

POSITIVE



Greenwich University

A Publication by Department of Mass Communication & Media Studies and the Diplomatic Academy

Pakistan's standing in the global rankings

Overview

Pakistan observed a slight improvement in the overall international rankings in 2021 covering socio-economic and political outcomes of the country. Several elements complemented the prospects including successful democratic transition, efficient counter-terrorism measures leading to enhanced peace and security, and foreign direct investment inflows under CPEC, among others. Albeit, decoupling economic growth from human development suggests that the country needs to enhance its scores in health, education and standard of living by ensuring political will, equitable financing and efficient governance to ensure parallel growth for marginalized segments as well. Civil and political liberties must grow hand in hand to ensure a conducive environment for democratic dialogue and accountability which ultimately supports its nation building process.

DEMOCRACY INDEX

Pakistan was placed at the 104th spot among 167 states on the global Democracy Index 2021, compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

Index from 0 (authoritarian regime) to 10 (full democracy)

Compiled based on indicators covering: Electoral process and pluralism, Civil liberties, Functioning of government, Political participation, and Political culture.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Pakistan ranked 161 out of 192 countries in the Human Development Index scoring 2022 0.562 out of 1.000 in 2018 compared to 0.560 out of 1.000 in 2017.

Index from 0 (low development) to 1 (very high development)

Compiled based on indicators covering: life expectancy, education, and per capita income

PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

Pakistan's press freedom rank dropped to 145 out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom Index, An annual ranking of countries published by Reporters Without Borders (RWB), an international non-governmental organization dedicated to safeguard the right to freedom of information.

Compiled based on indicators covering: pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and infrastructure.

TERRORISM INDEX

Terrorism Index in Pakistan decreased to 7.83 in 2021 from 7.92 in 2020.

Index from 0 (lowest impact) to 10 (highest impact)

Compiled based on indicators covering : Total number of terrorist incidents in a given year, total number of fatalities caused by terrorism in a given year, total number of injuries caused by terrorism in a given year and the approximate level of total property damage from terrorist incidents in a given year.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM INDEX

In 2021, index of economic freedom for Pakistan was 51.7 score.

Though Pakistan index of economic freedom fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to decrease through 2002 - 2021 period ending at 51.7 score in 2021.

Compiled based on indicators covering: Market openness, Regulatory efficiency, Government size and the rule of law.

Positive Post is a strategic effort to project achievement and contributions of Pakistan. While showcasing Greenwich University's cultural diplomacy initiatives, it also encapsulates a compilation of different developments complementing Pakistan's socio-cultural, economic & Political outcomes

Historic October

22 October, 1947: Battle of Muzaffarabad ends in a Pakistani victory and Muzaffarabad is made the capital of Azad Kashmir.

27 October, 1958: Ayub and his Cabinet takes oaths. Ayub now becomes the country's 2nd President. He remained Prime Minister for around 13 hours only, thus becoming the shortest-serving Premier in the history of the country so far.

26 October, 1959: Ayub Khan announces his system of 80,000 Basic Democrats, who would further form the electoral college for the elections of the President and the members of the Central and Provisional Legislature.

October, 1995: 1995 Pakistani coup attempt is foiled and coup plotters are arrested.

12 October, 1999: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif overthrown in military coup led by General Pervez Musharraf.

10 October, 2002: Pakistani general election, First general elections since the 1999 military coup held.

10 October 2007: Battle of Mirali ends in a Pakistani victory.

10 October, 2014: Activist Malala Yousafzai becomes the first Pakistani to win the Nobel Peace Prize for her struggle to voice girls' right to education.

21 October, 2023: Former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif returns to Pakistan after four years in self-imposed exile in London.

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Army chief warns Kabul, vows to 'cleanse' KP

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir said that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan has been providing all possible assistance to militant groups carrying out attacks on Pakistan's soil, despite Islamabad's "multiple diplomatic and economic overtures" to Kabul to improve bilateral relations.

"Despite the continued cross-border militancy from Afghanistan, Pakistan, over the last few years, exercised patience and extended multiple diplomatic and economic overtures to Afghanistan aimed at improving Pak-Afghan bilateral relations," the army chief commented during a trip to Peshawar, where he held an interactive session with a jirga of tribal elders.

