

DAILY MIRROR

Chief editor Syed Mumtaz Ahmed

Executive editor Syed Kamran Mumtaz

Wednesday, April, 22, 2026

Zul Qadaah, 03, 1447

PM Shehbaz approves streamlining of P3A to expedite development projects

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday gave in-principle approval to further integrate and strengthen the Public-Private Partnership Authority (P3A) and its related framework to speed up development initiatives during a high-level meeting.

According to a statement by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), PM Shehbaz chaired a high-level meeting in Islamabad to accelerate development projects through public-private partnerships (PPP) and instructed authorities to expedite the implementation of the newly approved system.

"Meeting decided that the P3A would be placed under the Privatisation Division to align its performance with modern requirements and improve efficiency in PPP-based projects," it said.

The statement further added that the prime minister directed that the capacity of relevant ministries and departments be enhanced to enable them to initiate development projects through public-private partnerships.

Premier said PPP-based projects should be made part of the key performance indicators (KPIs) of ministries and departments, adding that "through P3A, we were making the public-private partnership system more transparent and faster".

"The meeting was given a comparative overview of PPP models in various countries at regional and global levels, along with a briefing on the proposed new system. Officials said that under the new framework, the Cabinet Committee on Privatisation and the Privatisation Division would oversee the P3A," read the statement.

Nawaz Sharif praises PM Shehbaz, CDF Asim Munir for boosting Pakistan's global standing

NEWS DESK

GILGIT-BALTISTAN: Former prime minister and president of the Pakistan Muslim League (N), Nawaz Sharif, said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, and Army Chief Syed Asim Munir have played a historic role in enhancing Pakistan's global reputation.

Addressing a high-level meeting of the Gilgit-Baltistan parliamentary board, Nawaz Sharif said his party has consistently fulfilled its responsibilities in both political and defense domains. He credited the leadership's efforts for improving the international perception of the Pakistani passport.

He said the Pakistan Muslim League (N) has delivered development projects in Gilgit-Baltistan, including a road project worth Rs60 billion that significantly reduced travel time and distances. He added that the prime minister is giving

special attention to the region's development.

The former premier emphasized that such projects are not favors but the rightful entitlement of the people. "We have not relied on rhetoric; we have demonstrated performance through practical work," he said, calling for collective efforts to drive national progress.

He added that Punjab and the federal government are leading in development, noting that Gilgit-Baltistan is as important to him as Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan. He reiterated that his party believes in tangible action across all sectors. Nawaz Sharif assured that any funding gaps for Gilgit-Baltistan would be addressed, stating he would personally ensure allocation of resources in coordination with the prime minister. Referring to infrastructure, he said projects such as the Lowari Tunnel were essential, noting that travel time in some areas has been reduced from 24 hours to 10 hours.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding mechanism for Public-Private Partnership Authority.

Trump says he does not want to extend ceasefire with Iran

Pakistan awaits Iran response as ceasefire deadline looms over Iran-US talks in Islamabad

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON/ISLAMABAD: Donald Trump said on Tuesday he does not want to extend the current ceasefire with Iran, warning that the United States could resume military action if a deal is not reached soon. Speaking to CNBC, Trump said Washington was negotiating from a position of strength and remained prepared to escalate. "I don't want to do that. We don't have that much time," he said when asked about extending the truce, adding that he expected the US would secure what he described as a "great deal".

He also signalled a return to military action if talks fail. "I expect to be bombing because I think that's a better attitude to go in with. But we're ready to go. I mean, the military is raring to go," he said.

The remarks came as the US military said it had seized a tanker linked to Iran in international waters, in what appears to be part of efforts to

enforce a blockade. The vessel, identified as the Tifani, was boarded "without incident", according to United States Central Command. The tanker, capable of carrying 2 million barrels of crude, had last reported its position near Sri Lanka and was signalling Singapore as its destination.

"As we have made clear, we will pursue global maritime enforcement efforts to disrupt illicit networks and interdict sanctioned vessels providing material support to Iran - anywhere they operate," the command said. Trump also accused Tehran of repeatedly violating the ceasefire, though he did not provide details. There was no immediate response from Iran on the tanker seizure, but the move could complicate efforts to revive diplomacy.

Therefor, Islamabad remains at the centre of ongoing diplomatic activity as Pakistan continues to facilitate engagement linked to the proposed Iran-US discussions in the federal capital.

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has stated that Pakistan is still awaiting a formal response from Tehran regarding its participation in the upcoming round of talks in Islamabad, even as diplomatic efforts continue at multiple levels.

Allama Iqbal was benefactor of sub-continent Muslims, great intellectual leader: PM

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif paid his heartfelt tribute to the poet of the East, thinker of Islam and Pakistan, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, on behalf of the entire nation and said undoubtedly he was a benefactor of the Muslims of the subcontinent and a great intellectual leader.

