soil

SHE transformed how the world understands soil, farming and the hidden life beneath our feet. Elaine Ingham (1952-2026), one of the most influential voices in rethinking how we grow food, passed away on Feb 16, 2026, at the age of 73. She leaves behind a legacy that extends far beyond science — into farms, fields and the everyday lives of growers across the world.

Dr Ingham challenged dominant agricultural practices that rely heavily on chemical fertilisers, pesticides and intensive tillage. Her work drew attention to soil biology — the complex networks of bacteria, fungi and other microorganisms that support plant health. She consistently argued that disrupting this living system weakens the very foundation of agriculture.

In place of chemical dependency, she advocated approaches centred on restoring soil life through practical, accessible methods. In doing so, she validated long-held ecological wisdom while offering a scientific framework to understand it. Importantly, her 'soil food web approach' also made farming more economically viable for growers by reducing dependence on costly external inputs and enabling them to rely on the biological processes within their own soils.

Dr Ingham developed practical, low-cost methods from complex soil microbiology, offering farmers a path out of debt. Through on-farm composting, compost tea and simple soil biology assessment, they can restore soil fertility and reduce reliance on costly external inputs, strengthening self-reliance and long-term resilience. For countries like ours, Dr Ingham's work has particular significance.

What set her apart was not only her science, but her method. She broke the notion that science belongs only to laboratories and experts. With a simple microscope — the same tool she had learned to use as a child — she enabled farmers, gardeners and ordinary people to observe their own soils. This shift was profound. It reduced the distance between scientist and farmer, turning passive recipients of advice into active investigators. Growers learned to assess soil biology, understand relationships between organisms and plants and make informed decisions rooted in observation rather than dependence.

Across diverse contexts — from small gardens to large farms — practitioners reported improvements in soil structure, crop resilience and reduced reliance on external inputs. While debates around agricultural systems continue, her work has contributed significantly to a growing global interest in regenerative and agroecological practices. Through the Soil Food Web School, Dr Ingham trained people across continents, building a network of practitioners working with soil ecosystems as "living laboratories". She gave them not only tools, but language, confidence and a renewed sense of agency.

Her work also holds deep relevance in the context of climate change. Healthy soils, rich in organic matter, can store carbon, improve water retention and enhance resilience to extreme weather. At a time when global agriculture faces unprecedented stress, her insights offer pathways that are both ecological and practical.

For countries like Pakistan, where soil degradation, rising health and environmental costs of chemical inputs, and

climate vulnerability pose serious challenges, her work carries particular significance. Rebuilding soil health is not only an environmental necessity but a strategic policy priority. Approaches that reduce dependence on imported inputs, lower production costs and restore ecological balance can strengthen far-m-er livelihoods while enhancing national food security. Integrating soil biology into agricultural policy, extension systems and research agendas offers a pathway towards climate-resilient, economic sustainability and greater autonomy for growers.

Despite her global influence, Dr Ingham remained, at heart, a teacher — approachable, clear and quietly persuasive. She did not ask people to accept her ideas unquestioningly; she invited them to observe, to test and to see for themselves. There was something almost childlike in her curiosity — a willingness to look closely at what others overlooked. Like the young girl who once wondered about the hidden life, she spent her life helping others rediscover that same sense of wonder.

If her work leaves us with one enduring lesson, it is this: the smallest and most invisible

forms of life hold the greatest power to sustain our world. Her passing marks the loss of a remarkable scientist and educator.

But her legacy lives on — in healthier soils, in empowered farmers, and in a growing movement that continues to see the earth not as inert ground, but as a living system.

The responsibility now lies with us — farmers, scientists and policymakers alike — to carry forward this vision.

DAILY MIRROR

Khawaja Asif hails Pakistan's diplomatic, strategic achievements

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Wednesday praised Pakistan's recent accomplishments on the international stage, describing them as a "new identity" for the nation and commending the country's leadership for playing a constructive role in promoting peace and stability.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said, "The victories we have achieved, both on the battlefield and diplomatically, have given Pakistan a renewed global standing. Our leadership, under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, has demonstrated the ability to mediate and maintain peace anywhere in the world."