A statement issued by the military's media wing quoted Field Marshal Munir as saying during the meeting that Islamabad sought peace with all its neighbours, including Kabul, but would not allow cross-border militancy to be perpetrated from Afghan soil against Pakistan.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) added that he assured the tribal elders that Pakistan, particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, would be cleansed of



militants and their abettors.

"Instead of acting decisively against Indian-sponsored terror proxies Fitna Al Khwarij and Fitna Al Hindustan, the Afghan Taliban regime has been providing all possible assistance to these groups," the statement quoted him as saying.

Fitna-al-Khawarij is a term the state uses for terrorists belonging to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), while Balochistan-based groups have been designated Fitna-al-Hindustan to highlight India's alleged role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan.

'Tribal elders back forces'
Addressing the jirga, the army chief appreciated the steadfast

and unconditional support rendered by the tribal people to the security forces during the recent standoff between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban.

The statement read that the field marshal paid "rich tribute to the resilience and sacrifices of the brave people of KP in the war against terrorism".

"The tribal elders reiterated their full support to the armed forces against militancy and also against the Afghan Taliban," it continued. It added that the tribal elders appreciated the candid discourse by the army chief and expressed their "unwavering commitment to peace in Pakistan," noting that the "twisted ideology" of the militants "had no acceptance" among the tribes of the province.

'Volatile situation'

A source privy to the meeting said that participants discussed the volatile law-and-order situation in their areas, in addition to the situation with Afghanistan.

"We cannot target militants when they take refuge in populated areas," the source quoted the field marshal as saying during the meeting.

The source continued that the field marshal was also told that only a jirga could resolve the issues between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The tribal elders further suggested that Afghanistan was a neighbouring country and authorities needed to show restraint.

Later, according to the ISPR, Field Marshal Munir was given a comprehensive briefing at Headquarters 11 Corps on the prevailing security environment, operational preparedness, and on-going counter-terrorism efforts to maintain peace and stability along the Pak-Afghan border. The army chief was received by the Peshawar corps commander upon his arrival.

Courtesy: Dawn

Rizwan Ali humbles Indian rival, dedicates win to Pak Army, the nation

Pakistan's rising mixed martial arts star Rizwan Ali delivered yet another emphatic statement on the global stage, destroying Indian fighter Rana Rudra Pratap Singh in the first round of their explosive bout in Dubai, extending his unbeaten professional streak to 11-0. The high-voltage encounter, staged under the banner of Absolute Championship Akhmat (ACA), a premier Russian MMA promotion backed by Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, ended in spectacular fashion as Rizwan unleashed a flurry of strikes, forcing an early stoppage and securing victory within minutes of the opening bell.

The packed Dubai arena erupted in chants of "Pakistan Zindabad!" as fans celebrated Pakistan's dominance inside the cage. Videos of

Rizwan's knockout win went viral across social media, with supporters and sports analysts hailing his performance as "historic" and "a proud moment for Pakistan."

Trump makes major reversal, says House Republicans should vote to release Epstein files

Following his triumph, Rizwan dedicated the victory to Pakistan, the Armed Forces, and the entire nation, declaring: "There is nothing greater than Pakistan. This win is for my country, for our soldiers, and for every Pakistani who believes in me."

Rizwan's fiery confidence had been evident even before the fight, he refused to shake hands with his opponent and vowed to "teach him a lesson in the cage." True to



his word, he delivered a ruthless and disciplined performance that showcased his composure and precision. The bout was attended by UFC superstar Khamzat Chimaev, who personally congratulated Rizwan afterward, praising his skill and mental toughness. Rizwan also received a PKR 5 million prize, underscoring his rising stature as Pakistan's most promising MMA talent.

Expressing gratitude to his men-

tors and sponsors, Rizwan credited Omar Ahmed, President of Pakistan MMA Federation, for his guidance and international exposure, and thanked ACTIVIT CEO Rd. Rizwan Aftab Ahmed for his continued support in fitness and nutrition. "He's been like a big brother to me. His support in terms of finances, health, and nutrition has been magical. After Omar Ahmed, he's the biggest reason behind my feats."

Courtesy: The Nation

PM Shehbaz talks investment, trade ties with MBS

After arriving in Saudi Arabia to attend the ninth edition of the Future Investment Initiative (FII9), Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman on Monday night.