In a message on Iqbal Day observed on April 21, he said, "Allama Iqbal gave a message for self, action, faith and intellectual freedom. Allama Iqbal's thoughts gave a subdued nation awareness, self-confidence and a sense of continuous struggle," he added.

The Prime Minister said, "In today's national and global circumstances, Allama Iqbal's message is of extraordinary importance to us. Intellectual chaos, extremism, and social intolerance require us to build our individual and collective lives in the light of Allama Iqbal's intellectual training. Allama Iqbal declared love, brotherhood, and national awareness as the goals of life."

"In the light of Allama Iqbal's ideals, a Pakistan built on the strong foundations of peace, unity, knowledge, character, and justice is our future. The Government of Pakistan is committed to the complete eradication of terrorism, extremism, and sectarianism.

CM Bugti for protection of natural environment is shared responsibility of all of us

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Tuesday said that Earth Day reminds us of the fact that the protection and survival of the natural environment is a shared responsibility of all of us, for which collective awareness and practical measures are indispensable.

In his message on the occasion of Earth Day, he said that Balochistan is a province rich in natural resources and diverse ecosystems, where there are important natural assets from coastal mangroves to juniper and chilgoza forests in high mountainous areas, which play a key role in climate protection, water resource stability and public employment.

He said that however, chal-

lenges such as climate change, prolonged drought and land degradation are affecting the province, which requires urgent and collective measures to address. The Chief Minister said that the Balochistan government is committed to promoting sustainable development, increasing forest area and protecting biodiversity.

He urged the people to play a full role in planting trees, conserving water and protecting natural resources.

The CM expressed satisfaction that Alhamdulillah Balochistan is the first province of Pakistan to have established its own Climate Endowment Fund and has also formulated a regular policy for its transparent and effective use, which is a significant step towards addressing climate challenges.



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy has conducted successful live weapon firing of Taimoor Air-Launched Cruise Missile - an indigenously developed Anti-Ship Weapon.

Pakistan Navy successfully tests air-to-surface cruise missile "Taimoor"

APP

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Navy has successfully conducted the test of its indigenously developed air-to-surface cruise missile "Taimoor."

According to ISPR, the successful missile firing demonstrated Pakistan Navy's precision targeting at sea and operational readiness.

The missile, launched from the air towards a sea target, accurately hit its designated objective with high precision.

This successful test reaffirms the Pakistan Navy's capability to detect and neutralize targets at extended ranges in maritime domains.

The demonstration of the Taimoor cruise missile marks a significant addition to the country's defence capabilities.

Also read: Pakistan, Egypt hold joint military exercise 'Thunder-II'

Pakistan Navy remains committed to safeguarding national maritime interests and defending territorial waters.

The successful firing of the air-to-surface missile has further strengthened the integrated and multi-dimensional defence capabilities of the armed forces.

President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff Asim Munir, Air Chief Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu and Naval Chief Naveed Ashraf congratulated scientists and engineers on achieving this milestone.

Azerbaijan says it is ready to supply LNG to Pakistan

MONITORING DESK

Azerbaijan's state energy company SOCAR is ready to supply liquefied natural gas to Pakistan as soon as it receives a request from Islamabad, the company told Reuters on Tuesday, as Pakistan seeks spot cargoes to ease a growing energy shortfall.

SOCAR said a framework agreement signed in 2025 between SOCAR Trading and Pakistan LNG allows the Pakistani buyer to purchase LNG cargoes directly under an accelerated procedure.

"SOCAR is ready to provide LNG to Pakistan as soon as PLL submits a corresponding request," the company said in response to Reuters questions.

SOCAR did not say whether such a request had already been made, when a first delivery could take place, or whose LNG would be supplied under the agreement.

Pakistan, which relies heavily on gas for its energy needs, remains vulnerable to declining domestic production and swings in global LNG prices amid the supply disruptions related to the war with Iran.

US, Chinese diplomats praise Pakistan's role in regional diplomacy

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia stress dialogue and diplomacy for lasting peace: FO

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan said that US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker met with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to discuss the latest regional situation.

During the meeting, Pakistan emphasized the importance of dialogue and diplomacy, urging continued engagement between the United States and Iran. The US diplomat appreciated Pakistan's positive role in promoting peace in the region. Earlier, Ishaq Dar also held a separate meeting with Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, where regional developments were discussed.

According to an official statement, the Chinese envoy praised Pakistan's consistent efforts to facilitate communication between the United States and Iran, describing them as important for long-term regional and global peace and stability. He also acknowledged Pakistan's constructive diplomatic engagement in encouraging dialogue between the two sides.

Therefore, Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud has voiced the kingdom's support for Pakistan's continued diplomatic efforts to end the Middle East war, the Foreign Office (FO) says.

