



Nation united to completely eradicate terrorism: Atta Tarar



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PM directs for setting new targets for technical, vocational training programmes

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday expressing satisfaction over recent performance of National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), directed to set new targets for technical and vocational training programmes to further improve outcomes in future and ensure implementation of the Apprenticeship Law.

The prime minister was chairing a review meeting on the newly introduced vocational training ecosystem in the country, during which ongoing training programmes under the NAVTTTC were reviewed in detail.

The prime minister said that providing international certifications to Pakistani man-

power to enhance global competitiveness was a welcome development.

He directed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis to accelerate efforts to increase the absorption of Pakistani skilled labour in Gulf countries. The prime minister emphasized that Pakistani youth possessed immense potential and that a comprehensive programme had been launched through NAVTTTC to harness these capabilities. He added that, by the grace of Allah, positive results of technical and vocational training programmes under NAVTTTC were now emerging. He directed that a biometric attendance system be implemented for trainees and instructors in all NAVTTTC partner.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding NAVTTTC.

Six policemen martyred in Tank IED blast

PEAK POINT



TANK: Six police officials were martyred in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast near an armoured vehicle in Tank district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday.

The vehicle was targeted in the Gomal area, 25 kilometers from Kot Wali. The victims include SHO Ismail, ASI Sher Alam, Shafi, Hazrat Ali, Ihsanullah, and the driver, Majid. Emergency teams from Rescue 1122 have reached the spot as they are shifting the injured persons and bodies to local hospital.

Security forces have cordoned off the area while a search operation has been launched to arrest the perpetrators. In a separate incident took place in Orakzai, a terror attack on an Aman Lashar resulted in the death of two individuals and left three others injured.

The attack took place in the Yakho kandao area. In retaliation, three militants were reportedly killed during the counterattack.

Indonesia expresses desire to expand defence ties with Pakistan

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General (r) Sjafrie Sjamsuddin, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Indonesia, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi on Monday.

The high-level meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, evolving regional and global security dynamics, and exploration of avenues to enhance bilateral defence cooperation between the two countries.



Both sides underscored the importance of strengthening institutional linkages, training collaboration, and defence industrial cooperation. Discussions included ways to advance joint training exercises, capacity-building initiatives, and knowledge exchange across defence sectors. The visiting Indonesian

Field Marshal Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's commit-

ment to fostering a strong and enduring defence relationship with Indonesia. He emphasised that the partnership would be based on shared values, mutual respect, and a convergence of strategic interests. The meeting highlighted opportunities to deepen engagement in defence manufacturing, research and development, and multilateral security collaboration.

Both nations agreed to continue dialogue aimed at strengthening institutional and operational cooperation.

President Zardari to embark on official visit to Bahrain on Jan 13

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari will undertake an official visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain from 13-16 January 2026. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, the Foreign Office said in a press release on Monday. During the visit, the President will hold meetings with King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Bahrain. The discussions will focus on bilateral.

State Bank awaits cabinet approval for printing new currency notes

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: The State Bank is awaiting government approval for the final design for the printing of new currency notes. According to the Security Printing Corporation, the new currency will be produced with modern security features, but the designs have not yet been finalized. Printing the new currency is expected to take at least two months, although the modern machinery required is already in place. Senior Printing Manager Amir Shams said that discussions have taken place between the State Bank and the Security Printing Corporation regarding the printing.

KP CM Afridi decries treatment by Sindh government in address to SHCBA

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Chief Minister Sohail Afridi said on Monday that the Sindh government had not upheld the honour of the ajrak and topi and criticised its treatment of its "guests". The chief minister is currently on a visit to Karachi, where he staged a rally at the Mazar-i-Quaid on Sunday. In an address to the Sindh High Court Bar Association (SHCBA) in Karachi on Monday, Afridi thanked all the SHCBA members for their warm welcome and generous hospitality, adding that people from all over Pakistan — including Pashtuns, Kashmiris, Balochis — of every school of thought were present there. In contrast to this welcome



from the public, however, he decried the provincial government's treatment of him and his guests in Karachi, saying that they had "desecrated" the honour of the Sindh ajrak and topi. "I think every Sindh will fully condemn this," he said amid an outpouring of support from the crowd. The KP CM also criticised the fact that the constitution and law were being "toyed with," saying that it was not only damaging institutions but the whole of Pakistan.