According to the PM Office, Field Marshal Asim Munir, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and other members of the cabinet accompanied the PM during the meeting, which was held in a cordial atmosphere.

The brief readout issued by the PMO said that matters of mutual interest, including bilateral trade, investment and cooperation in various sectors, came under discussion in the interaction.

A joint statement was expected to be issued following the meeting, which was held around midnight (Pakistan time), but it was not issued until going to press.

Set to attend FII9 investment summit, which brings together global leaders, policymakers and innovators

In a post on X, however, PM Shehbaz expressed his gratitude to the Saudi crown prince for his “personal commitment and resolute support in advancing our shared vision for deeper collaboration and prosperity for our two

nations”.

“We reaffirmed the enduring strength of the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia brotherly bonds and discussed ways to further expand this historic and time-tested partnership in trade, investment and economic cooperation,” the PM wrote on X.

Earlier, upon his arrival, PM Shehbaz was received by Riyadh Deputy Governor Muhammad bin Abdulrahman bin Abdulaziz, Saudi Arabia’s Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliki and Pakistan’s Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ahmad Farooq.

His delegation included Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar and the PM’s aides Tariq Fatemi and Bilal Bin Saqib.

The FII9 will convene global leaders, investors, policymakers, and innovators to explore the theme, “The Key to Prosperity: Unlocking New Frontiers of Growth”.

Thematic discussions will address global challenges and opportunities, focusing on key topics such as innovation, sustainability, economic inclusion, and geopolitical shifts.

The Foreign Office (FO) had said in a statement that during his visit,



PM Shehbaz would engage with the Saudi leadership to explore avenues for enhanced cooperation in the trade, investment, energy, and human resource sectors.

“The discussions will also cover regional and global issues of mutual interest and concern,” it added.

On the sidelines of the summit, the premier will also interact with leaders from other participating countries and heads of international organisations.

The FO said these exchanges would highlight Pakistan’s investment potential and its readiness to pursue collaborations in sustainable development, in line with the “Think, Exchange, and Act” model.

“This visit underscores Pakistan’s commitment to advancing economic diplomacy and fostering strategic partnerships in investment, technology, and sustainable development.”

Islamabad and Riyadh have long shared a multifaceted relationship rooted in strategic military cooperation, mutual economic interests, and shared Islamic heritage. These ties have encompassed economic assistance and energy supplies, with Riyadh being a significant source of financial aid and oil for Islamabad.

Last month, the two countries signed a defence agreement, pledging that any attack on either nation would be treated as an act of aggression against both.

“This agreement, which reflects the shared commitment of both nations to enhance their security and to achieve security and peace in the region and the world, aims to develop aspects of defence cooperation between the two countries and strengthen joint deterrence against any aggression,” read a statement issued by the PM’s Office after the document was signed.

Courtesy: Dawn

IPC Ministry gifts modern padel and futsal courts to Islamabad colleges

The Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) has gifted modern padel tennis and futsal courts to two government boys’ colleges in Islamabad. The initiative, part of the Ministry’s broader vision to strengthen sports infrastructure in educational institutions, aims to encourage fitness, teamwork, and a healthy lifestyle among students. The state-of-the-art courts, constructed at Islamabad Model College for Boys, I-8/3, and Islamabad College for Boys, H-8, were formally inaugurated by Federal Secretary IPC Mohyuddin Wani, who emphasized the government’s strong commitment to promoting sports and physical education at the



grassroots level.

“Sports and physical education are essential for developing confident, healthy, and disciplined individuals,” said Mohyuddin Wani.

“The Ministry will continue investing in modern facilities and opportunities that empower our youth to achieve excellence, both academically and athletically.”

The new facilities are expected to benefit thousands of students, providing them with dedicated spaces to train, play, and develop their sporting potential. The addition of these courts marks a significant milestone in the government’s ongoing efforts to foster a culture of sports and fitness in educational campuses across the country. Through such initiatives, the Federal Government, under the leadership of the Ministry of IPC, seeks to nurture a generation that values health, teamwork, and national pride, ensuring that young Pakistanis have the resources and encouragement to thrive both on and off the field.