He described Pakistan's accomplishments as a moment of unparalleled pride and recognition in the country's history, surpassing previous individual or bilateral achievements.

He added that Pakistan's successes were being widely acknowledged across the globe.

"From European nations to Muslim countries, and across our region and

beyond, Pakistan's leadership under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir is receiving widespread praise. This level of coordination and understanding between our leadership and institutions is unprecedented in our history," he said.

Khawaja Asif highlighted that these achievements have set a historic benchmark for the nation. "The dividends of this leadership vision are visible today. Even the US President has repeatedly endorsed Pakistan's successes, acknowledging our superiority in conflict with India and the country's diplomatic standing," he added.

He stressed that these accomplishments would leave a lasting legacy for future generations, emphasising that Pakistan's resilience—despite internal challenges such as operations against the Taliban—reflects the nation's strength and unity.

"Pakistan's stature has grown significantly. Despite facing internal and external challenges, our country has emerged stronger, and the unity of our leadership is the key to these historic gains," he said.

Khawaja Asif added that Pakistan's progress and resilience were the result of the sacrifices and bravery of its people across various fronts, earning recog-

niton even from nations previously unaware of Pakistan's significance on the global map.

"Through commitment to our nation and dedication to our land, Pakistanis have showcased their true intentions and unity. These victories are dividends of our leadership's vision and the synchronization of national efforts," he said. Khawaja Asif underscored that the successes have not only strengthened Pakistan's identity but also positioned it as a center of hope and stability in the region.

He highlighted Pakistan's constructive role in promoting peace, particularly in the Gulf, where ties with Iran, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia have been reinforced.

"The teachings of our faith also guide us to act as mediators among nations. By promoting reconciliation and peace, Pakistan is earning benefits that will secure the country's future for coming generations," he added.

Khawaja Asif urged critics abroad to refrain from spreading negativity against Pakistan, stressing that protecting the country's reputation is a collective responsibility of all Pakistanis.



Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani Addresses Launch of National Anthem in Choral Format and Inaugural of Pak-Romania Relations Photo Exhibition at Parliament House.

China appreciates Pakistan's constructive role in advancing peace in region

APP

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong on Wednesday called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, and conveyed the deep appreciation of the Government of China for Pakistan's constructive role in advancing peace and security in the Middle East and the Gulf region.

The DPM/FM underscored Pakistan's sustained commitment to promoting dialogue and diplomacy as essential means for achieving lasting peace and stability in the Middle East and West Asia.

Both sides expressed the hope that ongoing efforts would lead to durable peace and security in the region, in the interest of all parties.

Babar pays rich tribute to General Asim Munir for averting war in region

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Assistant Home Department Babar Yousafzai has paid a great tribute to General Asim Munir on Wednesday.

He said that Pakistan has once again proven that it has always been a proponent of peace and a seeker of stability in the region.

In his statement, Babar Yousafzai said that due to the wise efforts and strategy of Field Marshal General Asim Munir, the dangers of war in the region have been effectively averted, which is a major diplomatic achievement. He said that Pakistan's mediation role is being recognized not only by friendly countries but also by adversaries, which is a clear proof of the country's growing reputation at the global level. Babar Yousafzai further said that the world should award Field Marshal General Asim Munir the Nobel Peace Prize for his outstanding role in promoting peace. He said that Pakistan has played an important role in establishing peace in Afghanistan before, and recent efforts have once again highlighted Pakistan's positive and responsible face before the world. He further said that all these achievements are the result of the leadership and vision of the Field Marshal, who has highlighted Pakistan as a peace-loving country on the global stage.

Secretary C&W reviews progress of Chaman Phatak project, directs to complete it soon

APP

Quetta: On special directive of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Provincial Minister for Communications and Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa, Secretary Communications and Works (C&W) Babar Khan reviewed the progress of the Chaman Phatak to Koila Phatak road project.

On this occasion, Chief Engineer E&M Works Division Mehrullah Jogezeai, Chief Engineer Quetta Zone Abdul Rahim Bangulzai, SE Quetta City Roads Azhar Jan and Chief Architect Dr. Sohrab Marri, besides other relevant officials, were also present.

