

Middle East on the Edge: Pakistan's Diplomatic Balancing Act

Dar, Iranian FM

- Discuss Regional Developments

China Urges US,

- Iran to Resolve Conflict Through Dialogue



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Welcome to this latest edition of The World Ambassador. As we navigate an era defined by rapid geopolitical shifts and deep economic transformation, the need for clear, analytical journalism has never been more critical. This issue brings you a comprehensive look at the diplomatic, economic, and social forces shaping our collective future.

In our cover stories, we examine Pakistan's deliberate pivot toward proactive economic diplomacy. From Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar's outlined trade goals to the concrete progress on a Pak-US Reciprocal Trade Agreement and the revitalized focus on Gwadar under CPEC, the message is clear: sustainable growth lies in robust international partnerships.

Beyond commerce, we confront the structural and ethical challenges of our time. Our "Articles & Opinions" section tackles the pressing realities of climate change as it edges closer to a point of no return, alongside an urgent call to address the rising global health crisis of cancer. Furthermore, as artificial intelligence reshapes industries overnight, our feature on ethical AI governance explores how Pakistan can harness this technology responsibly.

We also celebrate the enduring strength of our communities. From heritage preservation efforts in Sindh to the vibrant cultural appeal of Peshawar, these pages remind us that progress is meaningless without preserving the history and humanity that anchor us.

We hope these articles offer you valuable insights, challenge your perspectives, and spark constructive dialogue. Thank you for your continued engagement with our work.

With warm regards,

Abid Siddique Chaudhry

Editor



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EDITORIAL NOTE

As we present this month's issue, the world continues to move through a period of profound change—shaped by shifting diplomatic relationships, humanitarian crises, climate pressures, technological transformation and growing demands for social inclusion. This edition brings together developments from Pakistan and around the world, reflecting on the issues that are influencing our societies and our shared future. Pakistan's diplomatic and strategic engagements feature prominently in this issue. From expanding digital cooperation with Uzbekistan and strengthening ties with Russia to discussions with Iran and Türkiye, these developments highlight Pakistan's efforts to build stronger regional and international partnerships. At the same time, the country's growing focus on cybersecurity and digital cooperation reminds us that diplomacy today extends beyond traditional political and economic relations into the rapidly evolving digital sphere. Women's

empowerment is another important theme of this month's magazine. Japan's support for vocational training in Chakwal, Pakistan's call for a greater role for women in peace and security, and the appointment of Razia Mehsud to the South Waziristan DRC demonstrate the continuing importance of creating opportunities for women to participate fully in economic, public and peace-building processes. The humanitarian situation around the world remains deeply concerning. The continuing crisis in Gaza and the worsening humanitarian situation in Lebanon remind us that behind every statistic are individuals and families whose lives have been profoundly affected. The situation in Afghanistan and the Taliban's call for renewed diplomatic engagement also underline the complexity of regional challenges requiring sustained international attention and dialogue. Climate change receives particular attention in this edition. From warnings about the possibility of crossing the 1.5°C warming threshold

to Pakistan's continuing vulnerability to monsoon floods, the evidence is clear that climate risks can no longer be treated as a distant concern. For Pakistan, where extreme weather events can cause widespread loss of lives, livelihoods and infrastructure, climate resilience must remain a national priority. Health and human development also remain at the heart of this issue. The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo, efforts to expand mental health services, and the continuing importance of breastfeeding highlight the need for stronger and more accessible health systems. Prevention, awareness and investment in healthcare are essential not only during emergencies but throughout every stage of life. This month's magazine also celebrates Pakistan's national and cultural identity. The 79th Independence Day, Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH), Chehlum of Imam Hussain (RA) tourism, and sporting achievements provide opportunities to reflect on our heritage, resilience and national spirit. Pakistan's sporting engagements

in hockey and cricket demonstrate once again how sport can bring people together while strengthening international friendships. Finally, our feature on protecting citizens in the digital age addresses an increasingly important challenge. As technology becomes part of almost every aspect of daily life, protecting personal information, preventing financial fraud and strengthening cybersecurity are responsibilities shared by governments, institutions, businesses and citizens. We hope this edition informs, encourages reflection and contributes to a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities before us. In a rapidly changing world, informed citizens and responsible journalism remain essential to building safer, more peaceful and more resilient societies. Thank you for reading, and welcome to this month's edition.

Wasif Ali Khan

Japan Supports Women's Economic Empowerment with \$53,000 Vocational Training Grant in Chakwal

New Institute in Dulmial to Equip 240 Rural Women Annually with Skills for Employment and Entrepreneurship

Abid Siddique Chaudhry

Islamabad

Japanese Ambassador Akamatsu has signed a \$53,000 grant agreement with the Moawin Foundation to establish a modern vocational training institute for women in Dulmial, Chakwal, strengthening Japan's commitment to women's empowerment and economic self-reliance in rural Pakistan.

The new institute will provide practical technical training in sewing, tailoring, and garment production, enabling local women to develop marketable skills and pursue employment or establish their own small businesses.

The project, funded under Japan's official assistance programme, is expected to benefit

240 women every year. By creating access to specialized vocational education within the local community, the initiative aims to generate sustainable income opportunities and strengthen household economic resilience.

Beyond skills development, the project is designed to promote female entrepreneurship, financial independence, and greater participation of women in the local economy. It represents a community-focused approach to development, helping rural women turn vocational skills into sustainable livelihoods.

Japan's support for the initiative also reflects the broader partnership between Japan and Pakistan, with a continued focus on gender equality, human development, poverty reduction, and sustainable community development.

The establishment of the vocational institute in Chakwal is expected to provide women with new pathways toward economic independence while contributing to stronger and more resilient rural communities.



Pakistan, Uzbekistan Agree Roadmap to Deepen Digital Cooperation

Both sides seek stronger collaboration in emerging technologies and digital finance to expand economic ties between the two countries.

The World Ambassador Web Desk

Pakistan and Uzbekistan have agreed to develop a joint roadmap to strengthen bilateral cooperation in emerging technologies and the digital economy.

The understanding was reached during a meeting between Bilal Bin Saqib, Minister of State and Chairman of Pakistan's Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (VARA), and Vladimir Norov, Chairman of the Central Asian Artificial Intelligence Association (AICA).

The meeting focused on ways to use emerging technologies to promote economic cooperation between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and strengthen links between South and Central Asia.

Both sides stressed the need for structured cooperation to encourage innovation and facilitate greater collaboration among technology institutions, businesses, startups and financial organizations.

The proposed roadmap is expected to provide a framework for future cooperation and identify areas where the two countries can exchange expertise, develop joint initiatives and promote technological innovation.

The officials also discussed the growing role of digital finance and virtual assets, with emphasis on regulatory cooperation and the exchange of knowledge and experience.

Greater coordination in these areas could help create opportunities for digital businesses and financial institutions while supporting responsible technological development



Closer cooperation with Uzbekistan could provide new opportunities for investment, innovation and collaboration between businesses and technology professionals in both countries.

The continued engagement between VARA and AICA is expected to support efforts to strengthen digital connectivity and encourage secure, innovative and sustainable technological development.



Russia, Pakistan Discuss Closer Cooperation in Cybersecurity

Experts, diplomats and academics call for stronger collaboration on cyber defence, information sovereignty and digital security

Abid Siddique Chaudhry
Islamabad

Leading policy experts, diplomats and academic representatives from Russia and Pakistan held a joint roundtable on August 18, 2026, to discuss ways of strengthening cooperation in cybersecurity and information sovereignty.

The hybrid meeting was jointly organised by the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) and Pakistan's National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST).

The gathering brought together senior representatives from both countries to exchange views on growing digital risks and the protection of critical information infrastructure.

Among the participants were Dr Dmitry Kiku, Deputy Director General of RIAC; Dr Hassan Jalil Shah, Principal of NUST Jinnah School of Public Policy and Leadership; Gleb Shubin, Cultural Attaché at the Russian Embassy in Islamabad; and Egor Rykov, International Business Development Manager at Positive Technologies.



Focus on Digital Protection

Participants discussed national approaches to protecting critical digital infrastructure from emerging cyber threats and examined opportunities for greater cooperation between Russian and Pakistani institutions.

The discussions included the exchange of expertise in cyber threat intelligence, data protection and safeguarding national information systems.

The participants also highlighted the importance of cooperation between government institutions and the private sector, particularly in developing effective responses to rapidly evolving digital threats.

Greater Academic Cooperation

Academic collaboration was another important area discussed during the meeting. Participants called for stronger links between universities, research institutions and experts from the two countries.

They proposed expanding joint research programmes, academic initiatives and expert dialogues focusing on digital security, cyber governance and emerging technological



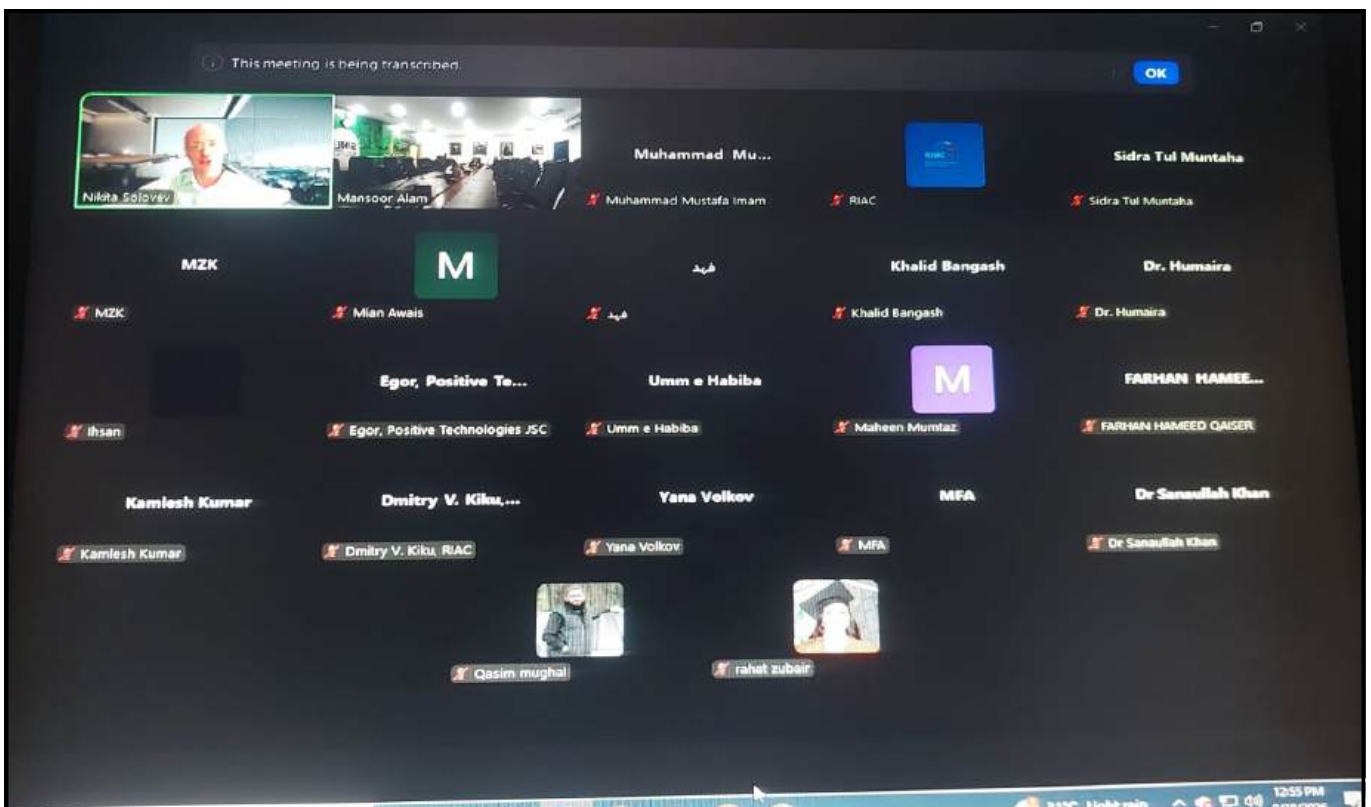
challenges.

Regular Expert Dialogue

The meeting concluded with a commitment to strengthen regular exchanges between Russian and Pakistani experts and institutions.

Participants emphasized that continued cooperation, knowledge-sharing and joint research could contribute to stronger digital resilience and provide a foundation for deeper institutional ties between the two countries.

The initiative is expected to encourage further dialogue and collaboration between Russian and Pakistani academic, policy and technology institutions.



Pakistan Moves to Deepen Economic and Strategic Ties with Russia

Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi says Islamabad is advancing trade links with the Eurasian Economic Union while expanding cooperation with Moscow

The World Ambassador Web Desk

Pakistan is moving ahead with efforts to establish a free trade arrangement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) as Islamabad seeks to further strengthen its relations with Russia, Pakistan's Ambassador to Russia Faisal Niaz Tirmizi has said.

In an interview with Russia's TASS news agency, Tirmizi said Pakistan had already initiated the process of establishing a free trade area with the EAEU, describing Pakistan as a "natural partner" in the North-South Transport Corridor. He said improved regional connectivity could eventually make overland travel possible between Russian cities such as Murmansk and Moscow, as well as Minsk in Belarus, and major Pakistani destinations including Islamabad, Karachi and Gwadar.

Pakistan, he said, considers itself part of the wider Eurasian economic region and wants stronger commercial and people-to-people links with EAEU member states. Discussions have already been held between Pakistan's commerce ministry and the EAEU leadership, although negotiations could take several months or up to two years.

Tirmizi said the proposed arrangement could expand trade by allowing Pakistan to source products from Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan while increasing access for Pakistani goods to the Eurasian market. Greater commercial integration, he added, could contribute to economic and food security while

strengthening regional connectivity.

The ambassador also discussed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's planned visit to Russia, which was postponed from March because of developments in the Middle East. He said Islamabad and Moscow were working to finalize new dates, with the visit expected during the final quarter of the year, most likely in autumn.

According to Tirmizi, the visit is expected to produce a number of agreements, potentially between eight and ten, including an Economic Roadmap through 2030. Further initiatives involving economic, social and media cooperation are also being considered.

He noted that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Russian President Vladimir Putin have met several times in recent years and are expected to have further interaction on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Bishkek.

On regional security, Tirmizi reiterated Pakistan's support for dialogue and peaceful resolution of disputes. He said Islamabad remained engaged with both Iran and the United States amid recent tensions and warned that further escalation could have serious consequences for regional stability and international energy and fertilizer markets.

Pakistan, he said, was also coordinating with regional partners, including Qatar, in efforts to promote lasting peace. He added that Islamabad had consistently advocated negotiations as the preferred means of resolving international disputes.

Turning to the South Caucasus, Tirmizi said Pakistan saw opportunities for closer engagement with Armenia, Azerbaijan and other countries in the region. He said recent developments had created greater understanding of the importance of normal relations with Armenia, while increasing contacts and business exchanges could open new avenues for cooperation.

The ambassador also identified artificial intelligence and information technology as promising areas for closer Pakistan-Russia cooperation. He said both countries had a large pool of skilled IT professionals and significant capabilities in scientific research.

Pakistan is already cooperating with Russia's RUSSOFT Association in the IT sector, Tirmizi said, adding that collaboration between Pakistani and Russian experts could contribute to technological innovation by combining Pakistan's young workforce with Russia's scientific expertise.

He further stressed the importance of improving connectivity and tourism between the two countries. Affordable transportation and direct air links, he said, would be essential for increasing business and travel.

Pakistan's mountains, archaeological sites, religious heritage and coastline offer considerable potential for Russian visitors, Tirmizi said, highlighting the country's historical links with the Indus and Gandhara civilisations.

He also pointed to education as a key foundation for long-term relations. Around 1,300 Pakistani students are currently studying in Russia, but the ambassador said he hoped the number would eventually exceed 13,000.

After visiting universities in several Russian regions, Tirmizi praised the quality of Russian education and said discussions were under way with Russian authorities to facilitate educational opportunities for Pakistani students.

Cultural exchanges are also being expanded. Pakistan plans to celebrate its Independence Day in Russia with performances by violinist Ustad Rais Khan and folk-fusion group Khumariyaan, while efforts are being made to promote Russian culture in Pakistan through educational and cultural programmes.

Tirmizi also highlighted growing opportunities in music, fashion, film and entertainment. Pakistani artists and musical groups are expected to perform in Russia, while Pakistan's fashion and textile industries are gaining greater international recognition.

He expressed hope that Russian films, theatre productions and artists would receive greater exposure in Pakistan.

The ambassador said cultural, educational and commercial exchanges could help bring the peoples of Pakistan and Russia closer together, with diplomatic engagement serving as a bridge between the two societies and providing a

foundation for stronger and more enduring bilateral relations.



Türkiye Marks Victory Day at GHQ Rawalpindi

Turkish ambassador hails Pakistan-Türkiye ties as “two states, one soul, one shield” during first Victory Day celebration at GHQ

Abid Siddique Chaudhry
Islamabad

Türkiye marked its Victory Day on August 30 with a distinguished ceremony hosted by the Pakistan Armed Forces at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi, highlighting the enduring friendship and strategic ties between the two countries.

The Turkish side described the occasion as a privilege and said the ceremony reaffirmed the deep bond between Pakistan and Türkiye, symbolised by the message: “Two states, one soul, one shield.”

The celebration commemorated a defining turning point in Türkiye’s history and carried added significance as the first Victory Day ceremony held in such a setting at GHQ.

Türkiye expressed its appreciation to the Pakistan Army for its warmth and hospitality, saying the opportunity to celebrate the national day at GHQ conveyed a powerful message of the countries’ “eternal brotherhood.”

The ceremony underscored the longstanding military, diplomatic and cultural relationship between Pakistan and Türkiye and reflected the close ties shared by the two nations



US Judge Strikes Down Trump-Era Visa Ban Affecting Pakistan

Manhattan court rules suspension of immigrant visas for nationals of 75 countries “patently unlawful” and beyond State Department authority

The World Ambassador International Desk

A US federal judge has struck down the Trump administration's suspension of immigrant visa processing for nationals of 75 countries, including Pakistan, ruling that the policy was “patently unlawful” and contrary to federal immigration law.

In a 61-page decision, US District Judge Jeannette Vargas of Manhattan said the policy exceeded the authority of Secretary of State Marco Rubio and unlawfully imposed a blanket restriction based on applicants' nationalities.

The suspension, which took effect in January, affected immigrant visa applicants from Pakistan and Bangladesh, along with countries across Latin America, the Balkans, Africa, the Middle East and the Caribbean.

Judge Vargas said the policy conflicted directly with the statutory framework governing immigrant visa processing, arguing that nationality alone could not serve as the basis for categorically preventing the issuance of immigrant visas.

The US State Department had defended the measure by arguing that applicants from

the designated countries posed a higher risk of becoming a “public charge ”



and relying on government assistance after entering the United States.

The department did not immediately comment on the court ruling. Judge Vargas, who was appointed by former Democratic President Joe Biden, issued the decision in a lawsuit brought by immigrant rights organizations, visa applicants and US citizens seeking to sponsor family members from the affected countries.

The ruling represents a setback for the Trump administration's broader immigration agenda, which has included a series of measures aimed at tightening immigration controls and strengthening screening of foreign nationals.

The administration has maintained that its immigration policies are intended to protect national security and prevent abuse of the US immigration system.

Immigrant rights groups, however, have challenged several of the measures, arguing that they undermine due process and other constitutional protections and could contribute to discriminatory immigration practices.

The ruling could provide relief to thousands of applicants whose immigrant visa processing had been suspended under the policy, although its practical impact will depend on any further legal proceedings or action by the administration.

China Urges US, Iran to Resolve Conflict Through Dialogue

Beijing warns military action and sanctions will only escalate tensions as Washington increases pressure on Tehran

The World Ambassador International Desk

China has called on the United States and Iran to resolve their differences through dialogue and negotiations, warning that military action and economic sanctions would only further escalate tensions.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian made the remarks during a regular press briefing on Friday in response to the latest US pressure campaign against Iran.

Lin said military measures and sanctions could not provide a lasting solution to the conflict and urged both sides to exercise restraint and return to diplomatic engagement.

He stressed that further escalation would serve no one's interests and called for efforts to prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

The remarks came after US President Donald Trump announced on Wednesday plans for what he described as the "most crushing economic operation ever taken" against countries providing economic support to Iran.

Beijing has repeatedly emphasized the importance of resolving international disputes through political and diplomatic means and has opposed measures that it says could deepen regional instability.

China's latest comments come amid heightened tensions surrounding US-Iran relations and growing international concerns over the wider security and economic consequences of further escalation.



UN: 94% of Gaza's 2.1 Million Residents Need Shelter as Israeli Strikes Continue

Humanitarian agencies warn of worsening living conditions, severe shelter shortages and mounting obstacles to aid delivery ahead of the cold and rainy season

The World Ambassador **International Desk**

Ninety-four per cent of Gaza's 2.1 million residents are in need of shelter as Israeli gunfire and airstrikes continue across the enclave, United Nations agencies and peacekeepers warned on Thursday.

More than four in five families are facing critical or catastrophic living conditions, with shortages of fuel, energy and essential household items, according to UN agencies and humanitarian partners.

"These constraints affect people's ability to sleep, their ability to cook, their ability to wash, their ability to store food and water, maintain adequate lighting, and cope with heat and cold," UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told reporters at the regular noon briefing in New York.

Nearly two-thirds of families are living in tents or makeshift shelters that can rapidly deteriorate in harsh weather because they were designed for short-term use, according to the UN humanitarian aid coordination office, OCHA.

"We continue to face obstacles in bringing the level of more structured shelter into Gaza," Dujarric said, noting that more than 70 per cent of families experienced flooding last winter.

"Ahead of the cold and rainy season, our humanitarian partners are working to ensure adequate shelter for families," he said.

Humanitarian operations continue to face funding shortages as well as Israeli restrictions on the entry of materials and equipment. UN partners estimate that \$562 million is required to improve living conditions across Gaza.

OCHA has continued to receive reports of Palestinian civilians being killed, injured or otherwise affected by Israeli airstrikes, shelling and gunfire, including children.

"Civilians should never be targeted or used for military purposes," Dujarric said.

On Thursday, the bodies of 50 people, including 19 children, were laid to rest after being recovered from beneath the rubble in Gaza in recent days. The victims had been killed more than two years ago.

Dujarric said efforts to remove rubble and recover bodies

remained severely constrained by restrictions on the entry of heavy machinery, spare parts, lubricants and other critical supplies, as well as restrictions on access to large areas of the Gaza Strip.

The UN Development Programme said pest-control efforts were making progress amid continuing rodent infestations and unsanitary conditions across the rubble-strewn enclave. Since May, pest-control activities have expanded to more than 3,250 high-risk sites, including displacement locations, markets and hospitals.

Meanwhile, the UN peacekeeping mission in southern Lebanon, UNIFIL, reported observing 86 airspace violations, nine airstrikes and 265 projectiles launched by Israeli forces between Monday and Wednesday. It also recorded nearly 30 incidents involving drones, including reconnaissance flights, kinetic strikes and suicide drones.

Demolitions and destruction of infrastructure by Israeli forces have also continued, alongside restrictions on freedom of movement. Seven such incidents were recorded so far this week, most involving Israeli forces and resulting in patrols, convoys or humanitarian movements being delayed, rerouted or forced to turn back.

Across Gaza, the West Bank and southern Lebanon, UN agencies are continuing humanitarian operations despite the deteriorating

security and humanitarian environment.

In Gaza, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, is opening a new temporary learning space. In southern Lebanon, the agency is distributing food parcels to people in refugee camps as food insecurity increases and access to food becomes more limited and costly.

UNICEF is providing vulnerable families in Gaza and the West Bank with essential assistance, supporting educational spaces and helping install solar energy systems at 16 primary healthcare centres to maintain essential services.

The World Food Programme is reaching around 1.5 million people in Gaza with food parcels, wheat flour, bread, hot meals, healthy school snacks, nutrition services and cash assistance, including support for children attending temporary learning spaces.

The UN Development Programme has also issued new guidelines for removing and recycling debris in Gaza to help reopen and repave roads, prepare shelter sites and restore access to critical facilities, including hospitals and humanitarian service points.





Taliban Urges US to Reopen Embassy and Invest in Afghanistan

Kabul seeks renewed diplomatic engagement with Washington, highlighting Afghanistan's mineral wealth and infrastructure opportunities five years after the US withdrawal

The World Ambassador **International Desk**

Five years after the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Taliban government is seeking renewed engagement with Washington, urging the United States to reopen its embassy, maintain a diplomatic presence and invest in Afghanistan's infrastructure and mineral resources.

"We consider the chapter of war to have come to an end,"

Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi told The New York Times, calling for relations based on mutual respect and a "new chapter" of engagement. Muttaqi said Afghanistan could offer opportunities in mining, dams and roads, while the Taliban seeks to overcome its international isolation. Kabul has expanded relations with Russia, Central Asian states and Gulf countries, but no Western country has formally recognized its government. Washington, however, remains reluctant to normalize relations, citing concerns over

terrorism, security and the Taliban's treatment of women and girls. The US has also restricted visas for Afghans and taken measures against Taliban officials.

Muttaqi rejected calls for a renewed US military presence, including at Bagram Air Base, saying Afghanistan could not accept foreign troops on its soil.

Some former US diplomats and analysts have nevertheless urged greater engagement, arguing that Afghanistan's untapped reserves of lithium, copper,

iron ore and rare earth elements could create economic opportunities and strengthen US influence in Central Asia.

The Taliban has already signed mining agreements with companies from China, Iran and Qatar. Afghanistan, however, remains heavily dependent on foreign assistance, while millions of Afghans continue to face humanitarian and economic challenges.

Despite growing diplomatic contacts, the Taliban's restrictive policies toward women and girls remain a major obstacle to wider international recognition.





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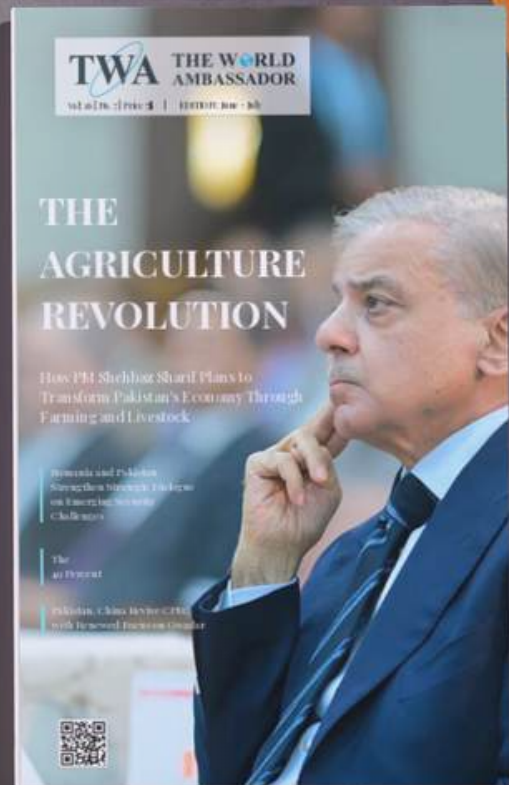
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Pakistan Celebrates 79th Independence Day with National Spirit

Flag-hoisting ceremonies, patriotic programmes and cultural events held across the country to mark August 14

Wasif Ali Khan
Islamabad

Pakistan celebrated its 79th Independence Day on August 14, 2026, with patriotic ceremonies and public events held across the country to commemorate the nation's independence.

The day began with flag-hoisting ceremonies at government offices, educational institutions and other public and private organizations. National flags were displayed prominently across cities, while special programmes were organized to highlight the significance of Pakistan's independence.

In Islamabad and provincial capitals, official ceremonies were held with the national flag raised amid the national anthem. Government officials, members of civil society, students and citizens participated in events marking the historic occasion.

Educational institutions organized speeches, national songs, debates, tableau performances and other activities focusing on Pakistan's history, the struggle for independence and the responsibilities of citizens.

Messages issued on the occasion emphasized national unity, peace, progress and the importance of education and hard work in strengthening the country. Tributes were also paid to the leaders and people who played a role in the creation of Pakistan.

Across the country, streets, buildings, markets and homes were decorated with national flags and green-and-white displays. Families and communities took part in celebrations, while patriotic songs and special programmes were broadcast throughout the day.

The celebrations also served as an occasion to reflect on Pakistan's achievements and challenges and to renew the commitment to building a peaceful, prosperous and united country.

The day concluded with prayers for Pakistan's peace, stability, prosperity and continued progress, as citizens reaffirmed their commitment to the country and its future.



Pakistan to Celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) with Religious Fervour

Mosques, streets and homes to be illuminated as Muslims across the country mark the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Nasir Ali Khan

Islamabad

Muslims across Pakistan will observe Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) with religious devotion and enthusiasm, marking the birth anniversary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Mosques, streets, markets and residential areas are expected to be decorated with colourful lights, banners and flags, while special gatherings, Milad ceremonies and religious programmes will be organized across the country.

Scholars and religious leaders will highlight the life, teachings and exemplary character of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), emphasizing his message of peace, compassion, justice, tolerance and unity.

In major cities, processions and Milad gatherings will be held at designated locations. Authorities are expected to make special security and traffic arrangements to facilitate participants and ensure the peaceful observance of the occasion.

Special prayers will also be offered for the peace, prosperity and stability of Pakistan and the wider Muslim world.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) is observed by Muslims as an occasion to remember the Prophet's teachings and renew their commitment to following his example of kindness, patience, honesty and service to humanity.



Dar, Iranian FM Discuss Regional Developments

Pakistan and Iran discuss regional tensions as Dar invites Iranian foreign minister to visit Islamabad.

Abid Siddique Chaudhry
Islamabad

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a telephone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi on Monday.

The two foreign ministers discussed regional and international developments, including the deteriorating situation in Occupied East Jerusalem.

During the conversation, Dar invited Araghchi to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience.



Army Chief Reviews Pakistan's Monsoon Disaster Preparedness

Field Marshal Asim Munir visits NDMA's emergency centre, stresses swift response and stronger inter-agency coordination

Abid Siddique Chaudhry
Islamabad

Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir visited the National Emergencies Operation Centre at NDMA headquarters and reviewed Pakistan's preparedness for the ongoing monsoon season.

He was briefed on the NEOC's operational capabilities and technology-based monitoring systems, including "Disaster

Lens 2026," which tracks the monsoon situation and multiple hazards.

Field Marshal Munir commended the NDMA's efforts to strengthen national disaster management and stressed readiness, effective coordination and rapid response to protect lives and critical infrastructure.

He assured that the Armed Forces remain fully prepared to assist the civil administration and NDMA in rescue, relief and rehabilitation

operations.



Pakistan Observes Chehlum of Imam Hussain (RA), Martyrs of Karbala

Processions held nationwide as authorities enforce strict security measures in major cities

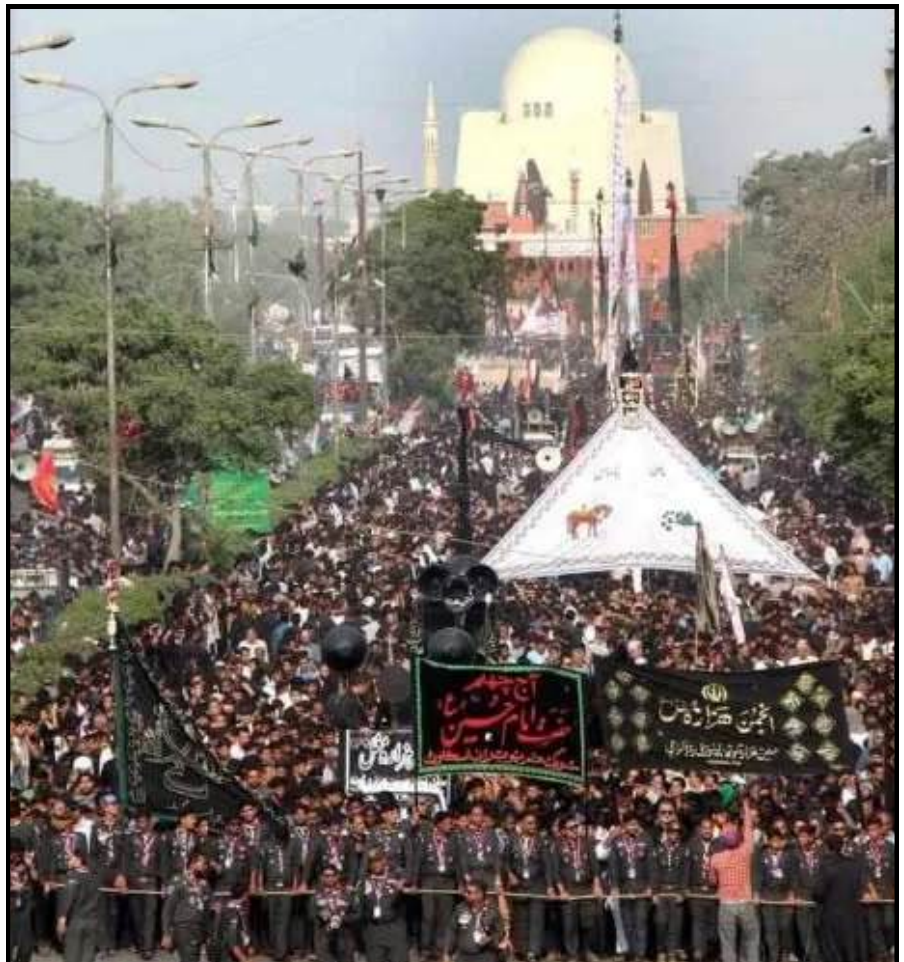
**The World Ambassador
News Desk**

The Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and the martyrs of Karbala is being observed across Pakistan today with religious devotion and reverence.

Processions featuring Alam and Zuljinah are being held in major cities, accompanied by noha khwani and matam. In Karachi, the central procession is being taken out from Nishtar Park amid tight security, with more than 4,000 police personnel deployed and restrictions imposed along the route.

In Lahore, the main procession will begin from Haveli Alaf Shah at Delhi Gate and conclude at Karbala Gamay Shah. Across Punjab, 382 processions and congregations are being secured by around 30,000 police personnel.

Peshawar is also witnessing two major Zuljinah processions from Imambargah Akhundabad and Jamia Masjid Kocha Risaldar. Both processions will conclude at their respective Imambargahs under strict security arrangements.



World Likely to Cross 1.5°C Warming Threshold, UNEP Warns

UN report says temporary overshoot can still be reversed through deep emissions cuts, adaptation and stronger climate action

The world Ambassador Web Desk

The world is likely to exceed the 1.5°C global warming threshold within the next few years, but the breach does not have to become permanent, according to a new report by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

The report says countries still have a narrow opportunity to limit how far temperatures rise, reduce climate damage and eventually bring global warming back below 1.5°C through an "overshoot, peak and decline" pathway.

UNEP's most optimistic scenario puts peak warming at about 1.8°C, while other pathways could push temperatures above 2°C. The report warns that higher and longer-lasting warming would increase the risks of heatwaves, floods, food and water shortages, ecosystem losses and climate tipping points.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres urged governments to make any overshoot "as small and short as possible," saying the world must significantly increase its climate ambition.

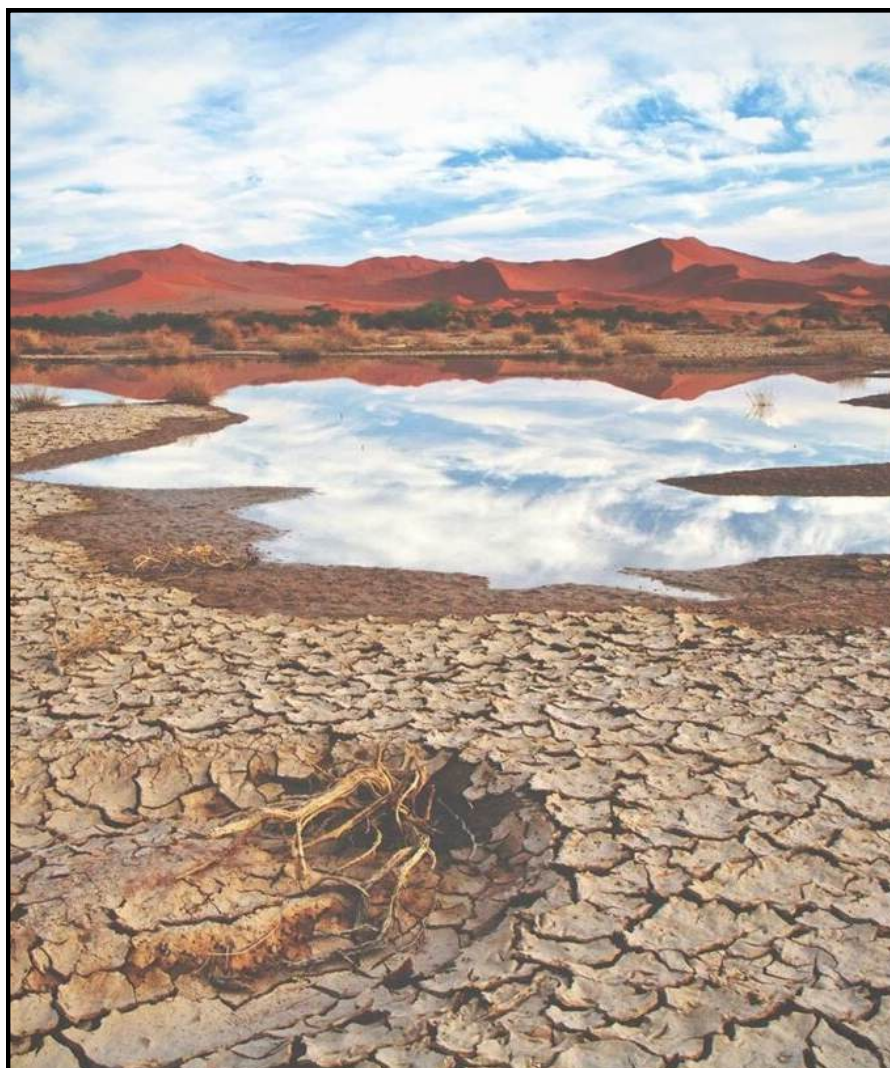
UNEP stressed that rapid cuts in greenhouse gas emissions remain the priority, including

reducing carbon dioxide and methane emissions, moving away from fossil fuels and accelerating renewable energy.

The report also calls for greater investment in climate adaptation, stronger infrastructure and increased international climate finance, particularly for vulnerable countries and small island states.

While carbon dioxide removal could eventually help bring temperatures below 1.5°C, UNEP cautioned that it cannot replace immediate and deep emissions reductions.

The report concludes that crossing 1.5°C would not mean the end of climate action, but every fraction of a degree and every year of additional warming would increase the risk of irreversible losses. "Now is the time we must double down on climate action," UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen said.



Climate Change Losing Political Priority, Green Climate Fund Chief Warns

Mafalda Duarte urges governments to act before climate tipping points become irreversible, as Pacific nations demand faster access to finance

Alisha Abid
Lahore

The world is failing to give climate change the urgent political attention it requires, despite increasingly frequent floods, heatwaves and wildfires, Green Climate Fund Executive Director Mafalda Duarte has warned.

Speaking to AFP during a summit of Pacific island leaders in Palau, Duarte said conflicts and other global crises were pushing climate change down the political agenda, even as the world approaches potentially irreversible climate tipping points.

"We cannot give up hope," Duarte said, calling for stronger international action and greater investment in climate resilience.

The Green Climate Fund, established by the United Nations to support developing countries facing climate change, has invested around \$19 billion across 134 developing nations. However, the United States withdrew from the fund in January, while Britain halved its contribution in May.

Duarte said the devastating floods in Nepal, along with deadly heatwaves and wildfires across Europe,

should remind governments that climate disasters are affecting countries worldwide, not only developing nations.

The fund has doubled its investment in the Pacific over the past three years to \$1 billion, with a growing focus on climate adaptation. Duarte acknowledged concerns among small island states over access to funding but said the approval process had been reduced to an average of nine months.

Pacific leaders have demanded faster and more concrete action. Marshall Islands climate envoy Tina Stege said a separate UN loss-and-damage fund remains largely ineffective, describing it as "an empty bucket."

Pacific nations remain among the most vulnerable to rising sea levels and extreme weather, while international efforts to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius face growing challenges.



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DRC Receives 70,000 Ebola Vaccine Doses Amid Bundibugyo Outbreak

WHO and Africa CDC back community-led response as clinical trial seeks to determine whether Ervebo can protect against Bundibugyo virus

The World Ambassador Health Desk

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has received an initial allocation of 70,000 doses of the Ervebo Ebola vaccine from the global emergency stockpile to support the response to the ongoing Bundibugyo virus disease outbreak.

The International Coordinating Group on Vaccine Provision (ICG) informed the DRC government on Monday that the doses would be released immediately. The allocation includes 20,000 doses for a Phase 3 clinical trial and 50,000 doses for frontline and health workers under current WHO recommendations.

Ervebo is licensed for protection against Ebola virus disease caused by Zaire ebolavirus, but its effectiveness against Bundibugyo virus in humans remains unknown. Early laboratory and animal studies suggest the vaccine may offer some protection.

The clinical trial is expected to provide important evidence on whether Ervebo can be used against Bundibugyo virus in future outbreaks. Health authorities stressed that people receiving the vaccine must be informed about its potential risks, benefits and limitations and provide informed consent.

WHO and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention welcomed the allocation and supported the DRC's focus on protecting affected communities through a community-led response.

The ICG, comprising WHO, UNICEF, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and Médecins Sans Frontières, manages emergency vaccine supplies, with funding support from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

Since 2021, more than 56,000 Ervebo doses have been allocated for Ebola outbreaks in the DRC, while a further 167,000 doses have been used in preventive campaigns for health and frontline workers across several African countries.



WHO, Lions Foundation Partner to Expand Mental Health Care in Jordan, Nepal

Three-year agreement aims to improve access to mental health services, reduce stigma and strengthen community-based care

The World Ambassador Health Desk

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) have signed a three-year agreement to expand access to mental health care in Jordan and Nepal, where millions of people face barriers to essential services.

The partnership, running through 2028, will support people living with mental, neurological and substance use conditions under the WHO Special Initiative for Mental Health. It will also promote awareness, reduce stigma and encourage people to seek help.

In Jordan, the initiative will expand counselling services in East Amman and provide acute secondary mental health care for children and adults at at least one public hospital.

In Nepal, mental health corners will be established in 10 district hospitals, while programmes will strengthen mental health support for young people through the government-endorsed National Implementation Framework on School Mental Health.

WHO said the treatment gap for people with mental health conditions exceeds 95% in some countries, highlighting the urgent need to expand services.

Lions Clubs International has identified mental health as one of its global initiatives, with the organization seeking to increase awareness and improve access to care in communities worldwide.

The partnership will also document the experiences of people using the services, helping inform future efforts to improve mental health care.



Breastfeeding Remains Vital to Maternal and Child Health

Early breastfeeding strengthens infant immunity and provides important long-term health benefits for mothers

The World Ambassador

Health Desk

Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to protect the health of mothers and children, providing newborns with essential nutrients and immune protection while offering mothers important health benefits.

World Breastfeeding Week is observed from August 1 to 7 each year. The 2026 campaign, "Breastfeeding for a Sustainable Start in Life: Strengthen What Works," called for stronger support from healthcare systems, families, workplaces and communities.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF recommend starting breastfeeding within the first hour after birth and exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months. After six months, complementary foods should be introduced while breastfeeding continues up to two years or beyond.

Breast milk provides essential nutrients and antibodies that help protect infants from infections and support healthy growth and development. Research also links breastfeeding with lower risks of childhood obesity and diabetes.

For mothers, breastfeeding is associated with a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers and may lower the risk of type 2 diabetes.

In Pakistan, the National Nutrition Survey 2018 found that 45.8 per cent of newborns were breastfed within the first hour, while 48.4 per cent of infants were exclusively breastfed. The figures highlight the need for continued support and awareness.

Health experts stress that mothers need more than information. Skilled counselling, family encouragement, maternity protection and breastfeeding-friendly workplaces can help women continue breastfeeding successfully.

Supporting breastfeeding is therefore not simply a matter of infant nutrition. It is an important investment in the health and wellbeing of both mothers and the next generation.



UN Women Worker Recalls Night of Bombing as Lebanon Humanitarian Crisis Deepens

Nour Abdul Reda says behind every humanitarian statistic are women, children and families facing displacement and uncertainty

The World Ambassador International Desk

For UN Women staff member Nour Abdul Reda, humanitarian crises are more than statistics. They are personal experiences of fear, displacement and resilience.

Reda recalls being awakened by nearby bombing in early March 2026. With violence forcing families from their homes, she quickly packed a small bag and carried her one-month-old nephew to safety while her sister gathered her other children.

Only hours later, Reda was back at work, helping coordinate humanitarian assistance for families facing the same ordeal.

She describes this as the “numbers trap” — the need to count people in crisis while remembering that every figure represents a human life and a personal story.

“I will never forget carrying my one-month-old nephew to safety,” Reda said, recalling the contrast between her own experience that night and the humanitarian meetings that followed.

Her story highlights the human reality behind Lebanon's displacement crisis, where humanitarian workers are often responding to emergencies while experiencing the same insecurity as the communities they serve.



Pakistan Calls for Greater Women's Role in Peace and Security

Ambassador Usman Jadoon says women's leadership can help build lasting peace and strengthen conflict recovery

The World Ambassador Web Desk

Pakistan has called for an expanded role for women in peace and security, emphasizing the importance of women's leadership in building sustainable peace.

Speaking at a High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace, Pakistan's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Usman Jadoon, urged greater investment in women's leadership, peacebuilding and the future.

"Let's invest in women leadership, let's invest in peace, let's invest in future," Jadoon said.

He said the UN's Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, adopted in 1999, recognizes that lasting peace depends not only on ending conflict but also on protecting human rights, promoting diversity and strengthening the rule of law.

Jadoon stressed that women are a major constituency for peace and that their full participation in political processes, along with access to education and justice, is essential for a strong culture of peace.

"A society scarred by prolonged conflict needs the

healing touch of women leadership," he said, arguing that peace is more durable when women play a leading role in negotiations rather than remaining on the margins of political processes.

The Pakistani envoy highlighted the contributions of Pakistani women as political leaders, diplomats, teachers, soldiers and peacekeepers, saying their achievements reflected courage and commitment.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's support for expanding women's participation in peace and security efforts in line with the country's constitutional commitments and broader vision for sustainable peace.



Razia Mehsud Becomes First Woman Appointed to South Waziristan DRC

Historic appointment strengthens women's representation in community-based dispute resolution in the tribal district

**The World Ambassador
Web Desk**



Historic appointment strengthens Social activist Razia Mehsud has become the first woman to be appointed to the Dispute Resolution Council (DRC) in South Waziristan, marking a significant step for women's representation in community-based justice.

Mehsud has joined the 17-member council, which resolves local disputes through an alternative dispute resolution mechanism. The council was constituted by the Regional Police Officer (RPO) Dera Ismail Khan on the recommendation of District Police Officer (DPO) Arshad Khan.

Officials said her inclusion would broaden community representation and encourage greater participation of women in resolving local disputes.

The appointment has been welcomed by social activists, tribal elders and residents, who

described it as an important development for gender inclusion and women's participation in the justice system of the merged tribal districts.

Observers said the move could encourage greater female representation in public institutions and community decision-making across the region.

women's representation in community-based dispute resolution in the tribal district



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PCB Appoints Michael Smith as Pakistan Batting Coach

Former South African first-class cricketer signs two-year deal to work with Test and limited-overs squads

The World Ambassador

Sport Desk

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has appointed former South African first-class cricketer Michael Smith as batting coach of the Pakistan men's cricket team on a two-year contract.

The 46-year-old coach will work with both the Test and limited-overs squads and is scheduled to join the national team ahead of the three-match Test series against England.

Smith scored 7,029 runs across first-class, List A and T20 cricket during his playing career, including nine centuries and 40 half-centuries.

A Level 4-qualified coach, he has previously worked with three HBL Pakistan Super League franchises as well as the Hobart Hurricanes and Cricket Tasmania.

The PCB said the appointment is part of efforts to strengthen the national coaching setup ahead of a busy international schedule.



PFF Hosts Luncheon for Visiting South Korean Hockey Team

Reception highlights Pakistan's sporting hospitality and commitment to stronger ties between football and hockey federations

The World Ambassador

Sport Desk

The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) hosted a luncheon on Wednesday in honour of the visiting South Korean hockey team, highlighting Pakistan's commitment to sports diplomacy, international friendship and greater cooperation among sporting federations.

The South Korean team is in Pakistan for an FIH-sanctioned international hockey series against the national side. The reception also showcased Pakistan's tradition of hospitality and encouraged

closer collaboration between different sports bodies.

Federal Secretary for Inter-Provincial Coordination and Acting President of the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF), Mohyuddin Wani, praised the initiative and urged other sporting federations to follow the PFF's example in promoting Pakistan as a welcoming destination for international athletes.

PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani welcomed the Korean delegation, recalling Pakistan's historic achievements in hockey and its contribution to the country's sporting legacy. PFF Chief Operating Officer

Muhammad Shahid Niaz Khokhar said the luncheon was a contribution to a sport that had given Pakistan some of its greatest sporting moments. He also expressed the federation's desire to strengthen cooperation with the PHF.

Officials from the PFF and Islamabad Football Association also welcomed the growing sporting and cultural exchanges between Pakistan and South Korea, describing the event as a positive step towards stronger inter-federation cooperation and goodwill through sport.

Pakistan, Iran Agree to Strengthen Cricket Cooperation

PCB and Iran Cricket Association discuss coaching, infrastructure and technical support to expand the sport in Iran

The World Ambassador

Sport Desk

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and the Iran Cricket Association (ICA) have agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation to support the development of cricket in Iran, following high-level talks at the PCB headquarters at Gaddafi Stadium on Thursday.

The Iranian delegation met PCB Chief Operating Officer Sumair Ahmed Syed and Pakistan Super League (PSL) Chief Executive Officer Salman Naseer to discuss a broad framework covering cricket development, coach education, infrastructure and technical knowledge-sharing.

Both sides explored coaching support for Iran's senior and junior national teams, coach-exchange programmes and the involvement of Pakistani coaching experts to improve players' technical skills. They also discussed assistance in developing cricket infrastructure and providing training and playing equipment.

The delegation also visited Gaddafi Stadium, the PCB Cricket Museum and the National Cricket Academy, where officials briefed them on Pakistan's high-performance system, player development programmes and training facilities.

The discussions marked a



step towards deeper sporting cooperation between Pakistan and Iran and efforts to expand cricket's reach in the region.



Pakistan Edge Japan 4-3 in Thrilling Hockey World Cup Comeback

Rana Waheed's brace and late winner seal dramatic victory after Pakistan overturns a two-goal deficit

The World Ambassador

Sport Desk

Pakistan staged a stunning comeback to defeat Japan 4-3 in a thrilling FIH World Cup 2026 encounter in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Japan made a strong start, with Hyota Yamada scoring in the seventh minute before Kaito Tanaka doubled the lead in the 15th minute.

Pakistan fought back in the second quarter as Rana Waheed Ashraf scored twice in the 22nd and 32nd minutes to level the match. Hammaduddin Muhammad then struck in the 33rd minute to put Pakistan ahead 3-2.

Japan restored parity through Koji Yamasaki in the 36th minute, but Shahid Hannan scored the decisive goal in the 41st minute to give Pakistan a 4-3 lead.

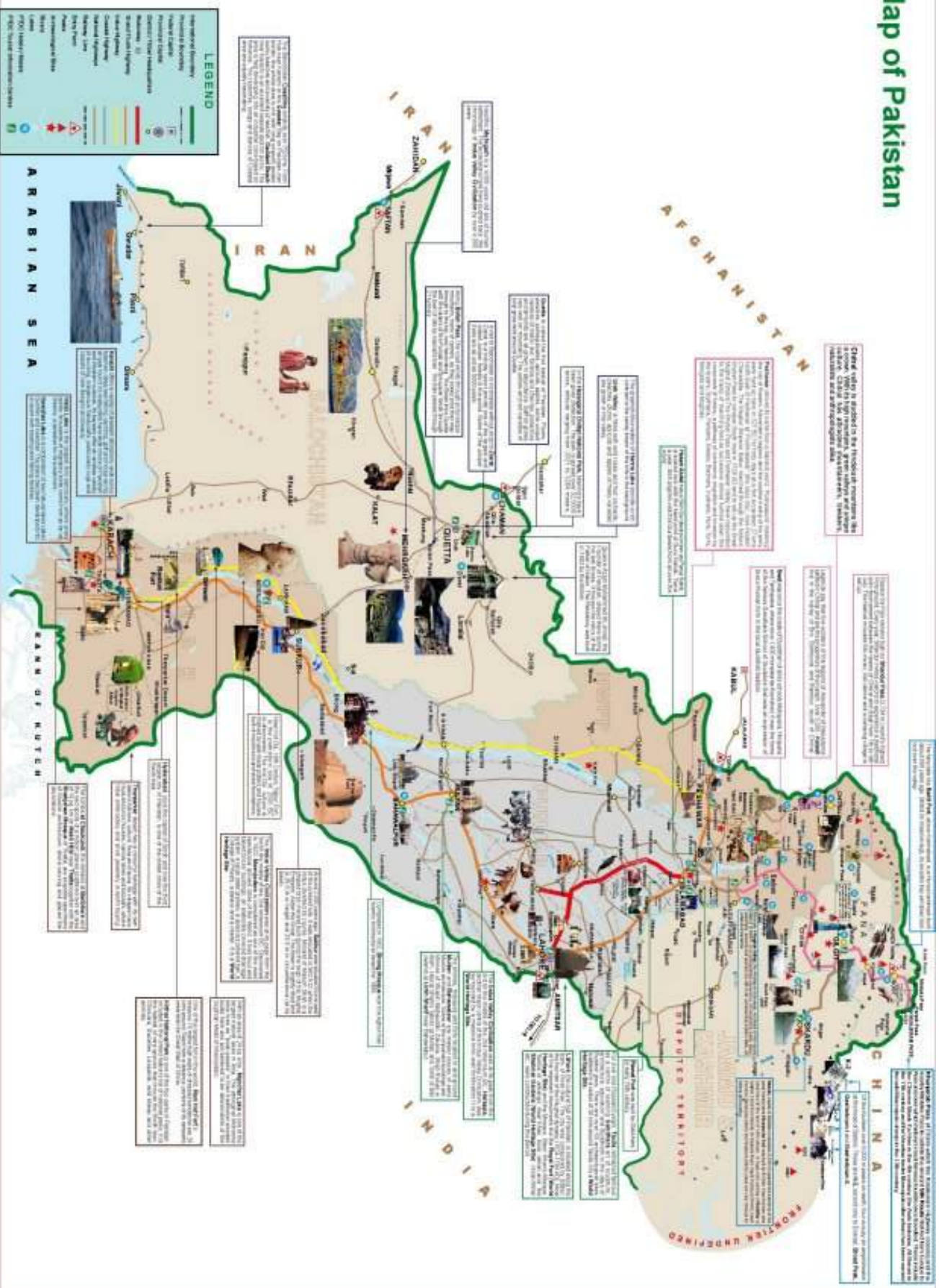
Japan pushed for an equaliser in the closing stages, but Pakistan's defence held firm to secure a memorable World Cup victory.

Pakistan scorers: Rana Waheed Ashraf (22', 32'), Hammaduddin Muhammad (33'), Shahid Hannan (41')

Japan scorers: Hyota Yamada (7'), Kaito Tanaka (15'), Koji Yamasaki (36')



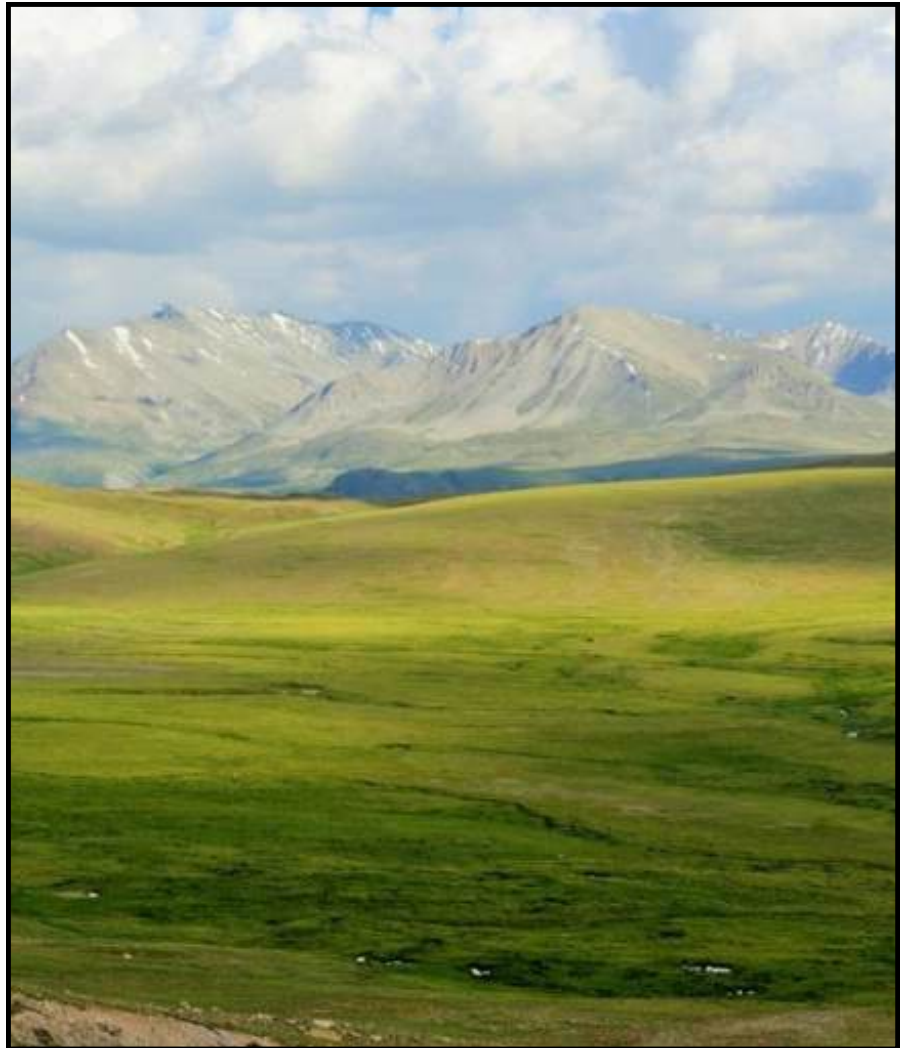
Tourist Map of Pakistan



Tourism In Pakistan

The North

The North of Pakistan is famous for its mountains, high peaks and beautiful valleys and lakes. This region has the confluence of the Himalayas, Karakorams, Hindu Kush and the Pamirs. Some of the highest mountain peaks in the world are found here. Due to its Alpine terrain and climate, tourism mainly happens in the summer months. However, the diehard mountaineers and hikers visit this area throughout the year. There are also a number of opportunities for adventure tourism in particular paragliding, white water rafting and extreme skiing. The North is also famous for its unique cuisine which is very different from the rest of Pakistan.



Gilgit Baltistan:

Gilgit Baltistan territory in the north of Pakistan, bordering China, has some of the most scenic mountains, valleys and lakes of Pakistan. Some of the highest mountain ranges and peaks criss cross this region including Himalayas, Karakorams and the Hindukush. The second highest mountain peak in the world K-2, Nanga Parbat, Rakaposhi, Broad Peak, and Gasherbrum I&II are located in this region. Also located here are the Deosai National Park situated at an average elevation of 4,114 metres (13,497 ft) above sea level and considered as the second highest plateaus in the world. The Park is a host to a wide variety of flora and fauna as well as animal species including the Himalayan Brown Bear.

Gilgit Baltistan offers a vast range of possibilities to all types of tourists including sightseers, hikers, trekkers, and mountain and rock climbers. The region is open for tourism from April to October. However, for mountain climbers and trekkers, activities are conducted throughout the year.

When visiting Gilgit Baltistan, the key places to visit include Gilgit city, Hunza, Skardu, and Deosai National Park. You will be able to see the Kachura Valley including the upper and lower Kachura lakes, Sadpara Dam, Katpana Desert and lake, Shigar Fort, Khaplu Valley, Hunza Valley, Attabad Lake, Fairy Meadows, Altit Fort, Khunjerab Pass, Passu Glacier, Batura Glacier, Satrangi Lake, the mountains peaks and many more breathtaking sites.

Chitral and Kalash Valleys:

Chitral located in the North west of Pakistan is a beautiful valley in the Hindukush range of Mountains. It has always been a very important route for many invaders to south east Asia, Including Alexander the great Scythians, Mangol Changez Khan and numerous others. Chitral can be reached by air from Islamabad or by road from Peshawar or Swat via Dir through the Lowari tunnel and from Gilgit through Phander (Below Shandur Pass).

From Chitral you can visit Kalash Valley. Kalash is a mountain tribe, of the Hindukush Living, known to be descendents of Alexander the Great, isolated from the rest of the world since ages. Kalash or Kafirs are very colorful people with their own traditions and a polytheist religion. As you reach the valley you get a very unique feeling of being in a very different culture. The women of the valley wear a black gown with beautiful embroidery and a Cap which hangs till the Back, embroidered with shells. You may witness a Kalash dance which made some people relate them to the armies of the Alexander the great.

The people of Kalash are known for their festivities. The Chilam Joshi Festival is one the most vital kalash festivals and is also known as Kalash



spring festival. The Kalash people celebrate this four day festival across all three Kalash valleys of Rumbur, Bumburet and Birir. A large number of domestic and foreign tourists attend the Chilam Joshi festival every year.

The Shandur Polo festival takes place in Shandur Valley since 1936 and is held annually in the first week of July between the local teams of Gilgit and Chitral. Shandur is the highest polo ground in the world at 3,700 meters (the pass itself is at 3,800 meters). The festival also includes Folk music, dancing and a camping village is set up.

Climate Change: The Planet Is Sending a Warning We Can No Longer Ignore

Alisha Abid

Lahore

Climate change is no longer a distant environmental concern reserved for scientists and future generations. It is now a defining reality of the 21st century—visible in record-breaking temperatures, intensifying heatwaves, rising seas, melting glaciers, extreme rainfall, droughts and increasingly destructive wildfires.

The latest international climate assessments show that the Earth is entering an era of unprecedented warmth. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the years 2015–2025 were the 11 hottest years ever recorded, while 2025 was among the two or three warmest years in the historical record, at roughly 1.43°C above the 1850–1900 pre-industrial average.

The numbers tell only part of the story. Behind every fraction of a degree are communities facing dangerous heat, farmers struggling with changing rainfall, families displaced by floods and coastal populations confronting rising seas.

A planet
accumulating
heat

Climate change is fundamentally a story about heat. Human activities—particularly the burning of coal, oil and gas—have dramatically increased the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. These gases trap additional heat, altering the balance of the Earth's climate system.

The latest Copernicus climate indicators estimate that global atmospheric CO₂ concentration reached about 425.3 parts per million in 2025, continuing its upward trend.

Global warming does not mean that every individual year must break the previous temperature record. Natural factors such as El Niño and La Niña can temporarily influence temperatures. But the long-term direction is unmistakable: the baseline itself is rising.

NASA's temperature record confirms that 2023, 2024 and 2025 were the three warmest years in its 146-year record, with 2024 remaining the warmest.



The oceans are
absorbing the
shock

Much of the climate crisis is hidden beneath the surface of the sea.

Oceans absorb enormous quantities of excess heat generated by global warming. Copernicus reports that global ocean heat content reached its highest level in the record beginning in 1993 in 2025.

Warmer oceans contribute to changes in marine ecosystems, coral reefs and fisheries and can provide additional energy for some extreme weather systems.

Sea levels are also rising. Copernicus estimates that global mean sea level has risen by about 9.38 centimetres since 1999, while the rate of rise accelerated from 2.92 millimetres per year in 1999–2009 to 3.82 millimetres per year in 2015–2025.

For low-lying coastal communities, this is not an abstract statistic. Rising seas increase the risks of coastal flooding, erosion and saltwater intrusion.

Extreme
weather is
becoming a
greater threat

Climate change is also reshaping the risks associated with extreme weather.

The WMO's 2025 global assessment highlights the widespread impacts of intense heat, heavy rainfall and tropical cyclones, with consequences for societies and economies around the world.

Europe's experience provides another warning. The WMO and Copernicus reported that Europe experienced heatwaves stretching from the Arctic to the Mediterranean in 2025, while wildfires burned the largest area on record for the continent.

These events demonstrate why climate change should not be viewed simply as an environmental issue. It is increasingly a question of public health, food security, water availability, infrastructure, migration and economic stability.

South Asia on the frontline

For countries such as Pakistan, climate change carries particularly serious consequences. A warming atmosphere can intensify heat stress while changing rainfall patterns can increase the risks of both drought and destructive flooding.

Pakistan's vulnerability is compounded by its geography, dependence on agriculture and exposure to floods, heatwaves and water stress. Climate change therefore represents not only an environmental challenge but also a development and economic challenge.

The people who contribute least to historical greenhouse-gas emissions can often face some of the greatest consequences. This has made climate justice an increasingly important part of international climate negotiations.



The 1.5°C warning

The Paris Agreement established efforts to hold the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels while pursuing efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C.

Recent data show how difficult that objective has become.

Copernicus reports that the 2023–2025 three-year average was more than 1.5°C above the pre-industrial level, although a temporary exceedance over one or several years is not the same as formally crossing the Paris Agreement's long-term temperature threshold.

Looking ahead, the WMO's 2026–2035 climate update says annual global temperatures between 2026 and 2030 are expected to remain around 1.3°C to 1.9°C above the 1850–1900 average, and there is an 86% chance that at least one year during 2026–2030 will exceed 1.5°C above the pre-industrial level.



The choice before humanity



The climate record is ultimately more than a collection of numbers. It is a measure of choices made by governments, industries and societies.

The response requires two parallel strategies: mitigation and adaptation.

Mitigation means rapidly reducing greenhouse-gas emissions through cleaner energy, energy efficiency, electrification, sustainable transport, protection of forests and changes in industrial and agricultural practices.

Adaptation means preparing communities for the climate that is already changing—through stronger infrastructure, flood protection, water management, heat-warning systems, climate-resilient agriculture and effective early-warning systems.

The good news is that climate action can also create opportunities: cleaner air, renewable energy, green jobs, more efficient cities and more resilient communities.

But the scientific record leaves little room for complacency. The WMO's latest assessment shows that the planet's climate system continues to accumulate heat and that extreme events are already imposing enormous costs on societies.

The climate crisis is no longer a prediction of what might happen tomorrow. It is a record of what is happening today.

The Monsoon Crisis: Why Pakistan Remains Vulnerable to Floods

Babra Gul

Peshawar

The monsoon season is an important part of Pakistan's climate. The rains provide water for crops, rivers and communities, but heavy rainfall can sometimes lead to flooding, affecting homes, roads, farms and daily life.

Pakistan's geography, with its mountains, rivers and large agricultural plains, means that some areas are naturally more exposed to floods. Heavy rainfall in a short period can quickly increase water levels in rivers and streams, creating difficulties for nearby communities.

The Impact on Communities

Floods can damage houses, crops, roads and other infrastructure. Farmers may lose crops and livestock, while families in affected areas may have to move temporarily to safer places.

Children and elderly people can face particular difficulties during emergencies. Schools and local services may also be disrupted until conditions improve.

Preparing for the Monsoon

Good preparation can reduce the effects of flooding. Weather forecasts and early warnings give communities valuable time to take



precautions. Keeping drainage systems clear, protecting important belongings and knowing safe places to move to can also help.

Local authorities, emergency services and communities all have an important role in responding to heavy rainfall and flooding.

Building a Safer Future

Pakistan cannot prevent the monsoon, but better planning and preparedness can help reduce its impact. Strong infrastructure, effective drainage, responsible construction and public awareness can make communities safer.

The monsoon is essential for Pakistan's water and agriculture. With proper preparation and cooperation, its benefits can be protected while the risks of flooding are reduced.



By Wasif Ali Khan

Protecting Citizens in the Digital Age

Technology has transformed the way people communicate, Technology has transformed the way people communicate, conduct business and manage their daily lives. Mobile phones, online banking, digital payments and internet services have made many tasks faster and more convenient. At the same time, the rapid growth of digital services has created new challenges, particularly in the areas of cyber fraud, identity protection and financial security.

The recent discussion by the National Assembly Standing Committee on Interior and Narcotics Control about fraudulent calls, illegal issuance of SIMs, misuse of biometric information and financial scams is therefore important. It reflects a growing need to ensure that technological progress is accompanied by strong safeguards for ordinary citizens.

The issue is particularly relevant because mobile phones and digital banking have become part of everyday life. A person may use a mobile number for communication, banking, government services and social media. If that number or personal information is misused, the consequences can extend beyond a simple inconvenience.

Fraudulent calls and messages are among the most common forms of digital deception. Criminals may pretend to represent banks, government institutions, telecommunications companies or other organisations. They may ask people to provide personal information, passwords, PINs or verification codes. Some victims may realise the deception immediately, while others can be persuaded because the caller appears convincing.

This is why public awareness is an essential part of cybersecurity. Citizens should be encouraged to treat unexpected requests for personal or financial information with caution. Banks and other service providers should also continue educating their customers about common forms of fraud and the safest ways to report suspicious activity.

The committee's concern about the illegal issuance of SIM cards is equally significant. A mobile SIM registered in a person's name can be connected to important services and accounts. The PTA's reported blocking of around 18.2 million SIMs over the preceding two and a half years demonstrates the scale of regulatory action, but it also highlights the importance of continued monitoring and effective verification.

The proposed use of stronger verification technologies, including facial and iris recognition, could help reduce the possibility of identity misuse.

Immediate notifications to customers whenever a new SIM is issued in their name could also provide an important layer of protection. If a person receives an alert about an activity they did not authorise, they can take action quickly.

Biometric information requires particular attention. Unlike a password, biometric data such as fingerprints, facial characteristics or iris patterns cannot simply be replaced when compromised. Institutions handling such information therefore have a responsibility to protect it through strong security systems, limited access and appropriate safeguards.

Financial fraud is another area that requires cooperation between institutions. The committee discussed unauthorised withdrawals, rented and so-called mule accounts, as well as difficulties in blocking and recovering fraudulent funds. These problems cannot be addressed by one organisation alone. Banks, law-enforcement agencies, telecommunications companies and relevant government institutions need effective channels for sharing information and responding quickly to complaints.

Speed is especially important in financial fraud cases. When money is transferred through several accounts,

recovering it can become increasingly difficult. Faster reporting, better monitoring and improved coordination could help reduce losses and increase the chances of recovery.

However, stronger laws and technology are only part of the solution. The public must also become more digitally aware. Schools, colleges, universities and community organisations can play an important role by teaching young people and families about online safety. Basic lessons about passwords, suspicious links, fake calls, privacy and responsible use of social media can prevent many avoidable problems.

Digital safety should not be seen as something only relevant to computer experts. It is now a basic life skill. Just as people learn how to protect their homes and personal belongings, they also need to learn how to protect their digital identities and financial information.

At the institutional level, transparency and accountability are equally important. Citizens need clear channels through which they can report fraud and receive assistance. Complaints should be handled efficiently, and people should be able to understand what steps they need to take when their information or accounts are misused.

The government's efforts to bring relevant organisations together are therefore encouraging. Cooperation

between the PTA, NADRA, banks, cellular operators and law-enforcement agencies can create a stronger system in which information is verified, suspicious activity is identified and citizens receive timely warnings.

At the same time, digital security should remain focused on protecting citizens while maintaining confidence in legitimate digital services. Technology should make people's lives easier, not create unnecessary fear or uncertainty.

Pakistan is moving towards a more digital economy. Online banking, mobile payments, e-commerce, remote work and digital public services are likely to continue expanding. This development can bring significant benefits, particularly for young people and businesses.

But digital progress will be sustainable only when people trust the systems they use. That trust depends on secure technology, responsible institutions and informed users.

The recent parliamentary discussion provides an opportunity to focus attention on these priorities. Preventing cyber fraud is not simply a matter of catching criminals after an incident occurs. It is also about building systems that make fraud more difficult, warning citizens before harm occurs and responding quickly when problems arise.

The goal should be simple: a digital Pakistan where technology creates

opportunity without compromising the safety and privacy of its citizens.

As technology continues to become a larger part of everyday life, cybersecurity must become a shared responsibility. Government institutions, banks, telecommunications companies, law-enforcement agencies and ordinary citizens all have a role to play.

Digital progress should not only make life faster and more convenient. It should also make citizens feel secure, informed and protected.



Ambassador Ilyas Nizami attended the inaugural session of the Annual Meeting of Romanian Diplomacy (RADR 2026) in Bucharest, engaging with Romanian officials and discussing ways to further strengthen Pakistan–Romania relations.





The launch of KP's new Disaster Risk Reduction Policy marks an important step towards stronger prevention, preparedness, community resilience and protection from future shocks, with Germany supporting this vital journey.

The Royal Thai Embassy and Thai Students Association in Islamabad hosted a Maal Hijrah event, bringing students together to reflect on the lessons of Hijrah, the noble character of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), unity, and community solidarity.





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