Courtesy: The Nation

US only hope for peace in Gaza, Dar tells NA

Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar on Friday stressed that the United States was now “the only hope” after the United Nations, European Union and Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) had failed to secure peace in Gaza.

Making a policy statement in the National Assembly, Mr Dar again distanced the government from US President Donald Trump’s 20-point Gaza “peace plan”, saying it differed from a draft jointly prepared by eight Muslim countries and shared with Washington. He said the prime minister’s initial statement welcoming the plan was issued while in transit, while he was “unaware of the changes”.

“Pakistan’s policy on Palestine is what was the policy of the Quaid-i-Azam. There was no change, there is no change and there will be no change in it,” he assured the House.

Reiterating the country’s consistent and principled position, he said that the two-state solution was the only viable path to a just and lasting peace, through the establishment of a contiguous, independent and sovereign state of Palestine based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

Mr Dar also disclosed that several Arab and non-Arab countries had expressed interest in concluding security agreements with Pakistan, along the lines of the recent ‘strategic mutual defence’ pact with Saudi Arabia. He cautioned, however, that decisions on such requests would “take some time”. He said several foreign ministers had raised the proposal with him on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. He likened multiple countries signing bilateral pacts with Pakistan to the formation of an “eastern Nato”, without explaining how separate arrangements could evolve into a multi-lateral bloc.

“It is my faith that Pakistan will one day lead the Islamic ummah,” he said. “Allah Almighty has made you a nuclear and missile power and now you are to become an economic power,” adding that



this would require unity.

He said talks on the Saudi agreement had been underway for about one and a half years, beginning during the PDM government. “We are fortunate to have been included among the defenders of Haramain Sharifain,” he remarked.

He also read out the joint statement, issued alongside seven other Muslim countries following consultations in New York, which called for unrestricted humanitarian aid to Gaza, no displacement of Palestinians, full Israeli withdrawal, reconstruction of Gaza and a credible path to a two-state peace with Gaza fully integrated with the West Bank.

He said the focus would remain on these objectives, including holding Israel accountable, and noted that the Palestinian Authority had accepted the plan.

Responding to opposition questions about British-Pakistani activist Shama Junejo’s presence at UN-related events in New York, Mr Dar clarified she was not part of the official government delegation. “Her involvement was confined to civil society interactions and did not reflect state policy,” he said.

Flotilla

Mr Dar also briefed the House on Pakistanis aboard the Global Sumud Flotilla seized by Israeli forces, condemning the interception as a violation of international maritime law and humanitarian principles.

He said Islamabad was pursuing diplomatic channels, including through an “influential Europe-

an country”, to secure their safe return.

Israel on Friday deported four Italian activists, the first of hundreds detained from the aid flotilla, shortly after the interception of the group’s final boat brought an end to its mission.

The Global Sumud Flotilla set sail last month, ferrying politicians and activists including former senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan and Swedish campaigner Greta Thunberg towards Gaza.

The Israeli navy began intercepting the boats on Wednesday, and an Israeli official said the following day that boats with more than 400 people on board had been prevented from reaching the Palestinian territory.

The military said on Friday that the navy had stopped all 42 of the fleet’s vessels “in an operation that lasted approximately 12 hours”, and transferred flotilla members to Israel’s Ashdod Port for processing by police.

Israel’s foreign ministry said it deported four Italian activists who were aboard the flotilla, adding that “the rest are in the process of being deported”.

Videos circulating on social media showed far-right Israeli Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir taunting activists from the Global Sumud Flotilla, as they were in Israeli custody.

Videos showed him pointing at the detained activists, and calling them “terrorists.”

The International Committee to Break the Siege on Gaza con-

demned his actions, saying that it was not surprising “for the criminals of genocide to send their minister swaggering before activists from 50 countries around the world, surrounded by his guards”. PM asked to apologise

Earlier, PTI leader and former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser demanded that the prime minister apologise for “hurting public sentiments” on Palestine, saying no decision would be acceptable without the will of the Palestinian people. He said Haramain Sharifain were central to Pakistanis’ beliefs and that the nation would stand united for their defence.

“If anyone dares to cast an evil eye towards the Haramain, the entire Pakistani nation will stand united in their defence,” he said.

He criticised the government for failing to take parliament into confidence on key national decisions.

