

Positive Post



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 January

1 January, 1948: UNO cease-fire orders to operate in Kashmir. War stops accordingly.

1 January, 1949: United Nations Cease-fire Line established between Pakistan Administered Kashmir (GB & AJ&K) & Indian Administered Kashmir.

17 January, 1951: General Ayub Khan becomes the first non-British Chief of the Army Staff of Pakistan when he replaces General Sir Douglas David Gracey as the chief of army staff.

January 26, 1952: At the Dhaka session of the ruling Muslim League party, prime minister Khawaja Nazimuddin declares Urdu the national language of the state of Pakistan.

2 January 1964: Fatima Jinnah lost the presidential elections, Ayub completes the second term.

10 January, 1966: Pakistan and India sign the Tashkent Declaration to end hostilities.

10 January, 1977: Nine opposition parties form joint election forum, Pakistan National Alliance (PNA).

5 January, 2002: Musharraf stunned Vajpayee by a hand-shake at the last 11th SAARC summit in Kathmandu.

1 January, 2004: General Musharraf won a vote of confidence in the Senate, National Assembly, and provincial assemblies.

2 January, 2006: Dr. Shamshad Akhtar assumes office of State Bank Governor having the first woman Governor of SBP.

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 and Political outcomes

Ayaz Sadiq, Jaishankar shake hands in high-level contact

National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq and India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar shook hands in Dhaka, marking the first high-level contact between Pakistani and Indian officials since the military conflict in May.

According to a press release issued by the National Assembly Secretariat, Mr Sadiq was in Dhaka to attend the funeral of former Bangladeshi prime minister Khaleda Zia when Mr Jaishankar approached him and offered a handshake.

"Indian External Minister Dr S. Jaishankar approached the Speaker of the National Assembly and shook hands," the statement said, adding that Mr Jaishankar introduced himself and said he recognised Mr Sadiq.

Relations between Islamabad and New Delhi reached their lowest point this year after an attack

in Pahalgam in India-occupied Kashmir. India blamed Pakistan, which denied any involvement and called for an independent investigation.

The NA Secretariat statement said Pakistan had "consistently emphasised dialogue, restraint and cooperative measures, including proposals for peace talks and joint investigations into the alleged false flag Pahalgam incident, in order to prevent unprovoked aggression and escalation".

Following the attack, India announced a series of unilateral measures against Pakistan, including steps to downgrade ties and closure of the main border transit point.

Among the measures, New Delhi's move to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) drew particular attention.

The 1960 World Bank-brokered



agreement has endured through wars and decade of hostility, and any move to hold it in abeyance has been viewed in Islamabad as a serious escalation.

On May 7, India launched air strikes in Punjab and Azad Kashmir, triggering a four-day conflict that included retaliatory actions and exchanges targeting airbases. A ceasefire was reached on May 10.

In June, the Permanent Court of Arbitration, an organisation that provides a framework for international disputes, issued a supplemental award on compe-

tence, stating that India could not unilaterally hold the IWT in abeyance. Earlier this month, Pakistan's Foreign Office accused India of "weaponising water" after abrupt variations in the flow of the Chenab and Jhelum rivers, which officials said had raised concerns among farmers in Punjab.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has said the arbitration forum reaffirmed the treaty's validity and its dispute-resolution mechanisms, and cited concerns raised by UN rapporteurs over India's actions related to the pact.

Courtesy: Dawn

Cervical cancer vaccine now part of Sindh's programme

In an effort to protect young girls from cervical cancer, the Sindh Health Department, in line with a decision by the Federal Directorate of Immunisation, has included the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine in the province's routine immunisation programme.

Other provinces are also expected to roll out similar initiatives in the coming months.

According to a notification issued by the Sindh Health Department, the decision has become effective from Jan 1 this year.

"The vaccination shall target girls aged nine years with an intended minimum coverage of 70 per cent," the notification stated.