In a call with Riyadh's top diplomat, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar discussed the latest regional developments, with the pair emphasising "the importance of dialogue and engagement for achieving lasting peace and stability".



QUETTA: Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti addressing the gathering.

Disciplinary proceedings must be carried out with full transparency: SC

INP

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has laid down important legal principles in a case relating to the dismissal of a government employee and a dispute over absence from duty, emphasizing that disciplinary proceedings and the exercise of administrative authority must be carried out with full transparency, clear record, and unambiguous decision-making. According to a detailed written judgment approved for reporting, a two-member bench comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Chief Justice Yahya Afridi issued these observations after hearing a service-related case of Arsalan Ahmed.

The court held that merely on the basis of administrative inconsistency or unclear record entries, a penalty cannot automatically be deemed valid, nor can disciplinary action against an employee be treated as final. It further observed that even if an employee's absence is later converted

into Extraordinary Leave (EOL), it does not necessarily amount to the withdrawal or nullification of disciplinary proceedings or dismissal, as both matters carry separate legal standing and cannot be used interchangeably.

The judgment stressed that the competent authority must clearly determine whether, despite granting relief such as EOL, a disciplinary penalty can still be sustained. Any such decision must be made after due consideration and on sound legal grounds.

The court also noted that contradictions, ambiguities, or inadvertent entries in official records weaken the legal basis for maintaining strict disciplinary actions.

Highlighting the importance of due process, the court observed that proper hearing, clearly defined charges, and impartial proceedings are essential components of lawful disciplinary action; otherwise, such proceedings cannot be regarded as meeting the requirements of justice.

FinMin says Pakistan regaining macroeconomic stability, investor confidence

Says country recently re-entered international capital markets after 4-year hiatus through Eurobond transaction

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday said the country was making a steady return to macroeconomic stability and regaining access to international capital markets. According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Finance on X, Aurangzeb held a meeting in Islamabad with the European Union Ambassador, Raimundas Karoblis, where both sides discussed economic cooperation, investment prospects, and ongoing reforms.

Aurangzeb said Pakistan had "recently re-entered international capital markets after a four-year hiatus through a privately placed Eurobond transaction", adding that it "witnessed strong investor interest and was successfully upsized".

He described the development as a sign of improving economic fundamentals and signals a positive trajectory for Pakistan's global financial integration".

The finance minister said that the government was pursuing a "diversified capital markets strategy", including future international issuances and innovative financing tools to strengthen external buffers and ensure sustainable financing.

During the meeting, the EU envoy invited Aurangzeb to attend the High-Level EU-Pakistan Business Forum scheduled for April 28 in Islamabad, an invitation the minister accepted. He is also expected to deliver the keynote address titled "Pakistan Rising: Incentives, Reforms, and the Next Investment Frontier".

The forum, scheduled for April 28-29, is expected to serve as a major platform to deepen trade and investment cooperation and to bring together a large number of participants, including government representatives, business leaders, and institutional stakeholders from Pakistan and across the EU.

Aurangzeb welcomed the EU's efforts to bring together international and domestic business leaders, saying such initiatives provide "a valuable platform to showcase Pakistan's

improving business climate and investment potential".

He also reiterated the government's focus on macroeconomic stability, foreign exchange reserves, and structural reforms, while expressing optimism about Pakistan's external sector outlook and continued progress under the GSP+ framework.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from both sides to strengthen Pakistan-EU economic relations and expand trade and investment cooperation.

The EU's GSP+ offers developing countries preferential access to European markets in return for commitments on sustainable development and good governance.

Under the scheme, eligible countries are required to implement 27 international conventions covering human rights, labour rights, environmental protection, and good governance. In exchange, the European Union reduces import duties to zero on more than two-thirds of the tariff lines applied to its exports. Pakistan is currently one of eight countries that benefit from this scheme.

Member APNS

Daily Mirror

Chief editor Syed Mumtaz Ahmed

Printed and Published Chief Executive Syed Mumtaz Ahmed, For MEM Publications (Pvt) Ltd, 4-A Model Town Hali Road Quetta Cantt. Phone, No. 081-2829164, Fax No. 081-2835934

Delicate moment

AS the fate of the US-Iran peace talks expected to be held in Islamabad hangs in the balance, the international community remains on tenterhooks. At the time of writing, Iran had not made a decision about attending, citing mistrust of the US, and violations of the ceasefire allegedly committed by America. The two-week truce is due to end soon.

As per Tehran, there are three main irritants that have called the status of the talks into question: America's blockade of Iranian ports, its attack on an Iranian cargo ship on Sunday, and delays in the Lebanon ceasefire. Unless these issues are addressed, and there is some sort of compromise, it is difficult to say whether the second round will go ahead, even as the Americans are reportedly due in Islamabad this morning.