The PTI leader stated that Mr Dar’s clarification regarding Shama Junejo had raised further questions. He said the foreign minister had admitted she was the prime minister’s speechwriter and therefore responsibility rested with the premier.

Commenting on the recent “Trump peace deal”, Mr Qaiser said no Muslim leader had endorsed the agreement, yet Pakistan’s prime minister, “in a display of sycophancy”, acknowledged an incomplete agreement through a tweet.

“If the deal was so good, why did the Palestinians reject it?” he asked. He noted that over 60,000 innocent Palestinians had been martyred in a brutal campaign of genocide, the likes of which the world had rarely witnessed.

Mr Qaiser categorically stated that Pakistan’s 250 million people would never accept recognition of Israel. “Any peace accord is incomplete without the recognition of an independent Palestinian state, with Al-Quds as its capital,” he asserted.

Courtesy: Dawn

IMF talks end sans staff-level agreement; tax hikes not on table for now

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff mission on Wednesday concluded talks with Pakistani authorities on reviews of two lending programmes totalling \$8.4 billion without announcing a staff-level agreement, though official channels insisted there was no immediate plan to burden taxpayers with fresh measures.

Sources said another round of discussions may take place on the margins of the World Bank-IMF annual meetings in Washington in the coming days to resolve the last-mile issues.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb is scheduled to depart for the United States later this week with a delegation that includes the finance secretary, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) governor, and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) chairman.

Officials said Islamabad would have to provide verified estimates of flood-related losses and ensure that provinces would absorb these costs from their own resources without compromising cash surplus commitments to the Centre. For the current fiscal year, Punjab is required to provide a cash surplus of Rs740bn, followed by Rs370bn by Sindh, Rs220bn by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Rs185bn by Balochistan.

Sources said that, against this backdrop, the IMF mission did not hold a formal wrap-up meeting with the finance minister before leaving, although both sides met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, given his recent engagements with the IMF managing director to discuss flexibility in light of the flood damage.

A select team of the IMF mission had reportedly called on the minister on Monday, the sources said. The visiting team, led by mission chief Iva Petrova, did not issue a customary end-of-mission statement, and its representative office did not respond to requests for comment.

Official sources, however, claimed that the talks were "smooth" so far,



and there was no immediate need for additional tax measures to bridge the shortfall, although the tax target might have to be revised depending on the first-quarter GDP data, due in the last week of December.

At that time, the question of fresh measures or changes in rates would become due with effect from Jan 1, 2026, to cover lapses in the first half of the fiscal year in view of the biannual nature of the review.

Civil servants to declare assets Separately, the government on Wednesday notified draft amendments to the Sharing of Assets of Civil Servants Rules, 2023, to comply with the IMF's demand for governance reforms, under which all Grade 17 and above public servants across federal, provincial and local level and state-owned enterprises would be required to file their electronic returns of assets and incomes for public review through the FBR. The draft rules, however, exempted serving officers of the armed forces.

The FBR has invited public comments within seven days to comply with the IMF deadline. Under these rules, all public servants who include officers of federal or provincial governments or autonomous bodies, corporations and companies owned by such governments having Grade 17 or above would need to file an electronic declaration in the format agreed to by the SBP and FBR.

However, these declarations would not be publicly available, as the relevant banks would be required to ensure a pre-notified, secure, and single authorised email address that would be under the control and responsibility of the bank's head of compliance for authorisation, use, and security of data.

The banks would share with the FBR the credentials of designated focal persons to ensure the secrecy of information. All required information would be transmitted in abridged form.

However, this requirement of electronic returns and declarations would not apply to people exempted under the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999.

According to the ordinance, this exemption applies to a "person who is a member of any of the armed forces of Pakistan except a person who is, or has been a member of the said forces and is holding, or has held, a post or office in any public corporation, bank, financial institution, undertaking or other organisation established, controlled or administered by or under the federal government or a provincial government or, notwithstanding anything contained in the Pakistan Army Act, 1952 (XXXIX of 1952) or any other law for the time being in force, a person who is a civilian employee of the armed forces of Pakistan".

