

# Positive Post



Greenwich University

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## 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 March

**17 March, 1948:** Las Bela's ruler Ghulam Qadir Khan (1920-1988) acceded to Pakistan, and Makran acceded to Pakistan.

**12 March, 1949:** Objectives Resolution passed by Liaquat Ali Khan.

**9 March, 1951:** Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan announced the foiling of the Rawalpindi conspiracy coup and the conspirators were exposed.

**March 23, 1956:** Iskander Mirza becomes the first President of Pakistan.

**16 March, 1971:** Yahya Khan starts negotiation with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

**14 March, 1972:** New education policy enforced. Free education in all private and public schools.

**7 March, 1977:** 1977 Pakistani general election.

**14 March, 1978:** Sardar Mohammad Daoud Khan visits Islamabad.

**18 March, 1984:** Azeem Ahmed Tariq & Altaf Hussain founded the MQM (Muhajir Qaumi Movement) in Karachi and Hyderabad.

**23 March, 2003:** AAJ TV, Pakistan's premier channel inaugurated.

**24 March, 2008:** Yusuf Raza Gilani is elected as the new Prime Minister.

**March 28, 2020:** Operation Zarb-e-Ahan is initiated by Pakistan.

**3 March, 2024:** Shehbaz Sharif takes office as Prime Minister of Pakistan for a second term with support from a coalition of the PML-N and PPP.

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## Pakistan, Romania sign MoU to boost maritime cooperation

Pakistan and Romania signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Tuesday to strengthen maritime connectivity between the two countries, Radio Pakistan reported.

The MoU was signed by Karachi Port Trust (KPT) Chairman Rear Admiral (ret) and Port of Constanța Administration of Romania General Manager Shahid Ahmed Mihai Teodorescu.

The signing ceremony, held virtually, was also attended by Romanian Ambassador to Pakistan Dan Stoescu, representatives from the ministries of foreign affairs and transport of both countries, and members of the Pakistan-Romania Business Council. The MoU reflects the shared objective of enhancing maritime



connectivity between Karachi Port and the Port of Constanța in the Black Sea, facilitating more efficient trade flows between South Asia and Europe.

It is also expected to support Pakistan's efforts to develop its maritime sector and blue econo-

my, while reinforcing Romania's role as a key logistical gateway to the European Union.

The enhanced connectivity between Karachi and Constanța is anticipated to generate new opportunities for bilateral trade between Pakistan and Romania.

Speaking at the occasion, Ambassador Stoescu highlighted Romania's aim to expand its exports to Pakistan, strengthen its economic presence in Asia, and contribute to more balanced trade flows.

He added that the Romania-Pakistan partnership provides a forward-looking framework for sustainable economic cooperation. The KPT described the MoU as "historic" in a post on X, noting that "the agreement establishes collaboration in port operations, engineering, technology, finance, maritime education, and information exchange, leveraging the strategic importance of both ports as key regional gateways."

Courtesy: The Express Tribune

## Pakistan making 'full diplomatic efforts' to de-escalate situation in Middle East, says Dar

Ishaq Dar, Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, on Monday said that Pakistan is making "full diplomatic efforts" to de-escalate tensions in the region following attacks by the United States and Israel on Iran. Speaking at a media briefing in Islamabad, he described the recent escalation as having "significantly heightened tensions in an already volatile and fragile environment" and urged all parties to exercise restraint to prevent further instability.

Dar recalled Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit to Austria, where he held discussions with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) regarding regional security and nuclear issues. He noted that the feedback from the agency was "positive," highlighting Pakistan's continued engagement with international institutions to maintain peace and stability. Dar said that the serious developments occurred just as diplomatic efforts were underway to achieve a peaceful and negotiable solution, but the sudden escalation quickly drew in almost all regional countries. He also highlighted a high-level meeting chaired by the Prime Minister on Sunday,



which reviewed the regional environment and the situation between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Addressing the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Dar expressed Pakistan's deep concern over the violation of international norms and law, emphasizing that attacks targeting heads of state and government are unacceptable. He reiterated that Pakistan has consistently urged that the door to dialogue and diplomacy must remain open, stressing that all nations must abide by the principles of the United Nations Charter, respect sovereignty and territorial integrity, and uphold international humanitarian law.