Amongst the biggest obstacles to peace is the mixed messaging from the White House, frequently combining offers of peace and bombastic threats in the same sentence. For example, US President Donald Trump said he is offering a "fair and reasonable deal", yet in the same post threatened to destroy all of Iran's power plants and bridges in case there is no agreement. He further asserted there would be "no more Mr nice guy" — in all caps — in case Iran did not agree to a deal.

Mr Trump should realise that such bellicose rhetoric has failed to disturb the Iranians, and has only hardened their tone. Moreover, the US war secretary, who peppers his public statements with extremist religious rhetoric, coarse language and threats, seems to be doing all he can to ensure that the talks collapse.

Instead of such bellicosity, which has resulted in much tragedy in Iran and brought America no tangible benefits in this disastrous war, the US should adopt a constructive approach towards Tehran.

On Iran's part, its first vice president has said there should be "a free oil market for all" or "significant costs for everyone".

If the negotiations are to proceed and produce a positive outcome, the US should immediately lift the blockade of Iranian ports, while Tehran should respond by ensuring free passage through the Strait of Hormuz. Furthermore, Washington's threats and bullying should end, and both sides must meet in good faith, respecting the norms of diplomacy. Israel should also be firmly told to end its hostile actions in Lebanon. Pakistan has invested much time and effort in this Herculean diplomatic exercise, and practically the entire international community has recognised its efforts for peace.

There is an urgent need to make a deal to achieve a lasting and just peace — no party can afford to lose sight of this goal.

If this opportunity is lost, the consequences for all will be extremely grim.

By Jawed Naqvi

Suppose Iran didn't exist

ASSUMING and not conceding'. That phrase underpinned the masterly court craft of Perry Mason, the popular detective-lawyer of Erle Stanley Gardner's riveting creations. Let's assume Benjamin Netanyahu's dream of destroying Iran as an Amalek of the Torah or Donald Trump's threat to bomb the country into extinction somehow got pre-empted and Iran never existed. Let's assume and not get needlessly reasonable to question the absurd assumption.

Would it not be a distraction, given the loaded assumption, to ask if Firdausi would still have written the Shahnameh had Iran not existed? Equally counterfactually, where would Zoroastrianism be born? Through which country would Alexander reach the Beas river to culminate his adventures of conquest? Who would Changez Khan turn upon in lieu of Iran? Who would dispute the Shatt al-Arab waterway with Saddam Hussein, assuming Iraq managed to dodge Zionism's poisoned dart? Without Iran where would the Safavids install the Shia beliefs as state religion? In which case who would Ayatollah Khomeini be plotting to overthrow and, without Iran, where?

An Indian journalist wrote a play not long ago with a similarly absurd theme and titled it *The Muslim Vanishes*. The thought was amusing and terrifying at once. Look up the pre-Islamic history of the subcontinent through Hindutva's jaundiced eye (as is Netanyahu's for Iran) and one would perhaps glean how in the absence of Mughal rule, currently being airbrushed from school curricula, Hindu chieftain Rana Pratap would struggle to locate the battleground of Haldi Ghati that would make him a hero with Hindu nationalists. Suppose the RSS and Narendra Modi have their way with their own ignorant and prejudiced agenda to undermine the role of Muslims in the evolution of India's enviable syncretic culture. The next step in conjuring a mythical golden past would involve hiding the endless internal conflicts, including caste-based exploitation and political power struggles between

regional kingdoms — like the Rajput, Pallava, Chalukya and Chola — and frequent battles for dominance, and occasional sectarian disputes between religious factions including Hindus, Buddhists and Jains.

The Iran war brings a totally new set of assumptions on board for any Perry Mason to grapple with.

Therefore, leave Iran aside. Focus instead on how colonialism shaped and created a parallel civilisation that worked as an American cantonment in the southern Gulf based on cheap imported labour in what a former Indian diplomat of Persian descent described as "desalinated water economies". One of the more fascinating stories circulating but never allowed to be published during my journalistic outing in the UAE was about how oil became a great equaliser between Bedouin habitations and the Iranian and Mesopotamian civilisations to the north. And so came a defter version of the overthrow of Iran's Mohammad Mossadegh who was deposed in 1953 for nationalising a British oil company. Had Iran not existed, colonialism would still be there, staging coups and assassinations in the Gulf.

The story of Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan instantly reminds me of one of my grandfathers who had a primeval fear of banks. Shakhbut was the ruler of Abu Dhabi when he was replaced on Aug 6, 1966, by his younger brother, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. As with Mossadegh, the Abu Dhabi coup was carried out with the direct support of Britain, which was the colonial power overseeing the Trucial States at the time.

Sheikh Shakhbut was removed from power by a coalition of his own family and the British government for a strange reason. After the discovery of oil in 1958, Abu Dhabi began accruing significant wealth, but Shakhbut refused to spend the royalties to westernise the emirate. He was so mistrustful of banks that he reportedly preferred keeping large sums of the state's money in a box under his bed. His fate was promptly sealed.

