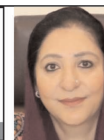




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Founded By:  
(Late) Rehmat Khan

ABC CERTIFIED

Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com  
Website: www.peakpoint.pk

Executive Group Editor  
Arif Mehmood Khan



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## Pakistan can achieve fast-track transformation in agriculture through Chinese partnership: PM

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that Pakistan, essentially an agrarian economy, held immense and largely untapped potential in agriculture and can transform its agri-sector not in years, but in months by adopting modern technologies, improving productivity and strengthening cooperation with China.

Addressing the Pakistan-China Agri Investment Conference here, the prime minister noted that nearly 65% of Pakistan's population still lives and works in rural areas, with agriculture remaining the backbone of the national economy. He stressed the need to enhance per-acre yield through modern techniques, efficient water management and opti-

mal use of limited land resources.

The prime minister said sustainable growth in agriculture required coordinated efforts by the federal and provincial governments, the farming community, and scientists and researchers. He underlined the importance of deciding what to grow and export, developing value chains, cold storage, warehousing and value addition to make Pakistani agricultural produce globally competitive.

He described Beijing as a friend who had stood by Pakistan through thick and thin and said China had never hesitated in sharing expertise and advanced technologies.

He said the dispatch of 1,000 Pakistani graduates, selected on merit, to leading Chinese agricultural universities.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses Pak-China Agri Investment Conference held in Islamabad.

## Ulema Council terms Trump's peace board invitation huge success

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Ulema Council on Sunday termed US President Donald Trump's invitation to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to join a proposed Peace Board on Palestine as a major diplomatic success for Pakistan.

In a statement, Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Ashrafi said the invitation reflected the strength of Pakistan's diplomatic engagement and its sustained efforts to highlight the Palestinian cause at international forums. He said Pakistan had consistently raised the issue of Palestine across the world, and the move was a recognition of those efforts.

Ashrafi praised the manner in which the prime minister, along with the country's top military leadership, presented the Palestinian case before the US president and the international community, calling it commendable and a source of national pride. He urged Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to accept the invitation and play an effective role in promoting peace, particularly for the betterment of the Muslim Ummah.

## Sindh CM announces Rs10m compensation for each victim after deadly Gul Plaza fire

PEAK POINT

Mayor Murtaza Wahab, Deputy Mayor Salman

He paid tribute to firefighter Furqan, who

KARACHI: The fire broke out at approximately 10:15pm on Saturday evening. While the exact cause has yet to be determined, preliminary assessments suggest a possible electrical short circuit. The blaze raged for over 24 hours, with cooling operations continuing amid heavy smoke and partial structural collapse that severely hampered rescue efforts.

Murad, and senior officials were present at the scene during rescue operations. Firefighters managed to enter the building through three access points, but the structure has suffered an estimated 40 per cent collapse. The chief minister warned that complete demolition of the building may be required due to safety concerns.



lost his life during the operation, noting that his father had also died in the line of duty as a firefighter. Immediate compensation has been announced for the families of firefighters who were killed while battling the blaze. Briefings given to the chief minister indicated that the death toll could rise to between 50 and 60, as several miss-

ing persons are feared trapped under debris. Five of the recovered bodies are yet to be identified.

The building housed more than 1,200 shops, leaving a large number of traders suddenly unemployed. Murad Ali Shah said a special committee has been formed to recommend rehabilitation measures, including the immediate provision of alternative shops so affected traders can resume their businesses.

He confirmed that clearing of debris will begin immediately, alongside a forensic investigation to determine the cause of the fire. The chief secretary has been directed to formally notify a fact-finding committee, and the option of a judiciary.

## President recommends Civil Award for martyred firefighter

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari has directed Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah to utilise all available resources in the ongoing rescue and firefighting operation in Gul Plaza.

During a telephone conversation with Murad Ali Shah on Sunday, Asif Ali Zardari said that martyred firefighter Furqan Shaukat should be nominated for the Civil Award and inquired from the CM about the situation of the fire in Gul Plaza. He appreciated the bravery of martyred firefighter.

## Deputy PM Ishaq Dar discusses regional issues with Egyptian foreign minister

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday held a telephone conversation with Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr Badr Abdelatty to discuss recent regional developments as well as ongoing bilateral and multilateral matters. During the conversation, both leaders underscored the importance of sustained dialogue and close cooperation between Pakistan and Egypt on issues of mutual interest. They also agreed to meet on the sidelines of the upcoming World.

## PAF F-16s arrive in Saudi Arabia for Spears of Victory-2026 Exercise

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Air Force contingent comprising F-16 Block-52 fighter aircraft, alongside dedicated air and ground crew, has arrived at King Abdulaziz Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to participate in the multinational aerial combat Exercise Spears of Victory-2026.