The department has directed all district health officers to adopt a mixed delivery approach, including facility-based vaccination, community outreach, and school-based vaccination activities, to ensure optimal coverage, equitable access, and sustainability.



"To ensure accurate monitoring, accountability, and transparency, HPV vaccination through routine immunisation must be fully integrated into the existing EPI [Expanded Programme on Immunisation] recording and reporting mechanisms," the notification added.

Provincial government health officials have also been instructed to ensure preparedness, including micro-planning, staff orientation, logistics, cold chain management, and coordination with relevant stakeholders to support an effec-

tive rollout of the HPV vaccine under routine immunisation.

'Free of charge'
According to officials, the vaccine will be available free of charge for nine-year-old girls at EPI centres, outreach vaccination sites, and during school-based vaccination sessions.

It may be recalled that the Sindh government launched a province-wide HPV vaccination campaign the first-ever immunisation initiative against cervical cancer on Sept 15, 2025, targeting 4.1

million girls aged nine to 15 years.

Despite official claims of over 65pc coverage across Sindh, parents' lack of interest and negative social media campaigns emerged as major challenges, particularly in Karachi.

According to health experts, cervical cancer is the second deadliest cancer among women worldwide and remains a major public health concern in Pakistan, with a mortality rate exceeding 65pc.

HPV is the primary cause of cervical cancer, and its vaccine is the world's first-ever cancer prevention vaccine.

Health experts say the vaccine is safe, effective, and provides 100pc protection against cervical cancer. According to officials, Pakistan is the 149th country to introduce this vaccine into its immunisation schedule. It is already being used in Muslim countries, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Indonesia.

Courtesy: Dawn

Pakistan, China reaffirm bond amid regional tensions

As tensions simmer in the region and further afield, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on Sunday termed the Pakistan-China friendship "vital" for regional peace and stability as they co-chaired the 7th round of the Pakistan-China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue in Beijing.

Mr Dar arrived in Beijing on Saturday at Mr Wang's invitation, primarily to co-chair the strategic dialogue.

Following the talks, the Foreign Office said in a statement: "Highlighting the salience of the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, both leaders reaffirmed that Pakistan-China friendship is vital for peace, stability, and prosperity in the region and for the two countries."

The two sides also agreed to enhance coordination at bilateral and multilateral forums, the statement added.

The two leaders reviewed the entire spectrum of Pakistan-China relations, and discussed key regional and global issues.

They also exchanged views on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), trade, multilateral cooperation and people-to-people exchanges.

Bangladesh eyes JF-17 purchase

Bangladesh has expressed an interest in the "potential procurement" of JF-17 Thunder aircraft jointly developed by China and Pakistan the military's media wing said on Tuesday.

The development came as Bangladesh Air Force Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan called on Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Babar Sidhu in Islamabad, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

"The meeting focused on strengthening operational cooperation and institutional synergy, with emphasis on training, capacity building, and collaboration in

75th anniversary

"The two leaders also agreed to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations," the FO added.

In a separate statement, the FO said Mr Dar and Mr Wang jointly unveiled the logo for the 75th anniversary of Pakistan-China diplomatic ties, "marking the start of year-long celebrations to commemorate this historic milestone in a befitting and memorable manner".

Mr Dar, who also serves as deputy prime minister, held meetings with other Chinese officials in Beijing earlier in the day, with exchanges mainly focusing on bilateral ties. Among those he met was Chinese Executive Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang.

The FO said the two leaders "reaffirmed their shared commitment to further deepening the Pakistan-China all-weather strategic cooperative partnership", adding that Mr Ding appreciated Pakistan's consistent support for China on issues of core interest.

Both leaders noted the historic significance of the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations and agreed to utilise the milestone to chart a forward-looking vision for enhanced cooperation, including

aerospace advancements," it said.

The Bangladeshi air chief was leading a high-level defence delegation, ISPR said.