Sheikh Zayed went on to rule Abu Dhabi and became the founding president of the

UAE in 1971. The current president, who joined the Abraham Accords and has become the most ardent spokesman for the destruction of Iran, is his son.

The six Gulf states — Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE and Oman — are often projected as Sunni rivals of the predominantly Shia Iran, which is a grossly misleading and inaccurate description. The six were welded into the Gulf Cooperation Council originally as a foil to the pro-Soviet Baathist Iraq under a Sunni ruling elite. It was in 1990 that the seeds were first sown for the GCC to side with Israel against Saddam Hussein. The GCC members also went against each other one at a time. Saudi against Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE. The UAE against each other that resulted in a failed coup in Sharjah in the 1980s.

The primary target of Saudi Arabia was Kuwait, which had a nascent parliament that threatened the Gulf's feudal satraps. It was made worse by an overwhelming presence in the country of Palestinian nationalists. Had Iraq not invaded Kuwait, the Saudis would have, or so the story goes. It was this acrimony that US ambassador in Baghdad, April Glaspie, exploited to fool Saddam Hussein into invading Kuwait. The outcome? The first pro-Soviet state would fall since the demise of the USSR. Libya, Syria, Yemen and Palestine would follow. After every such crisis, who paid for the military expenditure and damage? The GCC states had to put the petrodollars to work as envisaged. When a state exceeded its brief, as happened when Kuwait picked up over 20 per cent of British Petroleum's shares during an economic trough in the UK, it was quickly made to cough them up by Margaret Thatcher.

The Iran war brings a totally new set of assumptions on board for any Perry Mason to grapple with. Some assume that Iran is winning but do not want to concede that the US is losing. The GCC story hangs in the balance, as does the fate of petrodollars.

If BRICS wins, however, Iran wins regardless of the losses incurred. Netanyahu will need to tweak his reverie.

By Neda Mulji

Online schooling

ESHAAL, a 12-year-old student in Grade 7, sits in front of her laptop screen attending a 45-minute math lesson online. Her video is on, the teacher can see her, but she is disconnected from the lesson. Instead, she is consumed by a private chat with her friend on another window. Such lack of engagement in online lessons is rampant and many teachers see it as an inevitable hazard of online schooling.

As many schools turn to online teaching during the current crisis, it might be a good time to consider how lessons can be redesigned to capitalise on the benefits of online schooling. Digital learning cannot replicate in-person teaching where the monitoring structure is embedded in classroom interaction. Students are forced to sit through lessons even if they find the content boring. Chats are reserved for break time or after school.

For all the scepticism that surrounds it, online teaching has shown that learning is not confined to four walls, a whiteboard, and a bell schedule. In online classes, learning outcomes are a function of lesson design and engagement strategies leading to measurable outcomes. The engagement mechanism necessitates a fast momentum where students are called upon to talk, explain, question and work together on shared white boards. For online schooling to work, the students must have maximum talk, taking turns to explain concepts and invite questions from their peers.

While it might not be possible to take questions from each and every student or call upon everyone in the

class to answer questions, in online schooling, students can have their say on a minute-by-minute basis through the chat box or on digital bulletin boards such as Jamboard or Padlet. They can fill out grids, maps, timelines, work on math problems or write essays collaboratively. Online platforms also offer unique tools such as breakout rooms, instant polls, collaborative documents and chat features that can enhance engagement. In a classroom, it isn't always possible to give everyone a chance to contribute, but for online lessons it is the lifeline of teaching and learning. This creates consistent opportunities to assess learning where students can work on open-book tests, interactive quizzes and make short presentations.

Digital classrooms encourage deeper comprehension.

In fact, frequent assessments, both formal and informal, create increased opportunities for feedback. Students receive direct feedback — written, audio or video — from their instructor, or engage in two-way conversations in a breakout room. This digital interaction allows for a level of individualised support that time-pressed in-person classes can't offer. Students can pause, rewind and rewatch concepts that have been discussed — something impossible during a live classroom lecture.

In a volatile world wrought with political and economic uncertainty, online teaching is not only safer but cost-effective too. The technological tools that students begin using open up a world of possibilities. This is a good time to teach students how to conduct research on their own, encourage curiosity and reward

independent study.

Digital classrooms encourage deeper comprehension, as children pause, replay, highlight and research concepts at their own pace. Students learn how to ask better questions, evaluate sources, take notes and present ideas clearly. They can learn from a range of sources online while in a physical classroom there is only one source to rely on — the teacher. Online teaching is necessary to prepare students for the future as it mirrors the real world. Today's workplaces revolve around digital communication, remote collaboration, virtual meetings and self-directed ta--s-ks. Online le---arning trains students not only in subj-e---ct content but also in digital fluency and independence. Preparing students for the future means teaching in the modalities they will actually use and digital literacy is a non-negotiable asset in that journey.