Dar highlighted his recent conversation with Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi, in which he conveyed Pakistan's condemnation of the attacks and called for diplomacy, restraint, and dialogue. He said the response from Iran was positive, but he acknowledged that, on the ground, tensions had yet to ease. Pakistan's representation at an emergency United Nations Security Council meeting also reiterated condemnation of the attacks and urged all parties to exercise restraint and resume negotiations immediately.

While acknowledging that Iran's retaliatory strikes were carried out in self-defense, Dar condemned attacks against Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, Ku-

wait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman, stressing that there is "no justification" for such actions and that double standards cannot be accepted. Pakistan remains committed to the cessation of hostilities, upholding international law, and supporting peaceful negotiations.

Dar also emphasized Pakistan's continued engagement with global and regional leaders, particularly efforts to encourage the United States and Iran to resume dialogue to reach a viable, win-win solution. He noted Pakistan's focus on protecting its citizens in the Gulf, following the death of a Pakistani national in Iran's attack on Abu Dhabi, stating that Pakistan's missions are fully engaged with local authorities to provide assistance.

Concluding his briefing, Dar stressed that diplomacy, dialogue, and restraint are the only sustainable paths forward. He said Pakistan stands ready to support the peaceful resolution of outstanding issues and urged all parties to halt escalation immediately, highlighting the importance of negotiations to ensure long-term stability, regional peace, and the safety of all nations involved.

Courtesy: Dawn

## PM Shehbaz directs formulation of strategy for exporting surplus food items to Gulf countries

the formulation of a strategy for exporting surplus food items to Gulf countries while making sure that Pakistan's nutritional needs were not affected.

The premier gave the instruction while chairing a meeting convened to review the "food situation" in the country and the export of commodities available in excess in view of the "changing regional situation", a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

The meeting was held against the backdrop of an ongoing war in the Middle East, which began with the US and Israel launching deadly attacks on Iran on February 28. The conflict has widened since, with Iran carrying out retaliatory strikes in Gulf countries to target US assets and bases.

The conflict has also resulted in a global fuel crunch, with the disruption of traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic maritime cor-

passing.

Given the situation, the government has taken a series of austerity measures to curb fuel usage and reduce spending.

The PMO's statement said the prime minister directed that special attention should be given to providing the Gulf countries with the food items they require and ensuring their food security.

Meanwhile, the meeting was told that "there are ample stocks of food items available in Pakistan; there is no shortage of anything", the statement said.

The prime minister noted that disruptions in global supply chains had increased the export potential of Pakistani products in regional markets, it added.

PM Shehbaz instructed the relevant authorities to formulate a comprehensive strategy for exporting surplus food items to



Gulf countries without affecting domestic food needs.

He also emphasised that "high quality of items" must be ensured in the export of food products to Gulf states.

PM Shehbaz further ordered that the supply and demand of food items should be fully monitored to meet the Pakistan's food requirements.

He further directed that the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation should take necessary steps for the export of food items to Gulf countries via sea.

The statement said the meeting was briefed about the stocks of

food items and their production in the country. "The meeting was told that Pakistan's agricultural sector, including agricultural commodities, meat, poultry, dairy and seafood, has vast export potential," the statement read.

In this regard, the statement continued, the PM directed that a committee be constituted to review the situation on a daily basis. "He also directed the ambassadors and trade officers deputed in Gulf countries to remain active," it said. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, other ministers and officials also attended the meeting, the statement said.

Courtesy: Dawn

## CDF Munir discusses Iranian attacks in meeting with Saudi defence minister

Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir met with Saudi Defence Minister Khalid bin Salman Al Saud in Saudi Arabia on Saturday to discuss the ongoing Middle East conflict and Iran's attacks on Saudi Arabia.

A statement by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) issued on Saturday said that the CDF visited the Kingdom and met with the defence minister.

The two "discussed the gravity of the security situation accruing from Iranian drone and missile attacks on the Kingdom", as well as joint measures needed to halt them within the framework of the strategic mutual defence agreement signed by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia last year.

According to the statement, it was emphasised that unprovoked aggression undermined efforts for regional security and stability and

foreclosed options for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

"Both sides expressed hope and desire that brotherly country Iran would manifest prudence and sagacity to avoid any miscalculation and strengthen the hands of friendly countries seeking peaceful settlement of the crisis," the ISPR added.