During their meeting, Air Chief Marshal Sidhu briefed his Bangladeshi counterpart on PAF's recent advancements and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to supporting Bangladesh Air Force through a comprehensive training framework from basic to advanced flying and specialised courses across PAF institutions, it said. "He also assured fast-tracked delivery of Super Mushshak trainer aircraft, along with a complete training and long-term sup-



under CPEC.

Mr Ding also conveyed New Year greetings to the leadership and people of Pakistan.

'Shared future'

According to China's state-run Xinhua news agency, Mr Ding called for joint efforts to speed up the process of building an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era and to continue improving the well-being of the two peoples.

"China is willing to work with Pakistan to follow the strategic guidance of the leaders of the two countries, shore up political mutual trust and mutual support, better synergise development plans, improve quality and performance of pragmatic cooperation, and enhance communication and coordination regarding major international and regional affairs," he added.

Xinhua quoted Mr Dar as saying that Pakistan adhered to the

one-China principle and was ready to use the 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties as an opportunity to further promote the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership.

In another statement, the FO said Mr Dar also met Liu Haixing, minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China.

Mr Dar congratulated Mr Liu on the successful convening of the 4th Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee.

The two sides expressed satisfaction with the steady and forward-looking trajectory of bilateral relations while reviewing party-to-party exchanges, regional developments and progress on various CPEC projects.

They also agreed to jointly commemorate the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations in "a befitting and meaningful manner".

Courtesy: Dawn



port ecosystem," it added.

"The Bangladeshi air chief praised PAF's combat record and expressed interest in benefiting from its operational expertise, seeking assistance in maintenance support for Bangladesh Air Force's aging fleet and integration of air defence radar systems to enhance air

surveillance," the statement said. "Detailed discussions were also held on the potential procurement of JF-17 Thunder aircraft," it said, adding that the delegation also visited key PAF facilities. The multi-role fighter has proven its combat capabilities during recent conflicts with India.

Courtesy: Dawn

Dar arrives in Beijing for strategic dialogue

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Saturday arrived in Beijing to co-chair the seventh round of the Pakistan-China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue, which is scheduled the Foreign Office (FO) announced in a post on X.

In an earlier statement, the FO said the foreign minister will be the "first foreign dignitary to visit China in 2026", at the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, with whom he will co-chair the dialogue.

In the X post, the FO said Mr Dar was received at the airport by China's Special Representative on Afghanistan Ambassador Yue Xiaoyong, Pakistan's ambassador to China and officials from the Pakistani Embassy.

"[The] DPM/FM will also attend events marking the beginning of the 75th year of Pakistan-Chi-



na diplomatic ties, with both countries planning initiatives and commemorative activities throughout 2026," the post added.

The FO has said that the dialogue "will review the full spectrum of bilateral cooperation, identify new areas of partnership, and further advance the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between Pakistan and China".

Earlier this week, the was the "highest consultative mechanism between Pakistan and China, providing a structured platform to review the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation, as well as regional and international developments of mutual interest".

It said that during the dialogue, the two foreign ministers will also announce a series of initiatives and commemorative activities to

mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

It had added that the visit formed an important part of the regular high-level exchanges between the two countries and reflected their shared determination to broaden and deepen their cooperative partnership, while reaffirming their mutual commitment to regional peace, stability, and sustainable development.

The sixth round of the strategic dialogue was held in Islamabad in August, with Mr Yi visiting the capital and meeting Mr Dar, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari.

At the time, China had affirmed its commitment to working with Pakistan on promoting regional peace, development and stability.

Courtesy: Dawn

PCB's Future Stars Talent Hunt programme to start on February 11

A selection panel comprising of former Test cricketers and regional coaches to visit 15 cities for open trials from 11 February, 2026

Up to 24 talented and promising players to be shortlisted for each of 16 regional academies

PCB set to take around 350 players onboard via open trials for mentoring and skill development

The Pakistan Cricket Board has announced a series of open trials in 15 cities across the country to shortlist around 350 players for 16 regional academies in a bid to expand the country-wide talent pool of professional cricketers, it was confirmed on Friday.