"On one hand, they are selling our national assets — they auctioned PIA on OLCX," he said, referring to the recent auction of the national airline. "But here they have sold justice." Afridi added that the general public at least had hope that the judiciary would provide them justice and stand with them. He said that, although three judges in Islamabad had issued an order that he be allowed to meet the incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan,

"the jail superintendent picks up this order and throws it away".

"We are accused of protest politics," he added. "But our Constitution allows us to do this, so we will do protest politics."

He further claimed that the judiciary was not cooperating with the party, adding that he had called the chief justice repeatedly but received no answer.

"We are being put against the wall, so the only way left is for us to protest," he said.

The chief minister affirmed that he would always stand beside those who turned out in support of the supremacy of the Constitution and the law, saying, "We have to fight for our rights ourselves... we will not get freedom on a plate."

Trump says weighing tough response to Iran crackdown, Tehran says ready for war but also dialogue

PEAK POINT

DUBAI: President Donald Trump said the US may meet Iranian officials. "We are ready for war but also for dialogue," Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said on Monday in a briefing to foreign ambassadors in Tehran via English translation. Trump has warned Iran's leaders that the United States would attack if security forces open fire on protesters. US-based rights group HRANA said it had verified the deaths of 490 protesters and 48 security personnel, with more than 10,600 people arrested. Iran has not given an official toll and Reuters was unable to independently verify the tallies. Trump said on Sunday that Iran had called to negotiate its nuclear programme, which Israel and the US bombed in a 12-day war in June. "Iran wants to negotiate, yes. We might meet with them. A meeting is being set up, but we may have to act because of what is happening before the meeting, but a meeting is being set up."





SPORTS



PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi makes history with landmark PSL expansion for 11th edition



PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: For much of its existence, the Pakistan Super League (PSL) has been judged not merely by the quality of cricket it produces, but by what it represents: resilience, credibility, and Pakistan's return to the global sporting mainstream. Over the years, the league has survived security concerns, economic pressures, scheduling conflicts, and administrative transitions. Yet, what is now unfolding under PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi's leadership signals something far more ambitious than survival. The historic expansion framework for

of the PSL is shaping up to be a defining chapter, one that may well transform the league from a successful domestic product into a truly global sporting enterprise. Mohsin Naqvi's tenure has been marked by clarity of intent. Rather than treating the PSL as a static six-team tournament, he approached it as a scalable, evolving brand. The most significant shift has been philosophical: the PSL is no longer viewed as an event, but as an ecosystem. This thinking laid the foundation for what is now being described as the historic expansion framework for PSL 11. What made the recent

audition and expansion process remarkable was not just the numbers involved, but the structure behind them. Instead of rushed decisions or cosmetic changes, Naqvi ensured that every step, from valuation to bidding mechanics, was rooted in transparency and long-term sustainability. This professionalism sent a strong signal to investors, broadcasters, and overseas partners: the PSL is open for serious business. Traditionally, PSL auctions were seen as administrative necessities. Under Naqvi, they became strategic milestones. The process was streamlined, data-driven, and

globally aligned, mirroring best practices from leading sports leagues around the world. Franchise valuations were reassessed using modern metrics such as digital reach, diaspora engagement, sponsorship potential, and regional identity. This recalibration transformed the auction into a statement of intent. By allowing market forces to determine value, while maintaining strict governance, the PCB elevated the PSL's commercial credibility. The result was an auction that did not merely sell teams, but sold belief in the league's future.

Mohammad Rizwan retired out despite being not out in BBL match, but why?



PEAK POINT
MELBOURNE: A rare and eye-catching moment unfolded in Australia's Big Bash League when Pakistan's star batter Mohammad Rizwan was called back to the pavilion despite not being dismissed, after his team decided his scoring rate was holding back their innings. The former white-ball team captain has now become the first Pakistani batter to be retired out on tactical grounds in a 20-over T20 match. The incident took place during a Melbourne Renegades match, where the team captain made the strategic decision to retire Rizwan out because of what was judged to be slow batting at a crucial stage of the innings. The move saw Rizwan leave the field immediately, allowing another batter to come in and accelerate the scoring. Rizwan had scored 26 runs from 23 balls at the time of his withdrawal. His innings included nine dot balls, a statistic that weighed heavily in the captain's decision as the Renegades looked to push the run rate in the closing overs. With limited deliveries remaining, the team opted for a change that would bring more urgency and attacking intent to the crease.