Earlier, Al Saud had posted on social media platform X about the meeting. He urged Iran to "exercise wisdom and avoid miscalculation", following repeated missile and drone launches at the kingdom.

After meeting with Pakistan's military chief, the Saudi minister posted on X: "We discussed Iranian attacks on the Kingdom and the measures needed to halt them. We stressed that such actions undermine regional security and stability and expressed hope that the Iranian side will exercise wisdom and avoid miscalculation."



The two countries 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.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar disclosed that Pakistan's diplomatic intervention helped deter heavier Iranian strikes on Saudi Arabia, amid ongoing missile and drone barrages targeting United States military bases and allied facilities across the Gulf.

A day later, Pakistan formally requested that Saudi Arabia provide an alternative oil supply route through Yanbu to maintain its fuel supply chain in the wake of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz following the US-Israeli attack on Iran.

In September of last year, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman signed a "Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement" in Riyadh, pledging that any attack on either nation would be treated as an act of aggression against both.

Courtesy: Dawn

## Murad approves Rs5bn to make sewage treatment facility functional

The Sindh government on Saturday announced its plan to partially operationalise a facility to treat 30 to 35 million gallons of sewage per day before it was discharged into the sea.

Chairing a meeting to review progress of the sewerage projects, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah approved Rs5 billion for the secondary treatment of wastewater at the Treatment Plant I (TP-I) and set an interim target of 30-35 MGD treatment by June 30, aiming for full operational capacity by December 31.

The TP-I at Haroonabad is part of the Greater Karachi Sewerage Plan, known as the S-III project, which also includes the rehabilitation of TP-II at Mehmoodabad and TP-III at Mauripur and the construction of a new facility, TP-IV, at Korangi.



The chief minister emphasised that Karachi would see significant improvement this year, saying that the TP-IV project was a revolutionary step for the city's water management.

According to a statement issued by the CM House, the TP-IV will treat 180 MGD of sewage, aiming to improve marine life and curb pollution in the city's coastal

waters.

The plant will process water from the Malir River basin and will include a 22-kilometre interceptor for sewage collection.

The TP-IV, being executed under a public-private partnership model, involves a government-to-government (G2G) memorandum of understanding between the Kara-

chi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC) and EnerTech Holding Company of Kuwait. Financial support includes \$100 million from the World Bank and \$50 million from the Asian Development Bank as viability gap funding, along with \$80 million from the provincial government for capital expenditure.

According to the statement, the chief minister directed Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab, who heads the KWSC Board and Planning and Development Department, to ensure immediate coordination for the timely execution of the project.

CM Shah also directed the deputy commissioner concerned to promptly complete the survey and demarcation of 140 acres available for the construction of the treatment plant.

Courtesy: Dawn

## Tehran thanks Islamabad for extending 'strong solidarity' with Iranian govt, people facing US-Israeli aggression

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi thanked the government and people of Pakistan for extending their "strong solidarity and support" with Iran and its people who he said were facing aggression from the United States and Israel.

In a post in Urdu on X, Araghchi said: "On this blessed, divine, and spiritual day and hour, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the government and people of Pakistan for their strong expression of solidarity and support with the people and government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the face of the aggression by America and the Zionist regime."

Araghchi added that Iran stood with "steadfastness and perseverance in defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, with complete reliance on Allah Al-mighty".

His post comes amid an ongoing conflict in the Middle East, which began with US-Israeli strikes on



Iran on February 28. The strikes also assassinated Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. In retaliatory strikes, Iran has targeted US assets and bases in Gulf countries.

The Foreign Office (FO) has termed Pakistan's role as a "bridge builder" during the ongoing hostilities.

Most notably, as revealed by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Islamabad invoked its "Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement" signed with Riyadh last year to help deter heavier Iranian strikes on Saudi Arabia.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Dar, who also serves as the foreign minister, have been holding phone calls with dignitaries

from relevant countries since the war began, repeatedly calling for de-escalation.

PM Shehbaz even made a brief visit to Saudi Arabia on March 12, where he held a "restricted meeting" with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and discussed regional developments.

At the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Pakistan has maintained a delicate balance, condemning unwarranted attacks on Iran, expressing solidarity with Gulf states, and urging an immediate return to negotiations and diplomacy.