The exercise is witnessing the participation of fighter jets and combat support elements from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, France, Italy, Greece, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) here.

It offers a robust platform to enhance interoperability with



operational synergy, mutual understanding and capacity building among participating Air Forces, particularly in large force employment, night composite air operations, integrated ISR, and operations in advanced electronic warfare environments, it further said.

Through participation in this multinational forum, Pakistan Air Force seeks to enhance interoperability with partner Air Forces, and validate its operational preparedness in a contested, technology-driven battle space.

For this international deployment, PAF fighter aircraft undertook a non-stop flight from their home base in Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, demonstrating the long-range operational reach and expeditionary capabilities of Pakistan Air Force.

During the conduct of

the exercise, PAF pilots flying advanced F-16 Block-52 aircraft equipped with modern avionics and Beyond Visual Range capabilities will be pitched against aircrew of participating Air Forces operating a wide array of sophisticated combat aircraft.

Participation of Pakistan Air Force contingent in Exercise Spears of Victory-2026 not only reflects PAF's firm commitment to regional and international military cooperation, but also underscores its professional excellence and proven capability to operate effectively in diverse and demanding operational environments alongside leading contemporary Air Forces.

## Three newly-appointed permanent judges of IHC take oath



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Three additional judges have been sworn in as permanent judges of the Islamabad High Court.

Chief Justice of IHC Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar administered the oath to the Justice Muhammad Azam Khan, Justice Muhammad Asif and Justice Raja Inaam Ameen Minhas during a ceremony.

The event began with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by the national anthem. The Registrar of the high court read the official notification announcing the judges' appointments.

The ceremony was attended by Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tatar.



# SPORTS



## Player auction model to replace draft system for PSL XI



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The 11th edition of the upcoming Pakistan Super League (PSL) will see yet another historic development as the franchise moves to a player auction model instead of the traditional player draft system, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced on Monday.

The board called the transition to the auction model "a historic move after a decade of success" and said that it reinforced PSL's "continued growth, competitiveness, and commitment to innovation".

"This strategic shift is aimed at enhancing competitive balance, increasing transparency, and providing players greater earning opportunities," PCB said in a statement today.

Under the revised player acquisition framework, each franchise may retain a maximum of four players, limited to one player per category. Previously, every franchise was allowed to retain eight players from their squad, including a mentor, a brand ambassador, and a Right to Match (RTM) option to retain a ninth player in the draft.

The rules pertaining to men-

tors, brand ambassadors and RTM have been abolished for PSL XI, the statement said.

"Newly inducted teams will be allowed to select and retain four players from the available player pool before the player auction," it added.

It added that each franchise will also be allowed one direct signing of a foreign player who did not feature in PSL X, enabling teams to strategically strengthen their squads with fresh international talent.

Further strengthening the league's commercial and competitive outlook, the player salary

has been increased to \$1.6 million per franchise, which the statement said underscored PSL's "commitment to rewarding player performance and attracting elite domestic and international cricketers".

"These progressive measures reflect the League's strategic trajectory and evolution, while remaining firmly rooted in its mission to promote cricketing excellence fan engagement, and attaining unprecedented heights," it said.

According to the statement, PSL 11 will officially commence on March 26.

## PFF and Balochistan govt join hands to revive football



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: A delegation of the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF), representing PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani, held a high-level meeting with the Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, with a purpose of reviving and promoting football in Balochistan. The PFF delegation comprised Advisor to the PFF President Mr. Eyab Ahmed and Director Legal PFF Mr. Ali Akram. The meeting was also attended by Chief Secretary Balochistan Mr. Shakeel Qadir, Provincial Minister for Sports Ms. Meena Majeed, and Inspector General of Police Balochistan Mr. Tahir Khan, highlighting the government's collective interest in sports development. Discussions focused on the revival and long-term development of football across Balochistan, with particular emphasis on upgrading sports infrastructure and introducing structured youth education and development programmes. Both sides stressed the urgent need to create sustainable pathways for young talent, especially in underserved areas of the province. A key highlight of the meeting was the proposed implementation of FIFA's "Football for Schools" programme and the establishment.

## Australia rest Cummins and Hazlewood from Pakistan T20 series



PEAK POINT

MELBOURNE: Australia's Pat Cummins will be kept on ice until a few games into the Twenty20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka as selectors take a cautious approach with the pace veteran's recovery from a lower back injury. Cummins returned to action

during the third Ashes Test in Adelaide but missed the last two matches against England and will skip Australia's T20 warm-up matches against Pakistan.