A panel of former Test cricketers comprising PCB Director High Performance Aqib Javed, National Cricket Academy coaches Misbah-ul-Haq and Abdul Razaq will travel to the venues to conduct the trials from 11 February. The trials in will begin from PCB Ground in Sukkur, where



players from Larkana Region can take part.

The 15 cities where the first of its kind open trials will be held are Abbottabad, Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Hub District, Hyderabad, Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Muzaffarabad, Peshawar, Quetta, Rawalpindi, Sialkot, and Sukkur.

The selection panel will shortlist up to 24 players for each of the

16 regions across Pakistan, who will then undergo a four-week specialised training programme in their respective regional headquarter.

The best of the best players in those camps will also be called to National Cricket Academy camps and will also be fast-tracked via a year-long skills development programme in their respective regions.

Apart from the shortlisting of players for the regional academies, the selection panel will also award cash prizes on the spot to the best pacer, spinner and batter at each of the 16 trial venues.

With this exercise, the PCB will assist the 16 regions in expansion of their talent pools for intra and inter-district, regional and other domestic tournaments.

Following the rigorous regional and NCA skill development camps for the shortlisted players from open trials, they will be recommended not just to the various domestic teams in departmental and regional tournaments but also for HBL PSL selection in the seasons beyond 2026.

With this intervention policy and scouting programme, it is expected a number of players will be able to benefit from PCB's first of its kind player development initiative and enter the professional mould.

Courtesy:pcb.com.pk

Turkiye looks to join Pak-Saudi defence pact

TURKIYE is seeking to join the recently-formed defence alliance between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, Bloomberg reported, in a move that could “shift the balance of power in the Middle East and beyond”.

The deal, initially signed by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in September, states that “any aggression” against one country is considered an attack on all, which mirrors Article 5 of the Nato charter, of which Turkiye is the largest military partner, after the US.

Quoting people familiar with the matter, the Bloomberg report said talks are “at an advanced stage and a deal is very likely”.

The expanded alliance would make sense because Turkiye’s interests increasingly overlap with those of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in South Asia, the Middle East and even Africa, sources said.

Turkiye also sees the pact as a way of strengthening security and deterrents when there are questions over the reliability of the US



that has strong military ties with all three countries and President Donald Trump’s commitment to Nato.

Saudi Arabia brings financial clout, Pakistan has nuclear capability, ballistic missiles and manpower, while Turkiye has the military experience and has developed a defence industry, according to Nihat Ali Ozcan, a strategist with Ankara-based think tank TEPAV.

“As the US prioritises its own interests and that of Israel in the

region, changing dynamics and fallout from regional conflicts are prompting countries to develop new mechanisms to identify friends and foes,” Ozcan said.

The Turkish Defence Ministry declined to comment, while Pakistan’s Information Ministry didn’t respond to a request for a comment. Saudi Arabian authorities weren’t immediately available to respond to a request for comment.

New era
Should Turkiye ink its mem-

bership in the alliance, it would underscore the new era in its relations with Saudi Arabia as well. After turning the page on years of rancor, the countries are working to develop economic and defence cooperation. They held their first-ever naval meeting in Ankara this week, according to the Turkish defence ministry.

While they also share long-standing concern over Iran, they prefer engagement with Tehran rather than force. The Turks and Saudis also back a stable Syria and statehood for Palestinians.

Turkiye and Pakistan, meanwhile, have long enjoyed close military relations. Ankara is building corvette warships for the Pakistan Navy and has upgraded dozens of its F-16s.

Turkiye is already sharing drone technology with both countries, and now wants them to join its Kaan fifth-generation fighter jet programme, Bloomberg earlier reported.