Last week, Pakistan supported a Bahrain-led resolution condemning Iran's retaliatory attacks, which was adopted by the UNSC. It also voted in favour of a draft resolution presented by Russia on the military escalation, but the US vetoed it.

Courtesy: Dawn

## Pakistan launched Operation Ghazab lil-Haq against Afghanistan in self-defence

Talking about neighbouring Afghanistan, Dar maintained that Pakistan wanted good relations with all its neighbours, saying he had visited Afghanistan three times.

He said that in all engagements with Afghanistan, Pakistan had always demanded that Kabul stop its soil from being used for terrorism against other countries.

“We had only one demand, that please do not allow the Balochistan Liberation Army, the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, the Majeed Brigade which have been proscribed by many countries or provide them facilitation,” he said.

The deputy PM then recalled “serious violations” that took place in October 2025, adding that soldiers were being martyred every week, which “is certainly not acceptable under any circumstances”.

He further said Pakistan had no choice but to launch Operation Ghazab lil-Haq after repeated terrorist attacks.

“We have the capacity, we have the will, we have the kinetic capability to handle it in a very meaningful way. But we have been exercising extreme restraint ... to what has been happening.”

Dar recalled the talks between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban held in Qatar and Turkiye after the October clashes. “But the outcome was nothing, nil,” he stated for both rounds of talks.

“So we had no choice but to launch Operation Ghazab lil-Haq in response to repeated terrorist attacks by Fitna Al Khawarij and Fitna Al Hindustan against Pakistan emanating from Afghan soil, as well as the recent unwarranted and provocative actions by the Afghan Taliban regime on the night of February 26,” Dar asserted.

Dar further said that the repeated terrorist activities originating from Afghan soil had “led us, forced us to now take it seriously”.

He recalled “high-profile” incidents, including the Islamabad court bombing, the coordinated BLA attacks across Balochistan and the February 6 imambargah suicide bombing.

“Pakistan has conclusive evidence that the recent acts of terrorism in Bajaur and Bannu were perpetrated by TTP at the behest of their Afghanistan-based leadership and handlers,” Dar asserted.

He added that prior to launching the



ongoing operation, Pakistan “carried out intelligence-based selective targeting of seven terrorist camps and hideouts on February 21”.

Dar said that Pakistan launched Operation Ghazab lil-Haq “in self-defence, carrying out precise and targeted operations against seven terrorist camps and hideouts belonging to the TTP and IS-KP in Afghanistan”.

The deputy prime minister asserted that Pakistan’s “actions were proportionate, minimum and measured, with careful planning in order to make sure that only the terrorist camps and hideouts are hit and civilian populations should not be targeted”.

Dar mentioned there were “provocative actions by the Afghan Taliban on 53 locations across 15 sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa” on the night of February 26.

“Now this is horrifying and this is totally lunatic,” he remarked, adding that such actions were “totally a no-go for Pakistan”.

He further said that Pakistan’s actions during the operation were “very cery careful”.

“In this operation, initially 22 locations in Kabul, Kandahar, Paktia, Nangarhar, Khost and Paktika were subjected to aerial targeting and all these targets were military installations, which were carefully selected based on our intelligence,” Dar said.

“As a result of Pakistan’s befitting response to the Afghan Taliban regime, valiant forces targeted 37 locations in Afghanistan, 415 Taliban regime personnel and khwar-ij were eliminated, 182 posts destroyed, 31 posts captured, 185 tanks and armoured personnel carriers were destroyed,” he said.

Courtesy: Dawn

## 4th Ministerial Conference of WTO: Kayani participates in key meetings in Cameroon

The Pakistani delegation, led by Minister of State for Finance and Railways Bilal Azhar Kayani, has actively participated in various meetings in Yaounde, Cameroon, during the ongoing 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14) of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The minister has represented Pakistan’s position in multilateral discussions during WTO reform breakout sessions on foundational issues, decision making, development and level playing field. He emphasized the need for strengthening the rule-based trade system combining inclusivity and flexibility to meet the new challenges by building trust and promoting transparency. The