Courtesy: Dawn

Zaroon Abid shines at 9th Shahryar Malik Pakistan Open Tennis C'ship

Burewala's promising talent Zaroon Abid claimed third position in the 9th Shahryar Malik Pakistan Open Tennis Championship, defeating Muhammad Abdullah in the third-place play-off held in Lahore. Representing Xeesha



Tennis Academy run by Coach Hafiz Zeeshan, Zaroon made a strong start to the tournament with impressive early-round performances but narrowly missed a spot in the final. He capped off a remarkable campaign by over-



coming Abdullah to clinch the third-place title. Punjab Minister of Housing Bilal Yaseen and PTF President Aisam Qureshi graced the closing ceremony and handed over the prize to the winners and runners-up along with Zaroon.

Courtesy: The Nation

PIA resumes direct flights to UK after five years

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) resumed direct flights to Britain, after UK authorities had ended a five-year suspension imposed over aviation safety concerns, reported.

Last month, the national carrier had received Third Country Operator approval for the UK. The development came after Britain's Department of Transport concluded that security arrangements in the country were "satisfactory and in line with international standards".

Flight operations to Manchester are resuming in the first phase, with plans to extend them to Birmingham and London in the second.

Speaking at a ceremony held at the Islamabad International Airport to mark the national flag carrier's inaugural flight from the capital to the UK, Defence and Aviation Minister Khawaja Asif said that the government was committed to making PIA a profitable institution so that it could support the economy instead of being a burden.

"After a long and difficult delay of five years, today the resumption of flights from Islamabad to Manchester is a feat we have achieved through our hard work and determination," the minister said.



"This success is not a coincidence, but a living testament of the government's priorities, strong leadership, and efforts," he added.

Mr Asif said that the country's image suffered immensely when the national carrier faced international bans.

"We took it as a national challenge. The government, without wasting a single moment, empowered and provided resources to the country's aviation bodies," he continued.

"To meet the standards of the world's strictest aviation bodies, we completely restructured pilot training, the licensing system, aircraft maintenance, and safety protocols. It is a matter of great pride that we raised our standards to such a level that the European Union's Aviation Safety Agency [EASA] restored its confidence in the PIA."

The minister also expressed gratitude to the country's diplomats and staff based in Britain and Europe, saying that they "presented Pakistan's case effectively at a diplomatic level, provided evidence, and maintained continuous engagement" with the relevant authorities.

"I would especially like to thank the staff of the British High Commission in Pakistan and their team leader Jane Marriott," he said, adding that they also played a part in accelerating the process and removing obstacles. "Their cooperation highlights the strong friendship between the two countries."

The minister directed the PIA management to ensure safety, punctuality and customer satisfaction.

"Let us vow today to make PIA reach the status it had once achieved."

In a post on social media platform X (formerly Twitter), Mr Asif said the restoration of flights was part of a series of measures taken by the government for the restoration of national institutions, improvement of public facilities, and the promotion of Pakistan's image at the international level.

He wrote that the statement of the aviation minister [Ghulam Sarwar Khan] during the PTI era "caused damage to the reputation of our beloved country, the aviation sector, and the national airline PIA, which the current government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has rectified".

Meanwhile, Ms Marriott, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, wrote on a post on X: "A genuine joy to wave off the first flight by a Pakistani carrier to the UK in five years. Here's to more destinations and connections!"

PM felicitates nation
PM Shehbaz also felicitated the entire nation, especially the Pakistanis residing in the UK, on the commencement of PIA's direct flights from Islamabad to Manchester, read a press release issued from his office's media wing, the state-run APP reported.

Courtesy: Dawn

Efforts on for ex-senator's release, PM assures Jamaat chief

PM Shehbaz Sharif assured the Jamaat-i-Islami that his government was actively engaged in efforts to secure the safe return of Pakistani nationals, including former senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, who were detained by Israeli forces that intercepted the Global Sumud Flotilla.

In a telephone conversation with JI chief Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman, the PM said that Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar had been assigned to lead these efforts and coordinate with friendly countries and international organisations.

A statement issued by the PM Office said that the discussion

also focused on the broader Middle East conflict, particularly the urgent need for a ceasefire in Palestine and the ongoing violence against innocent Palestinians.

"[PM Shehbaz] reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support for the Palestinian cause, emphasising that Pakistan's stance is clear and resolute. He reiterated Pakistan's long-standing position advocating for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 borders, with Jerusalem (Al-Quds) as its capital," added the statement.