Courtesy: Dawn

Pakistan-China friendship growing stronger: CM aide

Adviser to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister on finance Muzammil Aslam on Friday said that the friendship between Pakistan and China continued to grow stronger despite changing circumstances and global transformations.

Addressing a ceremony organised by China Window to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Pakistan-China friendship and the Spring Festival, Mr Aslam said that Pakistan’s foresight and principled stand in recognising China in 1951 was today, 75 years later, evident to the world in the form of a strong and sustainable partnership.

He paid tribute to the organisers of China Window for arranging the event.

Former governors Haji Ghulam Ali and Iqbal Zafar Jhagra,



Dera Ismail Khan commissioner Dawood Khan, Vice Chancellor of the University of Engineering and Technology Prof Sadiq Khattak, Bishop Ernest Jacob, members of the business community, journalists, intellectuals, students and a large number of people from other walks of life attended the event.

Mr Aslam said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

(CPEC) was the flagship project of Pak-China friendship, which had given a new direction to Pakistan’s economy.

He said that energy projects under CPEC had significantly reduced the electricity crisis, while motorways and highways had connected the country from north to south and Gwadar Port had placed Pakistan at an important position on the regional and global trade map.

The aide to the CM said that the establishment of Special Economic Zones was creating new opportunities for investment, industrial development and employment.

He emphasised that China had always treated Pakistan as an equal partner, so there was immense love and respect for China among the people of Pakistan.

Addressing the ceremony, former governor Haji Ghulam Ali said that Pakistan demonstrated foresight and principled policy by recognising China in 1951, as a result of which bilateral relations had today taken the shape of a strong fortress.

“China has stood by Pakistan in every difficult time, whether during wars, natural disasters or global pressure,” he said.

Courtesy: Dawn

Defence pact with Turkiye, Saudi awaits final approval

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye have prepared a draft defence agreement after nearly a year of talks, Defence Production Minister Raza Hayat Harraj confirmed.

His remarks followed comments by Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, who said discussions had taken place but no agreement had been signed.

Speaking at the weekly media briefing, Foreign Office spokesman Tahir Andrabi said Pakistan was seeking clarity from US authorities after comments from the State Department suggested an internal review of immigrant visa processing.

He said Pakistan was “in touch with the US authorities to ascertain further details” as the matter was still evolving.

The spokesman said Pakistan understood the move as part of an internal review of US immigration policies and expressed hope that “routine processing of immigrant visas will resume soon”.

His comments came after the US Department of State announced an indefinite suspension of immigrant visa processing for nationals of 75 countries, including Pakistan, effective January 21.

The decision applies to immigrant visas only and is part of a review under US public charge provisions. The move has raised concerns about delays in family reunification and employment-based

immigration.

On trade matters, Mr Andrabi said Pakistan had taken note of the announcement on imposing tariffs on countries conducting trade with Iran and remained engaged with Washington on the issue.

“As regards our trade with Iran, it follows international trade regulations and relevant international law,” he said, adding that Pakistan would continue to engage both the US and Iran on its trade relations.

Earlier this week, President Trump announced the imposition of a 25 per cent tariff on countries doing business with Iran, framing the move as part of stepped-up pressure on Tehran amid its crackdown on protests and tensions with Washington.

Responding to a question on Pakistan’s possible role in US-Iran relations, Mr Andrabi recalled Islamabad’s involvement during last year’s nuclear-related talks. He said Pakistan had adopted a “very positive and principled position” that allowed it to act as a bridge builder and facilitator for communication channels.

He noted that during those talks, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar held multiple telephone conversations with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.



“We are willing to play such a role now,” the spokesman said while referring to the latest phase of tensions.

Asked about Pakistan’s policy on the use of its airspace or territory against Iran, the spokesman said it remained unchanged. “Policy remains the same. Ditto,” he said. Mr Andrabi said instability in neighbouring Iran did not suit Pakistan, underscoring Islamabad’s interest in a stable and peaceful Iran as protests there show signs of easing after weeks of unrest.