minister also took the floor in the plenary session of Reform to share Pakistan’s position on the facilitator’s report for protecting vital trade interests of Pakistan. As Minister-Facilitator for Agriculture at the Ministerial Conference, to assist the WTO members in reaching a consensus outcome on agriculture, he held extensive bilateral talks on the sidelines of the conference with ministers of the United Kingdom (Peter Kyle, Secretary of State for Business and Trade), Turkiye (Dr Ömer Bolat, Minister of Trade), Japan (Yukinoro Nemoto, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries) and Cotton-4 members, and senior officials of US, Brazil, China, EU, Cameroon, Mozambique, Canada, and Argentina. He



emphasized cooperation to send a positive signal to farmers and growers of member states who look to the WTO for predictability and fairness in agriculture trade, production and, food and livelihood security. He thanked his counterparts and officials for not only engaging constructively and positive cooperation for developing convergences on the draft but also in helping to bring other members to join the declaration.

The ministers and senior officials of members acknowledged and commended the efforts of Minister-Facilitator Bilal Azhar Kayani, and Pakistan’s Ambassador/Permanent Representative to WTO, Ali Sarfraz Hussain for their efforts in reaching a consensus. The Pakistan delegation’s participation will continue on Sunday, 29th March.

Courtesy: Dawn

## Celebrities urge joy, compassion as nation celebrates Eidul Fitr

As Eid festivities begin across Pakistan, celebrities have shared messages reflecting the spirit of togetherness, gratitude and compassion associated with the occasion, as communities come together to celebrate.

Actor Hira Mani, speaking to Express Tribune, highlighted the importance of family time after Ramazan. "Mehendi, bangles, sheer khurma—that's my Eid festival. Please don't disturb me," she said, adding that she spends the day with both her in-laws and her own family.

Commenting on perceptions around age, she said Eid should be enjoyed regardless of age. She also shared a lighthearted observation about couples shopping together, saying she enjoys seeing husbands carrying bags while their wives shop.

Hira Mani began her career as a video jockey before moving into hosting and later transitioned into acting, making her debut alongside her husband

in Meri Teri Kahani (2012). Model and entrepreneur Nadia Hussain described Eid as a time centred on family gatherings and visiting loved ones. "It's all about meeting family, a typical Eid atmosphere," she said, noting that preparations such as mehendi and bangles intensify after iftar, with Chand Raat marking the start of celebrations.

Born in the United Kingdom, Hussain moved to Karachi at a young age and began her modelling career in 2000 after completing her A-levels, later gaining recognition on international platforms.

Actor Ilma Jaffery pointed to fashion trends dominating this Eid, including Kashmiri bangles and farshi kurtas. She said she embraced the trend despite initial hesitation, adding that fashion should be enjoyed freely.

Describing her Eid routine, Jaffery said Chand Raat marks the start of celebrations, while Eid day is spent visiting relatives, taking photographs and enjoying time



with family. She added that Eid should be celebrated wholeheartedly and according to one's means.

Veteran actor Adnan Siddiqui emphasised unity and forgiveness. "Eid Mubarak to everyone—it's a time of happiness, so end your grievances and celebrate together," he said, adding that Eid marks the reward for Ramazan ibadat.

Siddiqui has featured in numerous television dramas and began his career in the 1990s, earning recognition for his performances.

Actor Shamoony Abbasi called for a more subdued celebration in light of global conflicts, urging people to remember those facing hardship and to pray for peace.

Actor Maya Ali shared a message marking the end of Ramazan, expressing gratitude and urging people to continue acts of kindness and support for those in need beyond the holy month, while promoting empathy and generosity.

Courtesy: The Express Tribune

## Pakistan thrash Bangladesh by 128 runs in rain-hit second ODI

Pakistan defeated Bangladesh by 128 runs via the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern (DLS) method in the rain-affected second ODI at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Friday.

Maaz Sadaqat was the stand-out performer of the game, blasting a rapid 75 for Pakistan before picking up three wickets.

Chasing a revised target of 243 in 32 overs after a two-hour rain and hailstorm delay, Bangladesh collapsed for 114 in 23.3 overs despite a brief counterattack from Litton Das.

Bangladesh had already been in trouble before the weather halted play.

Tanzid Hasan fell early for one, caught at backward square leg off Shaheen Shah Afridi, while Saif Hassan departed for 12 after offering a catch to short mid-off off Mohammad Wasim Jr.

Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto was bowled by Shaheen for a duck, leaving the hosts reeling at 27 for 3 in 6.3 overs when a sudden thunderstorm accompanied by hail forced the players off the field.

When play resumed, Litton attempted to revive the chase with a series of boundaries, including two sixes. He was eventually trapped lbw for 41 by part-time spinner Maaz Sadaqat.

Tawhid Hridoy made 28 off 38 balls before falling lbw to Haris Rauf, while Afif Hossain added 14 before becoming Sadaqat's second victim.

Captain Mehidy Hasan Miraz managed just one run as Bangladesh's innings folded quickly.

Rauf and Sadaqat claimed three wickets each to complete a dominant bowling performance for Pakistan.



Earlier, Bangladesh had fought back with the ball to bowl Pakistan out for 274 in 47.3 overs after a blistering start by the visitors.

Pakistan raced to 103 for the opening wicket inside 13 overs through an aggressive partnership between Sahibzada Farhan and Sadaqat.

Sadaqat struck 75 off 46 balls with six fours and five sixes, while Farhan scored 31 before falling to Taskin Ahmed.

Salman Agha later top-scored with 64 from 62 balls and shared a 109-run stand with Mohammad

Rizwan (44), though Agha's innings ended in a dramatic run-out by Mehidy Hasan Miraz at the non-striker's end that sparked animated reactions on the field.

Leg-spinner Rishad Hossain finished as the pick of the bowlers with 3 for 56 as Pakistan were eventually bowled out for 274, a total that proved more than enough on a rain-shortened night in Mirpur.

With this win, Pakistan have levelled up the three-match series 1-1, with the series decider to be played.

Courtesy: Dawn

## Pakistan edge Japan 4-3 to qualify for Hockey World Cup after 8 years

Pakistan put up an impressive performance to edge Japan 4-3 in the semi-final of the FIH Hockey World Cup qualifier at the Suez Canal Authority Hockey Stadium in Egypt.

The win has guaranteed the Green Shirts a place in the World Cup and marks their return to the global event after eight years. The tournament will be hosted jointly by Belgium and the Netherlands in August.

The Pakistan team, led by Ammad Butt, was trailing 3-1 in the third quarter of the match against Japan, when it smashed three goals in the last nine minutes of the final quarter to edge ahead 4-3, snatching victory from the jaws of defeat.

Ammad gave his side an early lead in the ninth minute with an impressive field goal. The lead, which

remained intact till the end of the first quarter, was neutralised in the second quarter (21st minute) when Japan's Ryoma Ooka scored a field goal.

In an inspiring show, Japan took control of the match in the penultimate quarter when Shota Yamada (35th minute) and Yamasaki Koji (40th minute) struck in quick succession to take a solid 3-1 lead.

However, in a sensational comeback in the final quarter, Pakistan's Abu Bakr Mahmood, Sufyan Khan and Afraz scored a goal each in the 52nd, 55th and 57th minute, respectively, to reclaim the lead that remained intact till the final whistle.

Just two minutes before the end of the match, Japan lost a golden opportunity to equalise when Fujishima Raiki missed a



penalty-stroke.

Pakistan have put up an impressive show in the qualifier, winning all of their group matches against China (5-4), Malaysia (5-3) and Austria (4-2) and Japan (4-3)

Ammad and company will now face England who routed Malaysia 7-1 in the other last-four match in the final of the qualifying event at the same venue.

Once a giant force in global hockey and four-time World Cup winners, Pakistan had failed to qualify for the 2014 World Cup held in The Hague, Netherlands, and finished poorly in 12th position in the 16-nation edition staged in Bhubaneswar, India in 2018. Pakistan had also failed to qualify for the 2023 World Cup held in the Indian city of Odisha.

Courtesy: Dawn

## Mahira Khan calls for structured salaries, royalties for artists in film industry

In a recent appearance on Vasay Chaudhry's Eid show, Mahira Khan revisited a longstanding concern in Pakistan's film industry: the lack of a structured salary system.

Mahira's Aag Lagey Basti Main co-star Fahad Mustafa was also present as she discussed the unequal distribution of pay, highlighting how new actors often struggle just to "survive," while senior actors manage to secure work and revenue with relative ease.