Many schools continue to resist online teaching and it may feel like protecting tradition.

At best, it can be a weak attempt at preserving focus and attention spans — much like the educators who resisted transcribing when it came about in the fear that writing things down will damage memory capacity.

Before writing developed, everything was committed to memory. Yet, once it started, there was no turning back. Online tools may come with their set of challenges and fears but external circumstances and technological demands have paved the way for digital learning and the quicker schools embrace it, the more equipped their students will be for an increasingly uncertain future.

DAILY MIRROR

Health minister says medicine stocks sufficient to meet demand for next 5 to 6 months

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Health Minister Mustafa Kamal said on Tuesday that Pakistan had sufficient medicine stocks to meet demand for the next five to six months.

"Despite ongoing international challenges, the health ministry and the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (Drac), in close coordination with the pharmaceutical industry, have taken timely and effective measures to safeguard medicine supplies," Kamal said, while chairing a meeting to review the availability of medicines and the national supply chain.

The health minister said that proactive steps ensured the uninterrupted availability of medicines across Pakistan.

"Pakistan currently holds sufficient medicine stocks to meet demand for the next five to six months," he noted.

Kamal reassured the public that, despite the prevailing global situation due to the conflict in the Middle East, there would be no shortage of medicines.

"The health ministry and Drac are maintaining strict oversight to ensure continuous supply, while the government remains fully committed to providing uninterrupted access to essential healthcare services," he stated.

The meeting was also attended by representatives of the pharmaceutical and medical devices industries and Drac Chief Executive Officer Dr Obaidullah Malik.

The primary objective of the meeting was to assess and strengthen a comprehensive strategy to ensure the uninterrupted availability of medicines across the country under all circumstances.

Participants also conducted a detailed review of the availability of helium gas used in MRI machines, recognising its critical importance for diagnostic services nationwide.

PPMA says pharmaceutical industry absorbing additional costs

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA) maintained that while energy and logistic costs were fluctuating rapidly, the industry was absorbing the shocks and was not passing on any additional burden on the people.

Speaking to Dawn, PPMA Chairman North Usman Shaukat said, "Even in the current rising economic cost environment, the pharmaceutical industry remains committed to providing quality medicines at affordable prices to the public."

"While energy and logistics costs are fluctuating rapidly during these times,

the industry is absorbing the [economic] shocks and is not passing on any additional burden on the people."

He affirmed that Pakistan's pharmaceutical industry would remain committed to providing life-saving and essential medicines to the market even in light of the current geopolitical crisis.

"The industry is maintaining ample raw materials and packaging inventory stocks to ensure an uninterrupted supply of medicines to the masses," he stated.

Shaukat said the health ministry and Drac were also working closely to ensure supply chains were not hampered.

"We appreciate the government's proactive approach to ensure the availability of medicines for the masses," he added.

Last month, Drac had also dismissed reports of price hikes in essential medicines across the country, stating that the rates have not "undergone any upward revision".

The regulatory body stated that medicine supply in Pakistan remained "unaffected" by the conflict in the Middle East and subsequent sea route disruptions, as 85pc of medicines consumed in the country were "manufactured locally".



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar meet US Charge d'Affaires to Pakistan Natelie Baker, in the Federal Capital.

Railways must be strengthened, modernized for country's development: Abbasi

INP

SUKKUR: Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi has said the business community is the backbone of the national economy and stressed that railways must be strengthened and modernized for the country's development.

He was addressing members of the Sukkur Chamber of Commerce and Industry during his visit to the city on Monday.

The federal minister also visited the Sukkur Chamber of Commerce and Industries (SCCI).

Chamber Senior Vice President Amit Kumar, Vice President Khurshid Alam, and other office-bearers received him.

Pakistan Railways Chairman Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, DS Railways Sukkur Farman Ghani, Hafezullah, and other officials were also present.

On the occasion, traders raised issues related to the Sukkur Express operating between Sukkur and Karachi.

ECP postpones Senate by-election for Murad Saeed's seat

INP

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday halted the Senate by-election for the vacant seat of Murad Saeed after issuing a stay order on a petition challenging his de-notification.

A three-member bench of the ECP heard the case and issued notices to all relevant parties while adjourning further proceedings.

During the hearing, counsel for petitioner MPA Jalal Khan argued that although Murad Saeed had been elected as a senator, he never took the oath of office.

The lawyer maintained that without taking the oath, questions arise about the legality of his de-notification, as a person is formally considered a member only after being sworn in.

The petitioner requested the commission to delay the by-election and address the legal ambiguity surrounding the matter.

Accepting the plea, the ECP postponed the by-election scheduled for April 23 and adjourned the hearing until May 7.