Noor surges into world Top 30 after Karachi open boosts Pakistani squash players' rankings



PEAK POINT
KARACHI: Noor Zaman surged in the global squash rankings to break through in the Top 30 on Monday and reach a career best after a scintillating performance at last week's Karachi Open that saw all six Pakistani players at the tournament improve in the PSA list. Noor reached world number 30 on the Professional

Association (PSA) rankings, having achieved his previous career best of 37 on October 27 after a series of international wins. The 21-year-old gave former world champion Mohamed Elshorbagy a run for his money as he took the Englishman to five intense games at the Karachi Open quarter-finals before being defeated 3-2, thereby ending Pakistan's streak at the international championship. Noor, the U23 world champion at the same venue last year, is no stranger to strong comebacks and lengthy, five-game matches. He was narrowly defeated in the fifth game with a match scoreline of 11-2, 11-8, 6-11, 8-11, 11-9. Former world number one Elshorbagy called Pakistan's Noor one of the most

focused players he's ever seen. "It's great for Pakistan to have someone coming up, you guys need another world champion coming up soon since you're a squash nation, and it's very exciting for Pakistan to have Noor," Elshorbagy said after the match. Ashab Irfan, Noor's only other compatriot in the Top 50, jumped up two spots for a career best 45 on PSA's list. Ashab also gave former world champion Karim Gawad a scare when he took the Egyptian to a five-game match that saw Gawad take the last three games with a scoreline of 7-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-5, 11-5.

Pakistan's potential squad for ICC T20 World Cup 2026 revealed



Pakistan's MMA Movement: From global recognition to a sustainable sporting future

PEAK POINT
LAHORE: For much of Pakistan's sporting history, international success has been an exception rather than the outcome of a functioning system. Great athletes emerged sporadically, driven by personal grit and circumstance, often succeeding in spite of weak structures around them. The country celebrated moments, not movements. That pattern, however, is beginning to shift, and nowhere is this change more visible than in the rise of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA).

What followed was progression with purpose. Pakistani fighters began appearing consistently on global amateur platforms, played out before a packed arena and conducted under globally recognised regulations, the event marked Pakistan's first true demonstration of its ability to deliver elite combat sports at international standards. Supported by the government of Punjab, it laid the foundation for something far more enduring than a single spectacle. Most notably at the IMMAF World Championships, competing against athletes from over 70 nations. This time, participation was not symbolic. Fighters advanced through brackets.



Master Paints clinch 6th Allama Iqbal Polo Cup trophy





Rubina Khalid visits Lyari, announces expansion of social protection and skill programs

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, visited Lyari on Monday and held a meeting with Senator Yousef Baloch, Sindh Government Spokesperson MPA Sadia Javed, MPA Shazia Karim Sanghar, and other local dignitaries at Baloch Hall.

Senator Rubina Khalid was accorded a warm welcome upon her arrival. Addressing the gathering, she said the government has introduced a new transparent and secure payment mechanism under BISP in the form of Social Protection Wallets to ensure that women receive financial assistance directly,

fully, and with dignity.

Under this initiative, free SIMs are being provided to women beneficiaries.

She clarified that free SIMs will only be issued through BISP offices or government-designated campsites, and women must bring their own mobile phones.

She strictly warned beneficiaries to immediately lodge complaints if anyone demands money or attempts to make illegal deductions.

Highlighting the legacy of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Senator Rubina Khalid said she was a brave leader who never bowed before oppression. She urged women to show the same courage and refuse



any illegal demands.

The BISP Chairperson emphasized the importance of completing all required documentation for registration. She announced that mobile registration vans have been launched to conduct on-the-spot registrations in various localities, reducing the need for women to travel to distant offices.

She further informed that

the Benazir Hunarmand Programme has also been launched, enabling women, their husbands, and children to acquire vocational skills. "Skill is your asset," she said, quoting Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, adding that the initiative aims to promote self-reliance, reduce unemployment, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities. Senator Rubina Khalid

stated that, in line with the vision of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and under the guidance of Faryal Talpur, BISP is ensuring the delivery of full entitlements to women beneficiaries with respect and dignity. She announced that the current BISP instalment of Rs. 13,500 will soon be increased to Rs. 14,500.