He stressed that calm and stability in Iran were directly linked to Pakistan’s own interests. “A stable and peaceful Iran, free from domestic unrest or political upheaval, is in Pakistan’s interest,” the spokesman maintained.

Sharing Pakistan’s position on the issue, he said, it is understood that the recent protests in Iran were driven by economic difficulties faced by ordinary citizens, which had been aggravated by US and Western sanctions.

“We understand that the recent protests in Iran were triggered by economic difficulties faced by ordinary citizens, which have been

further exacerbated by international sanctions,” he said.

The comments were significant as the Foreign Office explicitly identified economic grievances linked to sanctions as the root cause of the protests. Last week, the spokesman had implicitly rejected any external interference in Iran’s internal affairs.

The spokesman welcomed measures announced by Tehran to ease economic pressures, expressing hope they would help reduce public hardship. Pakistan, he said, extended its “best wishes for the success of these efforts” aimed at supporting traders and the general public.

“Pakistan remains confident that the Iranian nation will overcome these challenges and emerge stronger,” he added.

Referring to Iran’s long history and social resilience, Mr Andrabi said Pakistan had “full confidence in the wisdom of the Iranian people and leadership”, rooted in their culture, civilisation and experience, to address the challenges confronting the country.

Courtesy:Dawn

Development works at Lahore Arts Council reviewed

Development work at the Lahore Arts Council Alhamra is progressing steadily under the Chief Minister’s Punjab Initiative Program. In this regard, a comprehensive briefing was given to Alhamra Executive Director Muhammad Nawaz Gondal on the work completed so far and the overall progress of the ongoing projects, here on Monday. The briefing covered the current status of development works, technical standards, pace of execution, and overall performance. Renowned architect Nayyar Ali Dada was also present on the occasion, underscoring



the importance of maintaining architectural integrity and design excellence throughout the development process. During the briefing, the executive director was informed that renovation and uplift works are underway in various halls, galleries, and facilities at Alhamra. These include infrastructure upgradation and improvements to the sewage system, aimed at aligning the institution with modern requirements and ensuring enhanced facilities for artists and the general public.

Courtesy:Dawn

Kalam, Malam Jabba become magnet for winter tourists

As the first snowflakes began to fall over Kalam Valley on morning, the familiar chirping of birds faded into silence in tall trees of deodara and pine forests. Perched high in the towering deodara and pine trees, native and migratory birds retreated to their nests, quietly signaling the winter's most anticipated spectacle ahead of spring season. Ending a prolonged dry spell, rainfall followed by moderate to heavy snowfall transformed Upper Swat into a glittering winter wonderland. The fresh snow breathed new life into Malam Jabba, Kalam, Osho, Behrain and surrounding valleys, drawing a steady stream of tourists, families, and adventure seekers eager to experience the snowfall magic. Blanketed in white, the peaks of the Koh-e-Hindukush range offered a breathtaking backdrop as Malam Jabba and Kalam came alive with laughter and excitement of tourists. The crisp mountain air echoed with the rhythmic swish of skis slicing through fresh powder, while first-time snowboarders, seasoned skiers, and curious families filled the slopes. "The valley feels reborn with the first snowfall," said local hotel owner Khushal Khan, watching children tumble joyfully down gentle slopes as experienced skiers raced past. "This is the season everyone waits for." The hotels industry finally shined after snowfall and all rooms in my hotel are booked, he said. Situated at an altitude of 2,804 meters, Malam Jabba is Pakistan's premier

ski resort, renowned for its two ski tracks stretching over 800 meters. The resort offers a rare blend of winter sports including skiing, snowboarding, ice hockey, and curling activities seldom found together elsewhere in the country. Beyond Malam Jabba and Kalam, snowfall has enhanced the winter charm of Miandam, Matiltan, Utror, Gabral, Loyo Sar, and Madain. Visitors from Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Charsadda, Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Islamabad have poured into the region, many combining snow sports with trekking and indulging in Swat's famed brown trout fish often enjoyed with family as snow continues to fall. Nasir Khan, a property dealer of Peshawar described Malam Jabba and Kalam winter beauty as unmatched.