Selectors' chief George Bailey confirmed that pace bowler Josh Hazlewood, Nathan Ellis, all-rounder Glenn Maxwell and

a minor setback in his recovery last week but was expected to be fit for the start of the World Cup along with Hazlewood. The tournament runs from February 7 to March 8.

"Pat's a little bit different ... he'll probably join that World Cup group a little bit later in the tournament, around game three or four," Bailey told reporters on Monday.

Fast bowler Mahli Beardman and all-rounder Jack Edwards could make their international debuts after being included in a 17-man squad for the Pakistan series on Monday.

## South Africa set new record with 397/5 in ICC U-19 World Cup



## Bangladesh face deadline over refusal to play T20 World Cup matches in India

PEAK POINT

BANGLADESH: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has told Bangladesh to agree to play their matches at next month's T20 World Cup in India or risk being kicked out of the tournament, reports said on Monday.

Bangladesh announced on Jan 4 that it would not play its T20 World Cup matches in India after its player Mustafizur Rahman was released by his Indian Premier League (IPL) team amid growing tensions between the two countries. Subsequently, Bangladesh "formally requested" the ICC to shift their games to Sri Lanka.

The T20 World Cup begins on February 7 with Bangladesh in England's Group C and scheduled to play all of their group matches in Kolkata and Mumbai. The BCB held talks in Dhaka at the weekend with

ICC officials over the impasse, but no agreement was reached.

"During the discussions, the BCB reiterated its formal request to the ICC to relocate Bangladesh's matches to Sri Lanka," a BCB statement

who did not qualify for the World Cup.

One suggestion was for Bangladesh to swap with Group B's Ireland, whose matches are in Sri Lanka.

"Among other points, the possibility of moving



said. ICC have not officially commented, but website Cricinfo and other Indian media reported on Monday that the deadline of Wednesday had been set for Dhaka to make a decision.

ICC sources have told AFP that Bangladesh could be replaced by Scotland, who are the highest-ranked team

Bangladesh to a different group as a means of facilitating the matter with minimum logistical adjustments was discussed," said the BCB.

Pakistan will play all their matches in Colombo under an ICC agreement with India to play at neutral venues in global or regional tournaments.

## Students participate in table tennis trials during the "Khelta Punjab Pink Games Trials" held at the sports gymnasium





# Unplanned population growth is the root of all Pakistan's problems, reveals Dr. Shahzad Khan

### Unplanned pregnancy, health, malnutrition and environmental crisis are giving rise to revelation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor Health Services Academy Dr. Shahzad Khan has said that unplanned population growth in Pakistan is not just a problem but has become the root cause of dozens of national problems such as clean water, health, malnutrition, education, environmental pollution and urban planning. Dr. Shahzad Khan revealed that about 12.8 million pregnancies occur in Pakistan every year,



of which 50 percent are unwanted. He said that if women are provided with timely and quality family planning facilities, this number can be significantly reduced. According to Dr. Shahzad Khan, 3.8 million

abortions are attempted in the country every year, a large number of which are performed in unsafe conditions, resulting in serious risks to the health and lives of women. He said that the rate of stillbirth (stillbirth) in Pakistan is the highest in the world and every year about 700,000 babies are stillborn. He added that 6.5 million new babies are being added to the population in Pakistan every year, which is equal to the population of an entire city or New Zealand, while the state does not have

effective provision of education, health, nutrition and clean water even for the children it already has. Dr. Shahzad Khan said that a major reason for the problem is the lack of access to family planning services for women in rural areas, shortages of medicines (stock-outs) and limited options. We cannot solve the population problem without giving women the right to choose, he stressed. He clarified that linking the population problem with religion is a misunderstanding. The Quran recommends

breastfeeding children for two years, which is a clear scientific argument for birth spacing. Modern science also says that a mother needs at least two years to recover after a pregnancy. Dr. Shahzad Khan said that the merger of the population department with the health department in recent years is a positive step, which has improved service delivery. However, he regretted that family planning is still not being given the same priority as other health sectors. He said that it is a joint responsibility

of both the state and the individual, but providing basic facilities is the primary responsibility of the state. We are not talking about reducing the population, but rather slowing its pace so that the pressure on the country's resources can be reduced. Finally, Dr. Shahzad Khan urged the media to broadcast continuous and serious programs on the population issue so that public awareness increases and policymakers can make decisions based on facts.