She also shared that under the Taleemi Wazaif Programme, financial assistance is being provided to children from primary to Grade 12, while special initiatives are underway to support the health and nutrition of pregnant women and children up to two years of age. The Chairperson clarified

that all official BISP messages are sent only through 8171, and beneficiaries should not trust messages from any other number. She urged women to report any cases of fraud, illegal demands, or fake messages without delay.

In her concluding remarks, Senator Rubina Khalid said women are aware and empowered and must actively safeguard their rights.

She added that unnecessary filters imposed in the past, which had excluded deserving families, have now been removed to ensure wider inclusion of eligible households in the Benazir Income Support Programme.

Senate Flags "Breach of Privilege" as top officials skip committee, letter to Prime Minister ordered

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Senate sub committee declared the repeated absence of senior government officials a direct breach of parliamentary privilege, triggering a decision to formally approach the Prime Minister over what members described as open defiance of legislative authority. The move came after the chief executive of the National Highway Authority and the Secretary of the Ministry of Communications once again

failed to appear before lawmakers, despite earlier assurances. The issue was taken up in a meeting of the sub committee of the Senate Standing Committee on Communications, chaired by Senator Kamil Ali Agha, where members reacted sharply to what they termed "continuous and unjustified absence" by the two key officials. Senators attending the meeting said the non appearance was not an administrative lapse but a serious insti-

tutional insult to Parliament, whose committees function as an extension of the House itself. Committee members formally recorded that ignoring summons after giving assurances undermines parliamentary oversight and weakens accountability. The sub-committee observed that such conduct amounts to misconduct and a breach of privilege, stressing that no executive office holder is above parliamentary scrutiny. The tone of the meeting

reflected growing frustration within the Senate over what lawmakers see as a pattern of bureaucratic non compliance with committee proceedings. Taking the matter a step further, the sub committee decided to write a letter to the Prime Minister through the Chairman Senate, seeking intervention over the conduct of the Secretary of the Ministry of Communications. Senators warned that persistent absence from parliamentary

forums erodes democratic checks and balances and sets a dangerous precedent for executive disregard of elected institutions. Alongside the privilege issue, the committee directed that the pending matter under discussion must be finalized in the next meeting, signaling that tolerance for delays and absenteeism has run out. Members indicated that future proceedings would not overlook continued non-cooperation and that accountability mechanisms

would be pursued if officials again fail to appear. The episode highlights escalating tension between Parliament and segments of the executive, as senators increasingly push back against what they perceive as bureaucratic resistance to oversight. Lawmakers stressed that standing committees are not symbolic forums but constitutional instruments empowered to question, review, and hold officials answerable in the public interest.

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'Donroe doctrine' in action

MALEEHA LODHI

OVERTHROWING governments in Latin America has long been the US practice from a familiar playbook. The US has for decades intervened by military force to oust governments and assassinate leaders in the Western Hemisphere. More often than not, it has succeeded. Sometimes it has failed, as in trying to kill and remove Fidel Castro in Cuba epitomised by the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. This triggered the Cuban Missile Crisis that drove the US and the Soviet Union to the brink of nuclear war.

The US-backed coup in Chile in 1973 involved the assassination of its elected Marxist president Salvador Allende and installation of a brutal regime under Gen Augusto Pinochet. Another CIA-sponsored coup deposed Guatemala's elected government in 1954. In 1989, the US invaded Panama to oust Manuel Noriega, capture and extradite him to stand trial in America. The US-led invasion of Grenada overthrew its government in 1983. Over 40 US interventions are said to have "succeeded" in the past century and a half. This includes the invasion and capture in the mid-19th century of over half of Mexican territory. The US also engineered regime change and toppled governments in countries beyond Latin America — Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. Against the backdrop of this predatory history, the US attack on Venezuela