"I have traveled to many countries, but I have not seen such distinctive natural features as Swat, especially Kalam and Malam Jabba," he said. "Its pollution-free environment, easy accessibility, breathtaking scenery, and snowfall make it my favorite winter hill stations in Pakistan." Besides snowfall, tourists enjoy trout fish and horse riding at these winter wonderlands. Echoing similar sentiments, Salahuddin Sheikh from Kohat said the snowfall and skiing experience in Kalam and Malam Jabba surpassed that of Murree and Chitral. "Enjoying fresh trout with my family while snow falls all around—there's nothing like it," he remarked,



recalling his visits to Kalam and Mahodand Lake. Swat's appeal extends beyond natural beauty and adventure sports. According to Bakhtzada Khan, Assistant Director at the Archaeology and Museums Department, the region holds immense historical significance as a cradle of Buddhist civilization. Sites such as the Saidu Sharif Museum and the ancient Butkara Buddhist Monastery continue to attract monks, scholars, and history enthusiasts from across the world. Tourism experts believe Swat's growing popularity can play a vital role in strengthening Pakistan's economy. Dr. Zilakat Malik, former Chairman of the Economics Department at the University of Peshawar, noted that Pakistan's tourism revenue reached \$1.3 billion in 2023 more than double the previous year and is projected to rise to \$5.53 billion by 2029. He emphasized the importance of digital and social media platforms in promoting destinations like Kalam and Malam Jabba to international audiences.

To further strengthen Swat's position as a winter tourism hub, the KP Culture and Tourism Authority has launched several new

initiatives. A spokesperson said projects are underway to develop emerging tourist valleys such as Sola Tanar, Puchar, and Jargo, alongside eco-tourism walking tracks and camping pods to ease pressure on popular destinations like Kalam and Malam Jabba. Plans are also in progress to improve road connectivity between Malam Jabba, Bahrain, and Kalam through the Swat Expressway. Additionally, the World Bank-supported Integrated Tourism Zone in Mankyal Swat aims to promote sustainable tourism and adventure sports. Ensuring visitor safety remains a priority, with Tourism Police deployed at key locations. Meanwhile, a host tourism program offering interest-free loans of up to Rs3 million is encouraging locals to provide affordable accommodation to tourists.

With its snowfall-covered slopes, world-class ski facilities, rich history, and expanding infrastructure, Malam Jabba continues to emerge as one of Pakistan's top winter destinations offering not just adventure, but warmth, hospitality, and memories etched in snow.

Courtesy:Dawn

First Lady visits Bahrain museums; stresses cultural diplomacy, heritage preservation

First Lady Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari on Thursday visited the Bahrain National Museum and the Pearl Museum here, where she underscored the importance of preserving national heritage and safeguarding history as a source of identity, unity, and inspiration for future generations. The First Lady was accompanied by the Minister-in-Waiting of Bahrain Amna bint Ahmed Al Romaihi, Minister of Housing and Urban Planning. Upon arrival, she was received by Farah Mohamed Mattar, Director

General of Museums and Culture, and Hani Ali Behzad, Director of Communications and Partnerships. During the visit, First Lady Aseefa Bhutto was given a guided walking tour of both museums, which offered a compelling showcase of Bahrain's rich cultural heritage, deep historical roots, and civilizational legacy, including the Kingdom's globally renowned traditions of maritime life and pearl diving. She expressed deep appreciation for the warm hospitality and the opportunity to witness Bahrain's