Secretary C&W lauds IDSP for playing role in sustainable development of Balochistan

APP

Quetta: Secretary Communications and Works (C&W) Babar Khan on Tuesday appreciated the efforts of Institute of Development Studies and Practices (IDSP) and said that such institutions play a key role in the sustainable development of the province.

He said this while talking to Founding Director IDSP Dr. Qar-ul-Ain Bakhtiar called on him here to give a detailed briefing on the role, objectives and ongoing activities of the Institute of Development Studies and Practices (IDSP).

During the meeting, Dr. Qarul Ain Bakhtiar highlighted the establishment of the institution, its vision and the steps taken for socio-economic development in Balochistan province.

He said that IDSP is playing an important role in community development, education, research and policy making to highlight the potential of the youth. The institution is focusing on providing leadership and development opportunities especially to the youth of remote areas.

BFA seals 10 more water plants operating illegally in Quetta

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Food Authority (BFA) on Tuesday took action against the supply of unregistered and substandard bottled water and sealed 10 more water plants operating illegally.

According to the BFA spokesperson, under the special campaign, 10 water plants were sealed by food safety teams in various areas including Sariab, Eastern Bypass, Jatak Stop, Sarki Road, Patel Road, Shawakshah Road, Hazara Town, Isa-Nagri, Killi Shabu and Chashma Achuzai, while several samples of bottled water were obtained for laboratory analysis during the ongoing operation.

During the inspection, 100 cartons of substandard bottled water were also seized from one location, while several serious violations were revealed, including absence of product registration and BFA license in the units, poor cleanliness, fake labeling, lack of waste management

On this occasion, Secretary Communications and Works Babar Khan appreciated the efforts of IDSP and said that such institutions play a key role in the sustainable development of the province.

He emphasized that there is a need to further promote cooperation between government institutions and educational and research organizations so that better and effective results of development projects could be achieved.

The meeting also discussed how infrastructure development, community engagement and policy level can be improved through mutual cooperation between IDSP and the Department of Communications and Works.

Secretary Babar Khan expressed his determination that in the future, through joint initiatives and collaboration, a more effective role would be played for the development of Balochistan and the welfare of the people.

system, unavailability of CIP and CCPs, lack of PPE and medical records for workers. Open washrooms and poor pest control arrangements were also found at some places.

Director General Balochistan Food Authority Habibullah Khan said about the campaign that the aim of all the authority's measures is to reform food centers and factories.

He said that obtaining product registration and license from Balochistan Food Authority is mandatory for the manufacture and sale of all food items, including bottled water or mineral water, as per the law which is not only a legal requirement but also ensures the provision of safe and quality food to the public.

He said that the owners of water plants and all other food business operators should demonstrate responsibility and fully implement the BFA SOPs so that they could continue their business transparently and within the ambit of the law.

Open court to be held on April at Traffic Complex City Quetta

APP

Quetta: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic Mirza Bilal Hassan on Tuesday said that open court would be organized on April 22 at Traffic Complex City in order to address public related issues in the area where the public would be able to directly present their problems and be assured of their solution.

He said that this initiative would not only reduce the distance between the police and the public but could also strengthen the atmosphere of trust.

The official urged citizens to take full advantage of this opportunity, present their traffic-related problems, complaints and suggestions so that a better and safer traffic system could be created.

Gilani pays tribute to Allama Iqbal on his 88th death anniversary

APP

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani paid rich tribute to the Poet of the East and Mufakkir e Pakistan, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, on the occasion of his 88th death anniversary.

In his special message, he described Allama Iqbal as an extraordinary intellectual leader for the Muslims of the subcontinent, who, through his poetry and philosophy, articulated the vision of an independent homeland and infused a renewed spirit among the people. The Chairman of the Senate stated that the teachings of Allama Muhammad Iqbal continue to serve as a profound source of guidance even today.

He emphasised that Hakeem ul Ummat Iqbal inspired the youth with the values of self-respect and relentless struggle—principles that form the foundation of any successful nation.

He noted that by embracing Iqbal's philosophy, individuals can bring about positive change within themselves and contribute meaningfully to national development.

Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani further remarked that Allama Iqbal's vision of Pakistan was rooted in the ideals of a welfare-oriented and just society, where every individual enjoys equal rights, and the rule of law prevails.

He underscored that in the present era, it has become imperative to understand and implement Iqbal's philosophy to lay the foundation for a strong and stable Pakistan.

He added that Parliament, along with all state institutions, bears responsibility for discharging its duties in light of Iqbal's guiding principles. He stressed that national unity, cohesion,

Hormuz's closure further highlights Pakistan's geographical significance: Amb. Sheikh

APP

WASHINGTON: Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States Rizwan Saeed Sheikh on Tuesday said that the closure of the Strait of Hormuz has further underscored Pakistan's geopolitical significance in terms of transit and shipments.