ordered by President Donald Trump followed a well-trodden path. But that didn't make it any less egregious. President Nicolás Maduro was captured by American forces and taken to the US for trial. The armed intervention was illegal — a breach of international law and norms and violation of Venezuela's sovereignty. It sent shock waves across the world and invited condemnation from many countries, while legal experts and some Democratic lawmakers called it an "act of war". Five Latin American countries and Spain issued a joint statement which said, US actions "constitute an extremely dangerous precedent for peace and regional security". It expressed concern about any "external appropriation of natural or strategic resources". Venezuela's interim President Delcy Rodríguez declared, "we will not be anyone's colony". In a blatant display of imperial ambition, Trump vowed to run Venezuela, "take back" its oil and have American oil companies exploit its oil resources. Venezuela has the world's largest oil reserves. This laid bare a key motivation of the intervention, which was not strategic deterrence against drug traffickers but commercial aggrandisement. It was a throwback to the past, when in the so-called 'banana wars', US-armed interventions sought to secure its commercial interests. Above all, Trump's action was about establishing dominance over

the Western Hemisphere, signalling Washington would dictate policy there and control its resources.

Trump seeks sole control of the Western Hemisphere and its resources. The US military action came after months of escalating pressure on Maduro who Trump accused of links with drug smugglers without offering evidence. He also blamed Maduro for the influx of Venezuelan migrants into the US. Maduro's offer for talks on narco-trafficking and oil was spurned by Washington. Instead, the US carried out strikes on Venezuelan vessels alleged to be transporting drugs and imposed a naval blockade to enforce an embargo on oil exports. Maduro accused Washington of aiming to overthrow him and take control of his country's vast oil reserves. The attack on Venezuela can be understood in the context of the Trump administration's recently released National Security Strategy (NSS). This made enforcing the so-called "Trump corollary" of the Monroe Doctrine in the Western Hemisphere a top priority. The original doctrine was to prevent European recolonisation and communist influence in the region. The "Trump corollary" or "Donroe doctrine" is designed to assert a proprietary claim and exclude China (whose trade and investment influence has been growing in Latin America) and other "non-Hemispheric" powers.

Courtesy Dawn

Politics isn't my thing

M NADEEM NADIR

Donald Trump's kidnapping of Venezuela's president, a la Tamil movie, adds exponentially to the uncertainty of world politics. The precedent will serve as an alibi for other countries like China in Taiwan. The US hasn't still recovered from the backwash of US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, so it commits another misstep. The ruins of the invaded lands are archaeological evidence of American carte blanche.

I usually shy away from writing on politics. Simply put, politics isn't my thing. And there are reasons for it. One I alluded to in the first paragraph — uncertainty. Belief has to be suspended willingly. After all, politics has ended up becoming nightmarish attacks and coups. Privacy trespassed. Safety and security are breached, whether it is of an individual, a community or a country. Why would one write certainly on something uncertain? And why should one, when politics is poly tricks?

The facade, the persona, is all that politics builds and blinds us with. What is seen is not there, and what is there is not seen. Jugglery, gimmickry, camouflage. Puppets, puppeteers. Democracy is kakistocracy. Democracy: far the people, off the people, buy the people.

Words, words and words. Form, not content. Content, not meaning. All moonshine. Generalisations. Palmists and politicians talk in future tense. Past is past. Personal opinion versus party statement. Narratives versus gaslighting. Demagogues. Hell is other people. Naani versus pinky peeni. Roost tractor. Charsi. Patwari. Youthia. Security threat. Leaks: water leak, gas leak and Dawn leaks. Tum hotay kon ho versus you will be sent to the Stone Age! Press conference is to press the conference. 804 is 408. Benazir Bhutto, Hakeem Saeed, Sultan Rahi, Arshad Sharif all dead, but their killers are deathless. Traitors. Anti-state. Conspiracies.

Courtesy Tribune

Police-levies merger

THE Balochistan government's decision to formally merge the over century-old levies force into the Balochistan Police and abolish the distinction between 'A' and 'B' areas represents a paradigm shift in its approach to the administration of law and order for improving security across the province. By placing all territories under police jurisdiction, the government has ended an arrangement rooted in colonial-era governance to better address crime and the province's present-day security challenges. The move is expected to resolve long-standing administrative ambiguity, end uneven and discretion-based enforcement of the law, and equip the province for better policing and counterterrorism under a uniform police command structure. While levies personnel are often recognised for their local knowledge and community ties, the force, which controlled nearly 90pc of the province's territory, was ill-equipped to combat modern organised crime, militancy and the crime-terror nexus. Moreover, they were frequently accused of operating at the behest of their tribal chiefs, undermining their role as impartial law enforcers. Thus, the move will both improve the state's writ and ensure accountability.