When asked about a resurfaced post of hers advocating for artist royalties, Mahira said, "I think



world over there is a certain amount that goes to artists as royalties. I'm not saying we should exactly follow Hollywood, but it is

a system that ensures artists don't go hungry."

She stressed that Pakistan's entertainment industry needs a formal system that provides at least a baseline of financial protection. "Yes, there are many artists who are homeless or go bankrupt, but that's mainly because they were unable to save," she added.

Mahira also pointed out that broadcasters and TV channels often benefit from multiple revenue streams far more than the actors appearing on their shows.

"I feel if channels earn so much money, some of which we may

not even be aware of, artists like us still struggle to survive," she noted.

She further stressed that junior artists, supporting actors, technicians, and crew members rarely enjoy the same advantages.

Although organisations like the Actors Collective Trust and the Pakistan Broadcasters Association aim to support actors, their efforts have so far done little to effectively address these issues.

Veteran actor Naila Jaffery also highlighted this problem during her battle with cancer, when she had to cover her medical expenses herself.

Mahira's comments underline the need for wider discussion on this topic to bring about meaningful change.

The star acknowledged that while she benefits from her success as one of Pakistan's leading stars, she hoped that everyone in the industry receives the same level of recognition and support.

Courtesy: The Express Tribune



## Eid 2026 has its winner: Aag Lagay Basti Mein earns applause across Pakistan Theatres packed this Eid as Aag Lagay Basti Mein, starring Mahira Khan and Fahad Mustafa, wins applause nationwide

Arriving this Eid with all the usual hype, Aag Lagay Basti Mein is a full-on commercial entertainer that sticks to what works: action, comedy, and big star power. It doesn't try to be too deep, and that actually works in its favour. The film keeps things simple and focuses on giving audiences a fun, fast-paced watch.

The story unfolds through a series of chaotic events in which small problems quickly turn into bigger messes. There are misunderstandings, rivalries, and plenty of over-the-top moments that keep things moving. It's not about a

strong plot, but more about the journey and the entertainment along the way.

A big reason the film works is the pairing of Fahad Mustafa and Mahira Khan. The two have worked together before in Quaid-e-Azam Zindabad, and their comfort shows on screen. Fahad brings in all the energy, humour, and larger-than-life moments, while Mahira keeps things balanced with a more calm and controlled performance.

Fahad clearly stands out the most. His comic timing and screen



presence carry the film, especially in the louder scenes. Mahira also does well, adding stability to the chaos without getting lost in it. The supporting cast adds to the fun, even if some parts feel a bit repetitive.

Directed by Bilal Atif Khan, starring Javed Sheikh, Tabish Hashmi, and also including many other influencers in cameo roles, the film has a bright, colourful look and moves at a quick pace. It rarely slows down, which keeps the audience engaged from start to finish.

On Instagram, the response has

been mostly positive. Many people are calling it a "paisa vasool" film, sharing clips from cinemas and praising the entertainment factor. Fahad's performance is getting the most attention, while Mahira's fans are enjoying her screen presence.

Of course, some viewers feel the humour is a bit loud and repeated in places. But for an Eid film, that kind of style seems to work well with audiences. In the end, Aag Lagay Basti Mein delivers exactly what it promises, a fun, energetic film that's easy to watch and perfect for the festive mood.

Courtesy: Express Tribune



## Bullah hits the box office

The film Bullha has made a strong impact at the box office and is being called the biggest film of Eid.

During the Eid holidays, cinemas saw a huge rush of moviegoers. In just two days, more than 25,000 people watched the film. Viewers said that after a long time, they finally got to see a high-quality Punjabi film that offers a great mix of action, thriller, romance, and music.

Actor Shaan Shahid made an impressive comeback with this film. Audiences of all ages women, children, and elders enjoyed and appreciated it. Internationally, especially in the United Arab Emirates, the film also performed well.

The story of the film is written by renowned writer Nasir Adeeb, who previously wrote the blockbuster The Legend of Maula Jatt. The film is directed by Shoaib Khan. The cast also includes Salmeem Sheikh, Meera (actress), and



Naeema Butt in key roles.

In a special interview, Shaan Shahid expressed his (happiness) over the overwhelming

response, saying he is grateful to all the viewers who watched and appreciated the film.

Courtesy: The News

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