During the visit, Chief Engineer E&M Works Division Mehrullah Jogezeai gave a briefing and said that the project has entered its final stages of completion and soon this project would be completed 100 per cent.

Secretary Communications and Works (C&W) Babar Khan gave instructions on this occasion that all the work of the final

stages of the project should be completed within a week.

He said that the three points of the project, Koila Phatak, Pishin Stop and Chaman Phatak areas should be further expanded so that the densely populated areas of the city to be connected, the traffic flow should be improved in the area.

The Secretary further said that special care should be taken regarding the quality of the said project and no negligence in this regard would be tolerated.

He said that development and prosperity depend on the good performance of the Department of Communications and Works and this best performance would be achieved when these projects are completed even before the scheduled time.

Babar Khan further stated that the Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, has also given the same instructions that this project should be completed as soon as possible so that the people get rid of the traffic problems and the population of the city would not face any difficulty in reaching their destinations.

World steps back from brink of catastrophe: Sherry Rehman

APP

ISLAMABAD: Central leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Sherry Rehman, on Wednesday said the world had stepped back from the brink of a devastating conflict, describing the recent situation as one in which "humanity had come dangerously close to catastrophe."

Speaking in the Senate on a motion to discuss the prevailing regional situation, she said the world had pulled back from the edge of a major crisis, warning that the consequences could have been far more severe for the entire region and beyond.

She said global tensions had reached an alarming level, adding that the situation could have seriously impacted not only Muslim countries but the entire world.

She acknowledged the efforts of Pakistan's leadership and its diplomatic engagement, saying the country had played a role in helping steer the situation

towards de-escalation.

She also expressed appreciation for international efforts, including those by Iran and the United States, in moving towards a ceasefire and dialogue.

Sherry Rehman stressed the need for sustained diplomatic engagement to ensure lasting peace.

She warned that any escalation could have led to unimaginable consequences, affecting economies, development, and basic human security across the region.

She said the world must collectively act to preserve peace, adding that no country could afford another large-scale conflict.

Sherry Rehman said Pakistan had emerged as a responsible state advocating dialogue and stability, and urged all nations to fulfil their responsibilities in maintaining the fragile peace.

She emphasised that the coming days would be critical in determining whether the ceasefire could be transformed into a durable and sustainable peace.

Pakistan played key role in reducing regional tensions: Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry

INP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said Pakistan has once again shown leadership at the global level as a country that supports peace, wisdom and responsibility.

In a statement on X on Wednesday, he said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Pakistan played an active and strategic role in lowering tensions in the region.

He said the continuous and coordinated diplomatic efforts of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar helped present Pakistan's position effectively at the international level.

The minister said Pakistan has proven that it is not just watching events but is playing a leading role by protecting its national interests and promoting peace, dialogue and stability in the region.

He added that Pakistan's efforts to help achieve a ceasefire between Iran and the United States show its commitment as a responsible country.

"This leadership guides the nation in difficult times and works day and night for peace," he said.

MNA Jamal Raisani welcomes ceasefire between Iran & US

APP

Quetta: Member of National Assembly (MNA) Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani on Wednesday welcomed the ceasefire between Iran and the United States, calling it an important and welcome development towards reducing tensions in the region.

In his statement, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) central leader Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani said that Member National Assembly Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani appreciated the leadership of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and said that under their guidance, Pakistan has played an effective role in promoting peace, stability and a balanced foreign policy in the region.

He noted that Pakistan has always demonstrated responsible diplomacy and supported reduction of tensions, dialogue and peaceful resolution at every forum. He said that the recent progress is a positive step in the context of the Islamabad talks and the emerging Islamabad Accord, which reflects Pakistan's continuous efforts to promote peace.

Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani said that Pakistan would continue its efforts to promote peace.

Early childhood development vital for Pakistan's future: Ahsan Iqbal

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday stressed that early childhood development must be placed at the core of national policy and economic reform, warning that inadequate investment in the first years of life was undermining Pakistan's human capital, productivity, and long-term global competitiveness.

The minister was addressing the fifth International Conference on Early Childhood Development held at Allama Iqbal Open University, attended by academics, development partners, policymakers, and representatives of civil society.