Judicial Commission approves permanent appointment of three Islamabad HC judges



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission has approved the permanent appointment of three additional judges of the Islamabad High Court.

According to an official statement, a meeting of the Judicial Commission was held under the chairmanship of Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi, where important judicial matters were discussed.

During the meeting, the issue of making three additional judges of the Islamabad High Court permanent was

reviewed in detail. The commission also deliberated on the permanent appointment of two additional judges of the Balochistan High Court.

The meeting further considered the formulation of rules for the appointment of judges to the Federal Constitutional Court.

As per the statement, the commission approved the permanent appointments of Justice Muhammad Azam Khan, Justice Muhammad Asif, and Justice Inam Amin Minhas of the Islamabad High Court.

The statement added that the commission confirmed Justice

Najmuddin Mengal as a permanent judge of the Balochistan High Court, while the permanent appointment of Justice Ayub Khan was rejected by a majority vote. A committee was also formed to review the criteria for nominating judges to constitutional benches. The committee will prepare recommendations regarding the appointment process, interview procedures, and amendments to existing rules.

Sources said that Justice Muneeb Akhtar opposed the permanent appointment of Justice Muhammad Asif.

Sources further revealed that two members of PTI did not attend the Judicial Commission meeting. Chief Justice Yahya Afridi informed the commission about their absence. During the meeting, the car accident involving Justice Asif's son was also discussed. Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Sarfraz Dogar briefed the commission members on the matter, while Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani stated that Justice Asif.

Junaid Anwar Chaudhry announces 50 acres land for truck parking near Karachi Port

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of transport sector representatives on Monday met Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry to request for urgent measures to address chronic truck parking congestion around Karachi Port, a problem they said was disrupting cargo movement and worsening traffic in the country's largest city.

The three-member delegation was led by President of the Pakistan Transport Alliance Malik Shahzad Awan and included President of the Karachi Goods Carrier Association Malik Shair Khan Awan and United Goods Transporters Association representative Ghulam Yaseen Khan, said a press release.

During the meeting, the delegation highlighted the acute shortage of designated parking facilities for heavy vehicles operating at and around Karachi Port.

They said the lack of proper parking had forced thousands of trucks to queue daily on major city roads while awaiting port entry,

leading to severe traffic congestion, delays in cargo handling and rising operational costs for transporters.

The transporters told the minister that the situation was creating inconvenience for commuters and contributing to environmental and road safety concerns, particularly during peak port operations. They urged the federal government to allocate dedicated land near the port for truck parking as a long-term solution.

Junaid Chaudhry acknowledged the concerns and described truck parking as a critical bottleneck affecting both port efficiency and urban mobility. He reiterated the government's commitment to improving port-related infrastructure to support trade and economic activity. The minister agreed in principle to allocate 50 acres of land for the establishment of a dedicated truck parking facility for vehicles serving Karachi Port.

He directed relevant departments to begin coordination and feasibility work in consultation with stakeholders from the transport.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry chairing a meeting on Port Qasim.

Ahsan Iqbal flags Pakistan's 'alarming' population growth

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has flagged a fundamental flaw in the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, warning that the heavy reliance on population as a criterion for resource allocation discourages population control by rewarding provinces with larger populations, a distortion the minister believes requires serious debate and reform.

In a video message released on Monday, the federal minister shared that the country's first-ever Digital

Census, conducted in 2023, revealed many key insights, "some encouraging, some concerning".

"Our population growth rate has increased from 2.4% in the past census to 2.55%. We are one of the fastest-growing populations in the world. This is alarming because this kind of growth rate is typically seen in the least developed countries in Africa," said Iqbal.

He maintained that economic development is closely related to population growth. "Rapid population growth strains resources and affects human development. It can also produce a generation with challenges in skills



and education." "So this is a big challenge. For this, the government is now making a national effort in terms of population planning." Ahsan noted that population is a provincial subject, making coordination essential. "A challenge arises in the NFC

Nation united to completely eradicate terrorism: Atta Tarar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has vowed that terrorist elements will not be allowed to promote their narrative or ideology.