Later, the JI leader also took to X (formerly Twitter), saying that



during their conversation, he had also conveyed his party's reservations to the PM on the proposed peace plan in Gaza.

"I also expressed, on behalf of Jamaat-i-Islami as well as the entire nation, serious reservations regarding Trump's 20-point Gaza

plan, and stressed that Pakistan must remain firm on the demand for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Pakistan should not support any plan that ultimately strengthens Israel," Hafiz Naeem tweeted.

Courtesy: Dawn

Pakistan urges respect for Gaza ceasefire



Pakistan on Wednesday called for the immediate cessation of Gaza ceasefire violations by Israel after the latter's strike on the Palestinian enclave killed more than 100 people, Dawn.com reported. The renewed Israeli bombardment prompted strong condemnation from Pakistan, one of the eight Muslim countries that worked with the US on President Donald Trump's peace plan for Gaza.

"Pakistan strongly condemns the renewed attacks by the Israeli occupying forces in Gaza, which have reportedly resulted in civilian casualties," the Foreign Office said in a statement.

"These actions constitute a clear

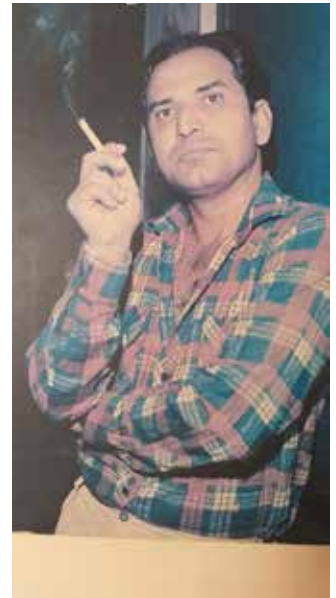
and flagrant violation of international law, as well as a breach of the recently concluded peace agreement," the FO said, warning that such measures by the Israeli occupation forces threaten to undermine the global efforts aimed at establishing durable peace. "Pakistan calls upon the international community to ensure an immediate cessation of ceasefire violations by the Israeli occupation forces," it added.

It reiterated Pakistan's principled position for the establishment of an independent state of Palestine based on the pre-June 1967 borders, with Al Quds Al Sharif as its capital.

Courtesy: Dawn

Nation pays tribute to veteran actor Saleem Nasir

Renowned television and film actor Saleem Nasir was remembered on his 36th death anniversary, as tributes from media circles highlighted his exceptional talent and lasting mark on the entertainment industry. Born on 15th November 1944 in Nagpur, India, Saleem Nasir was a versatile and accomplished actor who became one of the most admired figures in Pakistani television and film. He began his professional film career with "Zaib-un-Nisa" in 1976, marking the start of an illustrious journey in the entertainment industry, media channels reported. Over the years, he delivered memorable performances in popular TV dramas such as "Aakhri Chatan," "Nishan-e-Haider," "Ankahi," "Dastak," and the iconic "Aangan Terha. In recognition of his outstanding artistic achievements, Saleem Nasir was honoured with the Pride of Performance Award, one of Pakistan's highest civilian distinctions. He passed away on October 19, 1989, in Karachi, but his legacy continues to inspire generations of actors and audiences alike. On his 36th death anniversary, media platforms and fans paid heartfelt tribute to the leg-



endary actor, sharing memorable clips and videos of his remarkable performances. His distinctive acting style, emotional depth and commanding screen presence were fondly remembered across social media, reaffirming his timeless place in the history of Pakistani entertainment.

Talented daughters of Vehari once again bring pride to district

Courtesy: The Nation

NBP hosts 'Innings of Awareness' cricket match to support breast cancer awareness under Pinktober 2025

As part of its continued commitment to employee well-being and social responsibility, National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) hosted a symbolic cricket match titled "Innings of Awareness", organized under the broader Pinktober 2025 campaign to support breast cancer awareness.

The event, held at NBP Sports Complex, brought together employees from across departments to play not just for sport, but for a cause that touches millions, the fight against breast cancer. The match served as a public gesture of solidarity with the women affected by the disease and as a call for timely awareness, early detection, and education.