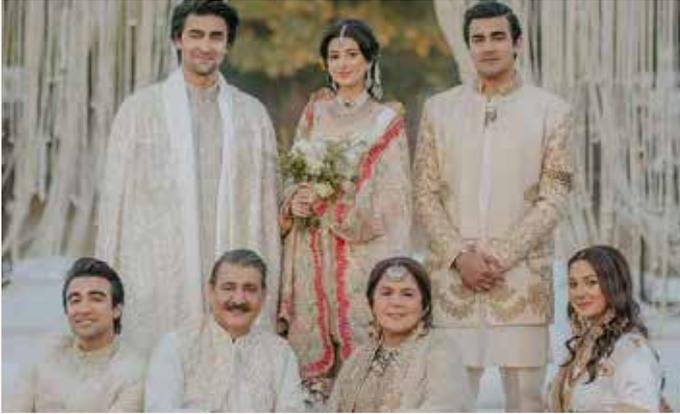


cultural and historical treasures firsthand. The First Lady also highlighted the strong potential for enhanced cooperation between Pakistan and Bahrain in

the fields of cultural diplomacy, museum partnerships, academic exchanges, and preservation of archaeological heritage.

Courtesy:Dawn

Actors Khaqan Shahnawaz, Sabeena Syed tie the knot in intimate ceremony



Actors Khaqan Shahnawaz and Sabeena Syed shared their first photographs together as husband and wife, confirming their marriage.

In a joint Instagram post shared on January 30, the couple shared pictures from what appears to be their nikkah ceremony, held outdoors in the presence of friends and family.

The pictures showed a simple yet celebratory setting, featuring balloons and a vintage car as part of the décor.

Shahnawaz wore a traditional off-white outfit complemented by an embellished coat, while the bride, Sabeena, chose an off-white traditional gharara with dusty rose antique ensemble dupatta in gold and silver embroidery.

Earlier in December 2025, the couple had dropped a group of snaps on Instagram, which meant to inform folks that their ring ceremony had been done.

Sabeena Syed began her acting career in 2017 and has appeared in dramas including Muqaddar,

Yakeen Ka Safar, and others.

Khaqan entered the entertainment industry in 2023 and is known for his roles in Yunhi, Sukoon, My Dear Cinderella, and others.

Courtesy: Geo News



ISPR releases song paying tribute to armed forces

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Tuesday released a new song paying tribute to the armed forces for their sacrifices in the defence of the country and their role in serving the nation in times of need.

Titled "Through Storms and Sacrifice", the song highlights the arduous conditions under which soldiers perform their duties, reflecting their determination, courage and unwavering sense of duty. The visuals show troops guarding the country's borders in valleys and on mountain tops while enduring extreme weather conditions.

The video also focuses on the armed forces' role during nat-



ural disasters and emergencies, showing personnel taking part in rescue and relief operations in difficult terrains to help affected communities across different parts of the country.

"Pakistan Army has always proven that it lives up to the expectations of the nation on every front," the military's media wing said in a statement accompanying the

release.

The song has been released at a time when the Pakistan Army is actively engaged in rescue and relief operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Tirah area, where efforts are under way to assist families being evacuated from affected regions.

Meanwhile, the country's northern areas continue to face disruption due to heavy snowfall in Murree, Tirah, Chilas, Quetta and surrounding areas. Rescue and relief operations are ongoing to help stranded tourists and residents as severe weather conditions persist.

Courtesy: The Nation

Patron

Ms Seema Mughal
Vice Chancellor
Editor

Dr Sabir Ahmed
Assistant Professor
Graphics & Layout
Shazia Anwar

Senior Graphic Designer

Greenwichians! Interested
in contributions!

Send an email to the editor
with your name, roll number,
and your work at
drsabir@greenwich.edu.pk.



Greenwich University, DK-10, 38th, Street,
Darakshan, Phase VI, Defence Housing Authority,
Karachi-75500, Pakistan

UAN: (021) 111-202-303; Tel: (021) 35840397-98
Email:gu@greenwich.edu.pk; URL: www.greenwich.edu.pk