Addressing Quami Paigham-e-Aman Committee conference in Islamabad on Monday, he said that the entire nation is united in its resolve to completely eradicate the menace of terrorism.

He emphasised that terrorism would be confronted through both kinetic and non-kinetic means.

Commending the role of religious scholars in safeguarding the country's ideological frontiers and maintenance of peace, the information minister stated that the Quami Paigham-e-Aman Committee would visit different parts of the country to spread



Islam's message of peace.

He said that terrorists have nothing to do with Islam, Pakistan or humanity.

He said that Paigham-e-Aman Committee is an overarching body in which minorities are also represented.

He emphasised that it is our responsibility to safeguard the rights of minorities. He further noted that this fully empowered committee will play an effective role in countering the narrative of terrorists.

Zero-tolerance policy enforced against Railway theft: Abbasi

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi on Monday reaffirmed that a strict zero-tolerance policy is being enforced against individuals involved in the theft and sabotage of railway property. The minister lauded the timely action of SHO Railway Police Landhi Muhammad Habib Zafar and his team for successfully thwarting an attempt to steal valuable railway tracks in Karachi, said a news release. He said such criminal activities cause heavy losses to the national exchequer and damage critical public infrastructure.

In line with the government's zero-tolerance policy against theft and damage to national assets, the Railway Police conducted a major operation in Karachi, recovering railway material worth millions of rupees and arresting four suspects.

According to details, the Railway Police Karachi Division carried out a successful raid within the jurisdiction of Railway Police Station Landhi, near Murtaaza Chowranghi and along the Malir River. During the operation,

No ambiguity on national security narrative will be tolerated: Talal Chaudhry

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Interior Senator Talal Chaudhry on Monday warned that any political leader, whether a chief minister or a party office-bearer, making ambiguous or sympathetic remarks toward militants would face strict action, saying the state would "not tolerate even a single vague word" against the national counter-terrorism narrative.

Speaking to reporters outside Parliament, Chaudhry said political parties were free to launch street movements and political campaigns, but no one would be allowed to create space for militants who had targeted "mosques, madrassas, markets, schools, children and security forces without discrimination."



"If anyone tries to build a narrative for them or adopt a soft attitude, it is intolerable," he said. "If you have so much sympathy for them, go to Afghanistan yourself or we will facilitate it."

The minister launched a blistering critique of the KP government, accusing it of intentionally weakening counter-terrorism capabilities in the province despite bearing the highest toll of militant attacks. He claimed that over 1,200 people had been killed in terrorism incidents.

May 9 riots: Punjab refutes PTI claims of submitting unrelated videos for forensic analysis

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari on Monday refuted claims by PTI leaders that different and unrelated videos were submitted for a forensic report about the May 9, 2023 riots.

KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi has found himself in the centre of a legal controversy after a forensic report, submitted by the prosecution to the anti-terrorism court in the Radio Pakistan attack case, identified him as one of the suspects seen in the purported video clips of the incident. "There are two separate videos [of KP CM] and they should not be confused.



One of the videos must be from Zaman Park. However, the other one showing [him] vandalising and lighting fire has been deleted [from the social media account]," she said while addressing a press conference in Lahore. "When KP chief minister realised that an effort to rebellion which he termed as revolution failed, he deleted the videos.

lation to get a larger share. "So this is a distortion in our NFC award, which needs to be discussed," he said. "Our population has reached 240 million, and if it continues to increase at this rate, then we will reach about 400 million by 2050. Which is a big challenge for us," Ahsan concluded. During the first meeting of the Commission held on December 4, it was decided to form several working groups to deliberate on various aspects of the forthcoming NFC award.

The Commission had tentatively planned to convene again on January 8 or January 15.

However, sources said the

working groups have made limited progress so far, making it difficult to consolidate recommendations within the proposed timeframe. As a result, the next session of the Commission may be delayed until preliminary reports are finalised.

The NFC is mandated to build consensus on the distribution of financial resources between the federation and the provinces — a technically complex process requiring extensive analysis and negotiations among stakeholders. Any delay in meetings could prolong discussions on the next NFC award, which is critical for both federal and provincial fiscal.