"This match is not just a game, it is a reminder that everyone, has a role to play in raising awareness. At NBP, we believe awareness



begins with empathy and action, and each of us, regardless of gender, can contribute to creating a culture that values health, support and early detection" said President NBP, Mr. Rehmat Ali Hasnie.

Pakistan faces the highest incidence of breast cancer in Asia, with 1 in 9 women at risk and over 40,000 deaths annually due

to late detection. Recognizing the need for early education and proactive health engagement, NBP's Pinktober initiative is designed to encourage conversation, screening, and compassion both within the workplace and in communities at large.

Participants of the match wore custom pink-armband kits, Med-

als and shields were awarded to team members and organizing committee members for their contributions.

The event is part of a month-long series of activities led by NBP, including educational content on breast cancer myths, early detection tips, nationwide awareness sessions and a survivor's story shared across internal and external communication channels.

About National Bank of Pakistan NBP is one of the largest commercial banks in the country, serving millions of customers with a national footprint. Alongside financial services, NBP actively promotes wellness, inclusion, and awareness as part of its commitment to nation-building and employee engagement.

Courtesy: The Nation

Eight Pak boys advance as Ali Embroidery Mills ITF Junior Tennis serves off

The ITF Pakistan Ali Embroidery World Junior Tennis Championship J-30 (Leg-2) 2025 commenced at the PTF-SDA Tennis Complex, Islamabad, showcasing an impressive assembly of rising stars from across the globe. The event, organized under the banner of the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF), features a large number of junior players representing China, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Lithuania, Russia, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and host nation Pakistan.

Tournament Director and former Davis Cup captain Rashid Malik (Tamgha-e-Imtiaz) expressed his appreciation for the support received in conducting the event. "I am grateful to Ali Embroidery Mills for sponsoring this ITF Junior tournament, which is providing Punjab players



a chance to compete alongside top national and international players," Malik said. "Ali Embroidery Mills CEO Tariq Zaman has also sponsored the entries of several deserving players, enabling them to participate at this prestigious stage. I am hopeful this event will

run smoothly and that our young players will excel." In boys' singles, Pakistan's Zohaib Afzal Malik impressed with a commanding 6-1, 6-2 win over Theerapat of Thailand, while Amir Mazari dominated compatriot Zain Saeed 6-0, 6-0. Abdul Basit reg-

istered another strong victory, defeating Thailand's PanawatSienghen 6-3, 6-2. Muhammad Hassan Usmani also advanced, overcoming China's Yupei Liang 6-2, 6-4. In girls' singles, Pakistan faced stiff resistance from international opponents, with Great Britain's Naimah Grant, Korea's Yewon Lee, and Russia's Varvara Rubtsova defeating their Pakistani counterparts on the opening day. Doubles action also saw Pakistan securing wins, including the pair of M. Haziq Asim and M. Hassan Usmani who outclassed their Thai rivals in a closely contested match 6-4, 2-6 (12-10).

The tournament continues t with second-round matches in singles and first-round fixtures in the remaining doubles categories.

Courtesy: The Nation

Talented daughters of Vehari once again bring pride to district

Commissioner Gold Cup Inter-Division Punjab Taekwondo C'ship



The talented daughters of Vehari have once again brought pride to the district by earning honors at the provincial level. In the Commissioner Gold Cup Inter-Division Punjab Taekwondo Championship, the Multan Division team representing District Vehari delivered an outstanding performance and won two bronze medals. Among the medal winners was Zeenat Bhat-

ti, daughter of senior Taekwondo master Shehzad Bhatti. A total of five players from District Vehari participated in the championship. District Vehari President Dr Muhammad Hussain Khan praised the players, saying that their remarkable performance is a matter of great pride. "Our athletes got an excellent opportunity to compete at the provincial level, which has further boosted

their confidence," he added. Multan Division girls' team coach and Ambassador of Love Pakistan Shehzad Bhatti appreciated the players' dedication and said, "Our athletes performed brilliantly through sheer hard work. The government should provide financial support and incentives to players and coaches who train tirelessly in the fields." Madam Gul Rana Ejaz, Chairperson of

Multan District, said the team's performance was commendable and left a strong impression in the championship. General Secretary Khalid Khan Commando and President Tasawar Hussain Khan also congratulated all players and coaches on their outstanding achievement.

Courtesy: The Nation

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