"Pakistan can provide a crucial economic corridor between China, Central Asia, and the Gulf states, Pakistan's focus is shifting from geopolitics to geo-economics," the ambassador said in his keynote address at the 4th Annual Pakistan-US Conference held at Georgetown University.

"Pakistan's geographical location is of paramount importance," the ambassador told the gathering of prominent American think-tank members, former ambassadors and experts who discussed the diverse challenges facing Pakistan, its journey of economic development, and its significant future role in the global arena.

He said that while historical events and geography have highlighted the country's importance, existing challenges have also impacted economic and financial progress.

He told the gathering that Pakistan's geography, as well as its present and

future, were linked with the Middle East.

Ambassador Sheikh said that despite threats from eastern and western borders and other adverse circumstances, Pakistan has consistently played a positive and successful role in global and regional peace and security. Pakistan's role in this regard is well-known as the country has always been at the forefront of peace efforts, he added.

Regarding the US-Iran conflict, the ambassador emphasized that Pakistan's positive efforts and facilitation should be viewed in light of its successful diplomatic history.

He said the expression of confidence in Pakistan by both warring countries was a matter of pride and satisfaction and that Pakistan was fulfilling its role with sincerity, humility, and a deep sense of responsibility.

He stated that Pakistan is among the world's oldest civilizations and would continue to play its role in regional and global security and economic matters.

Ambassador Sheikh paid tribute to the organizers and the Pakistani students at Georgetown University, specifically acknowledging the leadership of Rai Hassan Masood Kharal and International Academy of Letters President Ghazanfar Hashmi for the successful conduct of the conference.



ISLAMABAD: European Union Envoy to Pakistan, Raimundas Karoblis called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb.

Allama Iqbal's philosophy guides Pakistan's future: Amir Muqam

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister and President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engr Amir Muqam, has paid tribute to Allama Muhammad Iqbal saying Iqbal's philosophy continues to provide effective and enduring guidance for a bright and stable future for Pakistan.

On the occasion of the 88th death anniversary of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Muqam, noted that Iqbal gave the Muslim Ummah a new direction through revolutionary concepts such as selfhood, moral strength, intellectual freedom, and perseverance, said a press release.

Muqam added that, in Iqbal's view, education is not merely a means to secure employment but a comprehensive

process that nurtures a person's mental, moral, and spiritual development.

He emphasized that character building, responsibility, and purpose-driven education are the fundamental needs of today's educational and social system.

He said that knowledge must be used as a tool for character formation, awareness must be translated into responsibility, and skills must be employed to ensure societal progress.

Muqam said that this vision is essential for building a strong, independent, and progressive Pakistan.

Concluding his message on Iqbal Day, he reaffirmed the commitment to building a Pakistan that is prosperous and stable, grounded in knowledge, high moral character, and capable youth.

Pakistan a trusted mediator, advocate for regional stability: Sherry Rehman

APP

ISLAMABAD: Vice President Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Senator Sherry Rehman, on Tuesday reaffirmed Pakistan's position as a credible and trusted mediator in ongoing regional tensions during an interview with Bloomberg.

Senator Rehman noted that despite repeated breakdowns in dialogue and a stop-and-start negotiation process between key stakeholders, one constant feature has remained, "their trust in Pakistan". She described the sustained confidence as a clear indicator of Pakistan's diplomatic capital in both Iran and the United States.

"Pakistan has become adept at leveraging its diplomatic capital, strategic stability, and long-standing relationships built on trust and engagement," she said.

Highlighting Pakistan's regional relationships, Senator Rehman emphasized the country's strong ties with Gulf energy titans, including Saudi Arabia and Iran. She highlighted Pakistan's joint defense cooperation with Saudi Arabia and its close geographic and economic relationship with neighboring Iran as key factors enhancing its diplomatic

leverage. She underscored that Pakistan, trusted by all sides, has played a stabilizing role in reducing the risk of conflict. "Pakistan has acted as a hedge against war, helping pave the way toward lasting peace," she said, while acknowledging that the ultimate responsibility for de-escalation lies with the parties directly involved.

Addressing energy security concerns, Senator Rehman underscored the critical importance of the Strait of Hormuz, noting that approximately 80-81% of Pakistan's energy imports, including Liquid Natural Gas, oil, petrol, and crude oil, transit through this vital route.

She urged both Iran and the United States to reduce tensions to avoid disruptions to global energy supplies. "Even minor instability in this region can quickly impact international markets, drive up fuel prices, and create serious economic challenges, particularly for energy-importing countries," she warned.

Reiterating Pakistan's commitment to diplomacy, Senator Rehman concluded that the country would continue to promote dialogue, reduce mistrust, and support efforts aimed at achieving sustainable peace and stability in the region.



ISLAMABAD: Pak Army personals patrolling at Srinagar Highway, in the Federal Capital ahead of the expected second round of talks between United States and Iranian delegations, in the Federal Capital.