He underscored that early childhood represents the foundational stage from which a nation's development trajectory truly begins, asserting that the direction of future national progress and transformation is determined during these formative years.

He emphasised that global research consistently demonstrates that early childhood was critical for brain development, cognitive growth, emotional resilience, and long-term productivity.

Referring to international evidence, he noted that institutions such as UNICEF and WHO highlight the significance of the first 1,000 days of life, while Nobel Laureate economist James

Heckman's research shows that investments in early childhood can yield annual returns of up to 13 per cent in well-designed programmes.

Highlighting the urgency of the issue in Pakistan's context, the minister pointed out that more than 40 per cent of children under the age of five suffer from stunting, while over half are at risk of poor developmental outcomes due to inadequate nutrition, limited early stimulation, and insufficient healthcare.

He further noted that early childhood education enrolment for children aged three to five stood at only 31 per cent in 2022. Describing these figures as alarming, he termed the situation a matter of national concern, warning that compromised early development undermines the country's ability to compete in a global knowledge economy.

He said under the government's "Uraan Pakistan" vision, a shift is being made from a narrow focus on physical infrastructure towards a broader human development framework centred on skills, health, and intellectual capacity.

Drawing on global best practices, the minister highlighted the importance of integrated policy

approaches, referencing the "Nurturing Care Framework" advocated by international organisations, which combines health, nutrition, responsive caregiving, safety, and early learning opportunities.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhel in a meeting with Provincial Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani.

Making LG institutions financially stable need of hour: Secretary Rauf

APP

Quetta: Secretary Local Government and Rural Development Abdul Rauf Baloch on Wednesday said that making local government (LG) institutions financially stable is the need of the hour, so that they could play an effective role in providing basic facilities to the people. He said this while chairing a meeting regarding the proposed draft model tax schedule for Balochistan Local Councils through video link.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Local Government Board Shujaat Ali, Chief Metropolitan Corporation Nazir Zehri, Khadim Hussain and senior officers of the Local Government and Rural Development Department and Metropolitan Corporation Quetta. The meeting discussed the draft model tax schedule prepared under Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2010 in detail.

On this occasion, a comprehensive presentation was also given by the concerned

authorities on the draft tax schedule, in which the proposed taxes, their implementation procedures, and various aspects of strengthening the financial autonomy of local councils were highlighted. Addressing the meeting via video link, Secretary Local Government Abdul Rauf Baloch stressed that the tax schedule should be formulated in such a way that not only the revenue of local governments increases but also would not put unnecessary burden on the people. During the meeting, previous notifications and tax policies were also reviewed and discussed in detail so that the new policy could be made compatible with the current requirements.

The participants presented various suggestions, which were finalized and decided to submit to the relevant forum.

The Secretary Local Government directed that all the suggestions should be made practical and workable, so that the local government system can be made more functional, transparent and people-friendly.

Chairman, BoG, OPF, apprised the participants of various issues highlighted by the Pakistani community during his recent visits to Japan and Korea

By Zahid Ahmed Khan

Islamabad: A meeting between Syed Qamar Raza, Chairman, Board of Governors, Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF), and Lt. Gen. Munir Afsar, Chairman, NADRA, was held at the OPF Head Office in Islamabad.

Mr. Mohammed Afzaal Bhatti, Managing Director, OPF, along with senior officers from both NADRA and OPF were also present. During the meeting, matters relating to the facilitation of overseas Pakistanis by NADRA were discussed in detail, with particular emphasis on enhancing service delivery and ensuring the swift issuance of NADRA-related documents.

The Chairman, BoG, OPF, apprised the participants of various issues highlighted by the Pakistani community during his recent visits to Japan and Korea. He specifically requested the establishment of a NADRA facilitation desk at the Embassy of Pakistan in Tokyo, not-

ing that the absence of such a facility is causing considerable difficulties for the Pakistani community residing there.

The Chairman, NADRA, assured that the proposal would be considered as a priority basis.

Syed Qamar Raza expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the



Chairman, NADRA, for visiting OPF and for consistently prioritizing the concerns of overseas Pakistanis.

Both sides agreed to work collaboratively to ensure the prompt and effective resolution of issues faced by the overseas Pakistani community.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar calls on Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan.