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PM Shehbaz calls laptop scheme enabling ecosystem for youth to unlock potential, gain excellence

PEAK POINT
HARIPUR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday, while inaugurating the Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme 2025 distribution in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, termed his initiative as not only conferring laptops to students but rather, creating an ecosystem where the youth can unlock their potential and much deserved gain excellence. The prime minister inaugurated the much-anticipated Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme at a ceremony held at the University of Haripur, that was attended by government officials, youth leaders and a number of beneficiaries, all of whom expressed their gratitude for the scheme that has already impacted over a million students across the country.

A special documentary showcasing the success of the Laptop Scheme since its inception in 2013 was presented at the event. It highlighted the ambitious 2025 vision for the country's youth and the continuous strides taken under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's leadership to ensure their empowerment through education and technology. In his address, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif shared his long-standing vision of empowering Pakistan's youth, stressing the importance of providing them opportunities based on their capabilities to gain global recognition. "The future of this nation lies in the hands of our students, who are not just brilliant but capable enough to conquer the world."



HARIPUR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributes laptops amongst the deserving students of the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Inter-ministerial meeting discusses ways to strengthen Pak-Iran cooperation



PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday chaired an inter-ministerial meeting on Pakistan-Iran relations wherein the participants reviewed the existing bilateral cooperation in diverse areas. The participants also discussed ways to identify new avenues for strengthening economic and trade cooperation. The deputy prime minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to expanding bilateral engagement with Iran across priority sectors. The meeting was attended by the Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, Secretary Petroleum and senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant ministries.

Sydney shooter Sajid Akram's Indian passport revealed

PEAK POINT
SYDNEY: The Indian embassy was aware from the outset that the Sydney Bondi Beach attacker was an Indian citizen, according to documents that have recently come to light, despite early attempts to shift blame onto Pakistan. Sajid Akram and his son, Naveed Akram, who were both involved in the attack, were issued passports by the Indian embassy. Sajid Akram's passport, valid for ten years, was issued on 24 February 2022. The document lists Hyderabad in the Indian state of Telangana as his place of origin and carries an expiry date of 23 February 2032. In the immediate

aftermath of the attack, sections of the Indian media reported that the attacker was a Pakistani national. These claims were later contradicted when evidence emerged confirming that the assailant was an Indian citizen.



According to The Guardian, Australia deported two officials linked to India's intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), in 2020 over illegal activities, including the profiling of Indian residents in the country. Defence analysts have suggested that Sajid Akram may have had links to RAW. He had recently travelled to the Philippines using his Indian passport. Meanwhile, Australian authorities have formally charged the surviving attacker in the deadly Bondi Beach shooting with terrorism and murder.

The shooting took place during a Jewish Hanukkah celebration at Sydney's Bondi Beach, killing 15 people and injuring dozens, including two police officers. The attack has since been described as one of Australia's deadliest acts of mass violence in recent years. On Wednesday, police and court officials confirmed that 59 charges are being introduced against 24-year-old Naveed Akram, who survived the shooting after being wounded by police. The charges include committing a terrorist act, murder, wounding with intent to murder, placing an explosive, and discharging a firearm with intent to cause grievous bodily harm.

Pakistan extends airspace ban to Indian airlines for another month

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has extended the closure of its airspace to Indian airlines for an additional month, officials confirmed on Wednesday. The Pakistan Airports Authority, with government approval, issued a new Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) stating that all Indian-registered aircrafts, including commercial passenger planes, military aircraft, and private jets, will remain barred from entering Pakistani airspace until January 27, 2026. The airspace ban was initially imposed on April 23, 2025.

Field Marshal Asim Munir to meet Trump in coming days, reports Reuters

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Field Marshal Asim Munir is expected to fly to Washington to meet President Donald Trump in the coming weeks for a third meeting in six months that will likely focus on the Gaza force, two sources told Reuters. Trump's 20-point Gaza plan calls for a force from Muslim nations to oversee a transition period for reconstruction and economic recovery in the war-torn Palestinian territory, decimated by over two years of Israeli military bombardment. Many countries are wary of the mission to demilitarise.

At UN, Pakistan demands Israel end illegal settlement activity, respect international law

PEAK POINT
UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan Tuesday called for a halt to the dramatic increase in illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016). "Any attempt to alter the demographic, legal or historical character of the occupied territories, including around Al-Haram Al-Sharif, is illegal and must be reversed," Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the U.N., said in the course of the quarterly debate on Council resolution 2334, which demands Israel cease settlement activity in Palestinian lands. The Pakistani envoy stressed that no Security Council resolution can be unilaterally declared "outdated" as he strongly reject-

ed Israel's refusal to abide by Resolution 2334. "No



resolution of the Security Council can be unilaterally declared outdated; They remain relevant and in force, until they are implemented," he added. "The Palestinian people have endured decades of illegal occupation marked by dispossession, and denial of their inalienable rights," Ambassador Asim Ahmad

told the Council, while reaffirming Pakistan's support to Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination through the establishment of an independent, sovereign State of Palestine. US President Donald Trump's leadership and persistent efforts resulted in the Peace Plan and the Sharm El-Sheikh Summit, mobilizing regional and international actors around urgent priorities, namely: ending the bloodshed, maintaining the ceasefire, responding to the humanitarian catastrophe, reuniting families with detainees and hostages, and reopening a credible political process towards Palestinian self-determination and statehood, he said. "The ceasefire must be fully respected, with no unilateral military actions," the Pakistani envoy said, adding, "The withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza remains essential." Ambassador Asim Ahmad also joined other speakers in condemning the storming of UNRWA's headquarters in Occupied Jerusalem, saying the agency's role in helping Palestinians remains crucial and "cannot be allowed to be undermined by unwarranted and unfounded criticism."

27th humanitarian aid consignment leaves Pakistan for Palestine



PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: T has sent its 27th humanitarian aid consignment, carrying 100 tons of relief supplies, to support the people of Palestine. The consignment of essential supplies was sent with the support of Alkhidmat Foundation and dispatched via a special flight from Lahore's Allama Iqbal International Airport, following the directives of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. The consignment includes blankets, tarpaulins, clothing, and hygiene & family kits to meet the urgent humanitarian needs of the affected population. With the dispatch of this latest consignment, the total volume of humanitarian assistance sent to Palestine through 27 consignments has reached 2,627 tons.



SPORTS



Ali Tareen among three bidders in race to get PFF's nod for new league



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Ali Tareen emerged as a surprise contender in the bidding war to hold a new football league in Pakistan, with the former owner of Pakistan Super League (PSL) cricket franchise Multan Sultans in a race against two franchise league merchants, who have long tried to get an event underway.

Last month, the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) had invited expressions of interest from individuals and companies looking to hold a league in a bid to revive the domestic structure of the game in the country.

Tareen confirmed on Wednesday, the deadline day for submission, that he had sent a proposal.

"I have proposed a season (six-month) long league for Pakistan football, not a flashy, one-month cash-grab tournament," Ali wrote on X, in a jibe at the proposed franchise leagues.

Pakistan hasn't had a functioning league since the last edition of the Pakistan Premier Football League — which had a mix of departments and a smattering of clubs — in 2019.

Ali, who was denied renewal of Multan Sultans by the Pakistan

Cricket Board last month as the PSL extended its agreements with other franchisees, said his proposed league will have equity ownership for the teams.

"A proper league with home and away fixtures, equity ownership in the league for the teams, derbies with two clubs per city, and mandatory women's teams playing earlier on matchday like the Hundred (in England)," he added.

"This is the model that builds long-term value, gives fans real clubs to support, and can take Pakistan football to the next level. League > Tournament."

Two other proposals have come from entities who have been looking to launch franchise football leagues in the country on similar lines to the PSL.

One of them is Global Soccer Ventures (GSV), which held a launch event for its proposed 'Pakistan Football League' in Lahore in June last year. The other expression of interest has come from Zabe Khan, who was formerly part of GSV.

"The GSV revived interest in football when there was nothing happening locally," Pakistan football player Kaleemullah, who is one of the faces of the PSL, told Dawn, on Wednesday, referring to the launch event which featured England striker Michael Owen.

GSV claims to have sold five of its eight franchises. "We have already sold our teams and we are ready to launch," added Kaleem.

Former K-Electric sports head Zabe left GSV following the launch event amid claims that the company had not honoured its contracts and although he did not mention who was backing him for the league, Dawn understands that it is another entity that has long harboured ambitions of setting up a franchise league.

Saba Rashid sets another Guinness World Record in martial arts



PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Saba Rashid has become the first martial arts athlete from Pakistan to set a Guinness World Record in the nunchaku category.

According to details, her world record for performing the "figure of eight" movement with nunchaku in one minute has been officially approved.

Saba Rashid completed 138 figure-of-eight rotations in one minute, surpassing the previous benchmark of 120.

Earlier, she had also defeated India's Kiran Uniyal, who holds the distinction of creating the highest number of world records for India.

Guinness World Records also published the details of Saba Rashid's achievement on the website and confirmed the approval through email.

This is Saba Rashid's second world record overall. Previously, she had set a record in the elbow strike category by delivering 680 elbow strikes in three minutes, again defeating India's Kiran Uniyal. It is worth noting that Saba Rashid is the wife of Rashid Naseem, Pakistan's most prolific Guinness World Record holder.

Rashid Naseem's daughter, Fatima, holds eight world records for Pakistan in the female category, while his son achieved a world record for Pakistan at the age of just six. Rashid Naseem's father has also set several Guinness World Records for the country.

Raheel Victor Srings Major Upset at National Junior Squash Championship



SPORTS REPORTER

KARACHI: The semi-final line-up of the 4th McDonald's National Junior Squash Championship has been finalized following the conclusion of the quarter-final matches. In the Boys Under-15 category, an upset was witnessed when unseeded Sindh player Raheel Victor stunned third seed Faizan Ali Khan of Army in a thrilling five-game encounter lasting one hour and two minutes. Raheel

secured a 3-2 victory Batool and Damiah Khan qualified for the semi-finals. Top seed Mahwish Ali of WAPDA defeated fellow WAPDA player Fawad Khan, Abdul Hadi and Danish Sikandar. Manahil Aqeel of KP edged past Alishba in a close 3-2 contest, while Nimra Batool of Sindh beat Nahida Faiz of KP 3-0. Damiah Khan of Sindh also registered a straight-game victory over Punjab's M. Bin Atif retired hurt. In the Girls Under-19 category, Mahwish Ali, Manahil Aqeel, Nimra

Association, is being held at the Venus Jahangir Khan Squash Academy, PSB Karachi Centre, and carries a total prize money of Rs 800,000. The main draw in all categories consists of 32 players, with McDonald's Pakistan as the title sponsor. According to results issued by Naveed Rehman, Secretary General of the Sindh Squash Association, the Boys Under-11 semi-finalists include Abdul Rehman Riaz (PAF), Muhammad Sameer (PAF), Atif Ali Naz (Sindh) and Anas Rafi (PAF), who won their respective quarter-final matches. In the Boys Under-9 category, Muhammad Aban, Muhammad Naseem and M. Bin Naseem of Sindh.

BN, Diamond Paints win 14th Lahore Open Polo C'hip openers



PSB issues clarification on PHF election process

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) has issued a formal clarification regarding recent media reports about the club registration and election process of the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF).

In a letter issued here, the PSB referred to its earlier directive from November 26, which outlined the framework for PHF elections, including the formation of an independent Election Commission and scrutiny of clubs through a duly notified Scrutiny Committee under PSB supervision.

The PSB said that certain announcements made by PHF, such as initiating an online club registration portal, setting unilateral timelines including province-wise opening of the portal, forming a PHF-controlled scrutiny process, and announcing a two-member

Election Commission—are not in line with the PSB's directives. The board emphasized that the Election Commission should consist of three members (two nominated including Chairman by

The PSB clarified that PHF is not authorized to unilaterally conduct any part of the election process, including club registration or elections, without PSB's prior approval and compliance with Article 17 of the PSB



PSB and one by PHF), and the scrutiny of clubs must be conducted by a committee with representation from PSB, PHF, provincial associations, and relevant provincial/district sports authorities, with scrutiny criteria approved by PSB in consultation with Provincial Sports Boards.

Constitution. The PHF has been advised to halt all related processes and align any steps with PSB's instructions and the Standing Committee's mandate. The PHF must submit a written clarification. Z within seven days, detailing compliance with PSB's directives for further examination.

FIFA launches \$60 ticket tier amid criticism of 2026 World Cup pricing





IRS hosts book launch showcasing Uzbekistan's reform journey and Pak-Uzbek Partnership

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad, in collaboration with the Embassy of Uzbekistan, hosted a book launch ceremony for New Uzbekistan: The Path of Shavkat Mirziyoyev, bringing together diplomats, policy-makers, scholars, and members of civil society. The event underscored Uzbekistan's reform-driven transformation under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and highlighted the deepening partnership

between Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem President IRS termed the book an intellectually rich and well-articulated account of Uzbekistan's reform trajectory. He described the launch as a meaningful diplomatic and intellectual moment between two brotherly nations, bound by shared faith, history, culture, and civilizational ties. Highlighting Uzbekistan's emergence as a regional hub since independence, he noted that the book goes beyond political narrative



to present a profound reflection on leadership anchored in service to the people. Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Ambassador Alisher Tukhtaev, stated that Uzbekistan has entered a new era of growth marked by comprehensive reforms across governance, economy, science, and development. He noted that President Shavkat

Mirziyoyev's leadership has renewed public confidence in the country's future, reflected in tangible economic gains, including an increase in GDP from USD 115 billion to USD 140 billion and foreign exchange reserves from USD 48 billion to USD 59 billion. Highlighting bilateral relations, Ambassador Tukhtaev described Pakistan and Uzbekistan as genuine partners bound by a long-term cooperation framework and mutual trust. He noted positive developments such as visa facilitation

through e-visa regimes, expanded direct flight connectivity between Tashkent and Islamabad and Lahore, with Karachi to be added next year, and growing trade volumes expected to rise from USD 404 million in 2024 to USD 450 million this year. Mr. Hassan Irmatov, Member of the Senate Committee of Uzbekistan, described the book as a leadership-oriented and analytical work that provides insights into contemporary governance and state transformation.

Parliament warns of sugarcane market manipulation as crushing delays hit farmers

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: A parliamentary committee has expressed grave concern over the deepening sugarcane crisis, warning that delays in the crushing season and the continued inaction of the Sugar Advisory Board are causing serious losses to farmers and opening the door to market manipulation by sugar mills. Lawmakers noted with alarm that crushing remains far below last year's levels, alleging that harvested sugarcane is not being purchased deliberately to depress prices, while the absence of official government intervention has left growers vulnerable. The Standing Committee on National Food Security and

Research strongly criticized the failure of the Sugar Advisory Board to hold its first meeting despite the crushing season nearing completion. Members observed that sugarcane, Pakistan's fourth major crop, loses weight during winter, directly reducing farmers' income. The committee stressed that the federal government, as head of the Sugar Advisory Board, must take responsibility by formally announcing the crushing season to prevent monopolistic practices. It also warned that allowing sugar imports before or during the crushing season distorts the market and harms local growers. The committee further highlight-

ed that the minimum support price for sugarcane has not been announced for an extended period, leaving farmers exposed due to a policy of zero market intervention. Beyond sugarcane, the committee reviewed the sharp decline in rice exports and its implications for the national economy. Officials informed lawmakers that Pakistan's rice exports have fallen dramatically, largely due to intensified competition after India's return to the global market with substantial production volumes and heavy subsidies. Higher domestic prices and the lack of favorable trade arrangements were identified as key factors weakening Pakistan's

competitiveness. In response, the committee directed the Ministry of National Food Security and Research to pursue Free Trade Agreement status on a priority basis to revive rice exports. It was also decided that the ministries responsible for commerce and industry would be brought into future discussions to develop a coordinated strategy aimed at strengthening export performance and supporting farmers. The committee also examined challenges faced by farmers at the grassroots level following direct field engagement by agricultural authorities. Lawmakers were briefed on widespread issues including limited awareness, insuffi-

cient technical knowledge, restricted access to research, and minimal exposure to modern farming methods. These gaps were described as major barriers to productivity and sustainability in the agriculture sector. To address these shortcomings, directives were issued to expand farmer outreach through regular awareness and capacity-building initiatives. These programs are expected to focus on climate-resilient farming, soil and seed management, crop rotation, efficient fertilizer use, and the adoption of modern agricultural technologies to improve yields and long-term sustainability. Regulatory bottlenecks in seed approval were

also discussed, with officials reporting progress in reducing approval timelines while maintaining quality standards. The committee emphasized the importance of ensuring timely access to certified seeds, particularly during critical planting periods. On seed regulation, lawmakers debated the delegation of inspection authority and stressed the need for a system that ensures continuity, transparency, and accountability. They recommended linking inspection powers to official positions rather than individuals and called for stronger oversight mechanisms, along with regular reporting by provincial authorities.

Opinion & Editorial



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Afghan isolation

ALTHOUGH the Afghan Taliban regime desires to break out of international isolation and seeks recognition, its refusal to engage with its neighbours at a recent multilateral forum presents a strange paradox. On Sunday, Iran hosted a meeting of special representatives for Afghanistan in Tehran, featuring all of Kabul's neighbours, as well as Russia. However, the Taliban chose not to attend. Perhaps they were expecting uncomfortable questions about the terrorists active on their soil, hence chose to skip the Tehran meeting. Indeed, Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan Mohammad Sadiq highlighted the terrorist threat originating from Afghan soil, observing that if Kabul wanted to enhance trust with its neighbours, it was essential to address the problem of militancy. Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stressed that Afghanistan's neighbours were the "most natural and reliable" actors that could help Kabul address its problems. Mr Araghchi also made a veiled reference to the Western nation-building attempt in Afghanistan, saying that "imported prescriptions" had failed to bring stability to the country. Meetings such as these indicate that Afghanistan's neighbours are willing to work with the Taliban regime in order to help the Afghan people and support efforts to revitalize the economy.

"Power of teachers"

Amina Abdul sattar

W hat is the role of a teacher? To participate in different school activities. Every morning, when I watched other students reciting 'Surah' and 'Naat' in the assembly, I wished to be among them. But I was shy, and I lacked confidence. One day, I finally gathered the courage to participate. I started reciting "Surah Ikhlas", but halfway through, I forgot the words and made a few mistakes. A teacher came forward, shouted at me, and even hit me. That moment broke my confidence completely. After that incident, I stopped participating in any activity. Time passed, and I became even more hesitant in class. Later, I joined Quran classes, but again, the same teacher interrupted my speech, telling me that it was too long and needed to end quickly. These experiences made me realize how deeply teachers influence the lives of students. Behind every successful student, there is always a supportive teacher. My experiences left a permanent impact on me. I always wanted to be a public speaker, but because of discouragement from teachers, I could never speak confidently. Since we spend most of our time in school, teachers play a very important role in shaping our personality. It is their responsibility to understand students' behavior, emotions, and potential. If a child is struggling mentally or emotionally, it is the teacher's duty to recognize it. I want to advise students that choosing the right teacher is very important. You may not know a teacher's behavior at first, but if you ever feel unsupported, you should speak up—either to the teacher or to another trusted teacher. If you stay silent, your personality may suffer, just like mine did. Today, I have observed that many government

teachers are not very cooperative because they know their jobs are permanent and that no one will question them daily. On the other hand, private school teachers work under more pressure because coordinators constantly monitor their performance. Parents pay high fees, so private schools are compelled to maintain their reputation. But unfortunately, education is becoming a business. Schools focus more on marks than on real learning. Students who pay less fee often receive less attention. These attitudes harm a child's confidence and future. Recently, I started teaching spoken English in a school as part of a Punjab Government project. This project aims to improve the skills of primary and secondary teachers. It is a wonderful opportunity, because communication skills are just as important as academic grades. After graduation, students face job interviews, presentations, and workplace communication—all of which require English. However, I noticed that many schools still prioritize memorization. Their main focus is on producing high marks to improve their reputation. I tried to explain the importance of communication skills, but they only cared about competition with other schools. Another problem is the excessive use of Punjabi in classrooms. When I asked teachers why they do not speak Urdu or English, they started lecturing me on cultural pride. Loving our mother tongue is important, but it should not stop us from growing. If students cannot speak their national language, how will they speak an international one? Urdu unites the country, and English connects us with the world. There is also a lack of digital learning in schools. This is the age of technology, yet many institutions still fol-

low outdated systems. It is time to end the cramming culture and focus on practical skills. Some teachers even use politics to influence students, telling them to be thankful to politicians for educational projects. But education is the basic right of every child. Schools should not involve politics. Teachers must give students confidence, love, and care—not unnecessary punishment. Strictness does not always create discipline; sometimes it damages a child's self-esteem. Teachers should build students' morals, manners, motivation, discipline, and character. Teaching is not limited to school hours. A good teacher helps students anywhere, any time, because humanity comes before duty. If someone needs help at night, and we say our duty is over, what kind of teacher—or even human—are we? People often blame the government for lack of opportunities, but one major issue is the lack of respect for teachers. Teaching is the profession of prophets, yet teachers are not respected as they should be. Doctors, officers, writers, and leaders are all created by teachers. When I joined a private school, I noticed that schools make fake videos and pictures to show that they are conducting activities. This helps them attract more students, but behind the scenes, teachers are treated like servants. They are overworked and underpaid. Even after school holidays, they are forced to stay and decorate the school. Schools have become businesses, but teachers and students are the foundation of our future. We must respect teachers and protect their dignity. Teachers should perform their duties with honesty, and society should value them for their hard work.

Afghanistan & regional paradox

KHURRAM ABBAS

RECENTLY, Afghanistan's neighbours held consultations in the Iranian capital on security and its impact on regional stability, under the Tehran Format. Special representatives on Afghanistan from Pakistan, China, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan participated in the meeting. But the Afghan Taliban declined to attend.

The Tehran Format is not the only regional process which has been initiated for regional consensus building on Afghanistan's security situation. Since 2014, 10 multilateral platforms have been introduced on various occasions by several regional and extra-regional countries to facilitate coordination and avoid regional and international confrontation on Afghanistan's security affairs. The most notable among them is the Moscow Format, and keeping in view the Russia-Iran strategic partnership, the Tehran Format is an extended version of the Moscow process. Pakistan has been an active member of almost all of these regional processes including the two aforementioned, the SCO Contact Group on Afghanistan, the Istanbul Process, the Extended "Troika", etc. For Islamabad, participation in these regional forums has become a central pillar of its Afghan strategy. Pakistan's decision to participate in regional dialogue forums on Afghanistan, particularly in the Tehran Format, is primarily based on three strategic objectives. Courtesy Dawn

President assents to bill for setting up minorities' commission



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday assented to three bills on the advice of the prime minister, including one for establishing a statutory body to protect and promote the rights of minority communities in the country.

According to a statement released by the Presidency, Zardari approved three pieces of legislation on the advice of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

These include the Qanun-e-Shahadat (Amendment) Bill 2025, the King Hamad University of Nursing and Associated Medical

Sciences Bill 2025 and the National Commission for Minorities Rights Bill 2025.

The statement added that the Daanish Schools Authority Bill 2025 was sent back to the premier "in view of the need for provincial consultation".

"In the case of establishment of Daanish schools in the provinces, prior consultation with the respective provincial governments is essential," the statement quoted the president as saying.

The National Commission for Minorities Rights Bill 2025 was passed with a majority vote during a joint session of Parliament earlier this month amid stiff opposition from both sides of the aisle.

The opposition was based on fears that a provision giving the law an overriding effect would affect the anti-Ahmadiyya ordinance promulgated in 1984.

A motion seeking leave of the House to take up the bill for immediate consideration was opposed by

around one-third of the members present in the joint sitting. A total of 160 members voted in favour of the bill while 79 opposed it.

The bill was, however, passed with certain amendments, including the omission of the clause giving it overriding effect and a change to withdraw the suo motu powers earlier proposed for the National Commission for Minorities' Rights.

During the session, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar made it clear that the bill would neither dilute the anti-Ahmadiyya provisions nor affect any court judgement. "Neither the law nor the Constitution, nor our conscience, allows us to make a proposal that contradicts the Holy Quran and Sunnah," he remarked.

He said the Constitution and the state had declared Ahmadis as non-Muslims, but they did not accept this and therefore did not fall within the ambit of the bill. He said that when the decision declaring Ahmadis non-Muslims.

Campaign falsely linking Bondi shooting suspect to Pakistan launched from 'hostile countries': Tarar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said on Wednesday that it was falsely claimed after the Bondi Beach shooting in Australia that one of the attackers was from Pakistan, holding "hostile countries" responsible for this campaign.

The tragic attack by two men on Sunday resulted in the death of 16 people, including one of the attackers. Soon after the incident, a Pakistan-origin man living in Sydney was misidentified as one of the attackers. Later, it was confirmed that among the father-son duo of suspects, the former, 50-year-old Sajid Akram, was from India and the latter, 24-year-old Naveed Akram, was born in Australia.

"When the incident happened, certain media outlets were very quick to state that one of the



attackers was from Pakistan and the other one was born in Australia. "There was no evidence to prove this claim, there was no documentation, and there was no verification of this claim. But somehow, we know that this campaign was launched from hostile countries trying to malign Pakistan," Tarar said during a media briefing in Islamabad. The minister continued, "In Israel and India, this campaign was proliferated and posted on social media platforms, as well as electronic media platforms, which is very, very sad."

Leghari seeks ADB support to tackle power sector debt, boost investor confidence

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Wednesday sought the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) support in addressing power sector debt repayment challenges, and in building confidence among private investors.

The minister expressed these views during a meeting with a high-level ADB delegation led by Ms. Leah Gutierrez, Director General, Central and West Asia Department, which called on him here.

Welcoming the delegation, the minister thanked ADB for its continued partnership with Pakistan's power sector. Ms. Leah Gutierrez, on her first visit to Pakistan in her current role, appreciated the opportunity to engage with the Power Division and discuss reform priorities. Briefing the delegation, the minister highlighted key challenges facing the power sector, including financing constraints, issues related to rupee cover, and high upfront investment costs. He said the government was

actively engaging local investors through the Pakistan Business Council to attract private investment in the power transmission sector and to enhance market visibility. Sharing details of ongoing reforms, the minister highlighted progress on IGCEP-aligned transmission projects, while excess power capacity not required in the future had been removed. He reaffirmed that the government would not procure additional power and was transitioning towards a competitive electricity market. The minister noted that Pakistan had already shifted around 20 gigawatts of power generation to clean energy. However, despite this significant transition, no dedicated financing was provided for the clean energy shift, nor was funding made available to ensure grid stability. He said that the transition to renewable energy continued despite these limitations, but stressed that serious and coordinated efforts, supported by adequate financing, are now required to keep the grid stable. He also shared details of the Energy Surplus Package introduced.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, in a meeting with Ms. Leah Gutierrez, Director General, Central and West Asia Department of ADB.

Shortage of Gas Supply in Sadiqabad Karachi

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Through your esteemed newspaper, I would like to draw the attention of the concerned authorities to the serious problem of gas shortage in our area, Sadiqabad. For the past several weeks, the residents have been facing extreme difficulty due to the irregular and low gas supply, especially during morning and evening hours. People are unable to cook food or heat water, and this situation becomes even worse for school-going children and elderly people. Many families are forced to use costly alternatives like LPG cylinders or wood, which adds to their financial burden. It is requested that the concerned department take immediate notice of this issue and restore regular gas supply in Sadiqabad so that citizens can live comfortably again.

Yours faithfully, Rida Batool Malik Sadiqabad

Blatant discrimination against students of district Karak under OGDCL CSR Programs

PEAK POINT

KARAK / ISLAMABAD: On one side, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, is providing laptops and educational scholarships to the students—especially female students—of District Karak to empower them through education. On the other side, officials of OGDCL are deliberately depriving the same students of their rightful scholarships under the OGDCL Talent Hunt Program, which is nothing short of institutional injustice. Credible sources confirm that deserving and competent male and female students of District Karak were intentionally failed during interviews conducted under the OGDCL Talent Hunt Program in collaboration with IBA Karachi.

Justice Jahangiri challenges IHC proceedings in FCC

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Justice Tariq Jahangiri has challenged the ongoing proceedings of the Islamabad High Court before the Federal Constitutional Court in fake degree case. According to sources, Justice Jahangiri has constituted a three-member senior legal team to contest the matter at different judicial forums. Advocate Akram Sheikh and Barrister Salahuddin will represent the case.

Policy deliberations underway for local manufacturing of lithium-ion batteries

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Wednesday chaired a meeting on the formulation of a lithium-ion battery policy. The meeting was co-chaired by Minister of State for Finance and Railways, Bilal Azhar Kiyani, said a news release. The meeting was also attended by Secretary Industries Saif Anjum, Chief Executive Officer Engineering Development Board (EDB) Hamad Mansoor, along with representatives from the public and private sectors. The participants held detailed discussions on promoting local production and manufacturing of lithium-ion batteries in



Pakistan. SAPM Haroon Akhtar Khan said that, in line with the directives of Prime Minister, the government is formulating a comprehensive policy to encourage domestic manufacturing of lithium-ion batteries. He highlighted that currently lithium-ion cells and components are imported and only assembled locally, underscoring the need to develop full-scale manufacturing capacity within the country.

Farmers form the backbone of the national economy: Ayaz Sadiq

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, said that farmers are the backbone of Pakistan's economy, and that national food security, agricultural self-sufficiency and rural development are inconceivable without their tireless efforts and sacrifices. He further stated that farmers work day and night to provide food for the nation and play a pivotal role in economic stability, exports and the promotion of rural employment. He expressed these views ahead of National Farmers' Day, which is observed every year on 18 December. The NA Speaker said that Pakistan is an agricultural country where the livelihoods of millions of families are directly linked with the agriculture sector. He emphasized that it is the fundamental responsibility of the State to provide farmers with modern agricultural facilities, quality seeds, timely availability of fertilizers, equitable distribution of water, and access to modern research, in order to enhance productivity, reduce input costs and improve farmers' incomes. Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq noted that climate change, erratic rainfall, floods, droughts and rising agricultural input costs have emerged as serious challenges for farmers.

IN the court of Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Shami Civil Court Judge Mandi Bahauddin

Claim of encroachment by way of partition Title Sajid Mahmood etc. vs. Khalid Mahmood etc. VS Khalid Mahmood, son of Mehrban, Sadia daughter of Mehrban, caste Sheikh Residence of house number AB/1415/B# near the cemetery, Mohalla Tehsil and District Mandi Bahauddin, Muhammad Ansar son of Mehrban, Sheikh resident of AB/1415/B# Mohalla Gurha near Graveyard Tehsil and District Mandi Bahauddin effected through ordinary means so service of defendants be effected through proclamation in the newspaper. You defendants are directed to appear in court in person or through counsel 20/12/25 at 09:00 am in case of failure ex party proceedings shall be initiated against you.

IN the court of Mujeeb ur Rahman Shami Civil Court judge MANDI BAHAUDDIN

Suit for Contempt of court TITLED Rani Rafiq ETC VS Azra Parveen ETC VS Muhammad Tauseef Son Riaz Ahmad caste Hanjra Residence of Bhakhi Sharif Tehsil and District Mandi Bahauddin effected through ordinary means so service of defendants be effected through proclamation in the newspaper. You defendants are directed to appear in court in person or through counsel 09/01/26 at 09:00 am in case of failure ex party proceedings shall be initiated against you.

IN the court of Mujeeb ur Rahman Shami Civil Court judge MANDI BAHAUDDIN

Suit for Claim of encroachment by way of partition TITLED Sajid Mahmood etc. v. Khalid Mahmood etc. VS Khalid Mahmood, son of Mehrban, Sadia daughter of Mehrban, caste Sheikh Residence of, house number AB/1415/B# near the cemetery, Mohalla, Tehsil and District Mandi Bahauddin, Muhammad Ansar son of Mehrban, caste Sheikh Residence of, AB/1415/B# Mohalla, Godha, near the cemetery Tehsil and District Mandi Bahauddin effected through ordinary means so service of defendants be effected through proclamation in the newspaper. You defendants are directed to appear in court in person or through counsel 20/12/25 at 09:00 am in case of failure ex party proceedings shall be initiated against you.

IN the court of Mujeeb ur Rahman Shami Civil Court judge MANDI BAHAUDDIN

Suit for Declaration Titled Nighat Parveen VS Administrator VS Administrator through Secretary Union Council Bhikhi Sharif Tehsil and District Mandi Bahauddin, Muhammad Asghar son of Hazrat Maulana Abdul Hakim Jamia Masjid Bhikhi Sharif Tehsil and District Mandi Bahauddin, Muhammad Aslam son of Muhammad Wilayat resident of Bhikhi Sharif Tehsil and District Mandi Bahauddin effected through ordinary means so service of defendants be effected through proclamation in the newspaper. You defendants are directed to appear in court in person or through counsel 20/12/25 at 09:00 am in case of failure ex party proceedings shall be initiated against you.