## National Assembly Standing Committee on Commerce clears two Amendment Bills

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly Standing Committee on Commerce on Monday unanimously passed two key pieces of legislation the Export Development Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2026 and the National Tariff Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2026 during its meeting held at Parliament House. The meeting was chaired by Muhammad Jawed Hanif Khan, MNA, and focused on legislative business related to trade facilitation and tariff regulation. During deliberations on the Export Development Fund

(Amendment) Bill, 2026, a member of the committee proposed several amendments. The committee reviewed and adopted these amendments before approving the bill unanimously. Following this, the committee also passed the National Tariff Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2026 without opposition. While concluding the session, the chairman described both bills as significant legislative measures and thanked committee members for their active participation. He acknowledged their constructive input during discussions and appreciated their presence in the

meeting. The session was attended in person by MNAs Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, Ms. Kiran Haider, Mr. Asad Alam Niazi, Mr. Gul Asghar Khan, and Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani. Other members, including Ms. Shaista Pervaiz, Mr. Farhan Chishti, Choudhary Iftikhar Nazir, and Mr. Muhammad Numan, participated virtually. Senior officials from the Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Commerce, and the National Assembly Secretariat were also present to assist the committee during the proceedings.

## 169,538 vehicles tagged as Islamabad opens 18 M-Tag centers

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad's vehicle tagging drive continues as authorities confirm that 169,538 vehicles have received M-Tags so far, while the number of service centers across the federal capital has increased to 18 to support public access and compliance. Officials said the M-Tag campaign is being carried out across the federal capital to register vehicles and regulate movement on major roads. To reduce congestion at service points and improve access for motorists, new centers are being added at key locations.

A fresh M-Tag center has now been set up on N-5 near Margalla, expanding coverage for residents and commuters. According to the Director General of Excise and Taxation Department, the total number of operational M-Tag centers in Islamabad has reached 18. These centers are working daily to issue tags, update vehicle records, and guide citizens on the registration process. Authorities said the expansion aims to shorten waiting times and ensure smoother service delivery. Director General Excise Irfan Memon said all possible steps are being taken to facilitate

citizens during the campaign. He stated that staff has been deployed at centers to handle increased demand and provide guidance. The department is also monitoring operations to maintain uniform service standards at all locations. Alongside service expansion, enforcement against vehicles without M-Tags is continuing across the city. Checkpoints are being set up at different routes, and vehicles found without tags are being stopped for verification. Officials said these actions will remain in place to ensure compliance with the registration policy.

# Opinion & Editorial

ISLAMABAD: **DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD**  
 Arif Mehmood Khan  
 Group Editor: 0333-5366814  
 Samra Athar Kakakhel  
 Resident Editor  
 Nadim Tanoli  
 Joint Editor: Mob-0301-777874  
 Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com  
 www.peakpoint.pk

## A disordered world

MALEEHA LODHI

THERE is no doubt President Donald Trump has shaken up the world order by his disruptive and unilateral policies. From upending the global trading system to launching military attacks in the Western Hemisphere and beyond, he has shown contempt for international law and the sovereignty of other nations. For someone who vowed to end wars and not start new ones, his aggressive actions and rhetoric suggest the contrary. Trump's 'America First' foreign policy means riding roughshod over others. His deputy chief of staff, Stephen Miller, aptly described the Trumpian worldview when he poured scorn on a "rules-based system" and declared: "We live in a world, in the real world, that is governed by strength, that is governed by force, that is governed by power." That means the exercise and projection of raw American power, whatever the consequences.

What kind of world is emerging from this? To be sure, Trump is acting in an environment already characterised by a fragmenting global order and increasing disregard for international rules and norms by other big and regional powers. The use of hard power by countries has become all too frequent in pursuit of a 'might is right' approach. Trump is reinforcing or sharpening these trends and pushing the world into a Hobbesian state of law-

lessness. Today, the world has increasingly become one ruled by impunity. In a speech to the General Assembly over a year ago, UN Secretary General António Guterres said the world had entered "the age of impunity". He was prompted to say this by the Israeli aggression and desperate situation in Gaza but he was also referring to the growing number of countries acting this way. "They can invade another country, lay waste to whole societies" and "thumb their nose at international law", he said, pointing to the fact that this "age of impunity" is everywhere. He is, of course, right. This era of impunity is reflected not just in the US assault on Venezuela and bombing of Iran but the genocide carried out by Israel in Gaza, its military attacks on neighbouring countries, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and India's military strikes against Pakistan. None of these powers thought their actions entailed much cost and they faced no international accountability. Countries have to navigate a no-rules world amid great uncertainty and volatility. If international institutions were designed to deter and check such behaviour that isn't happening in today's no-rules world. Multilateralism and multilateral organisations have been under stress for well over a decade. But the attitude of big powers, especially Trump's conduct,

has accelerated this trend and magnified the pressure. The UN's paralysis and ineffectiveness are evident from its failure to stop the genocide in Gaza, the war in Ukraine and end other conflicts, such as in Sudan. Its growing irrelevance is laid bare by its role as a bystander in wars and crises, unable to perform its core responsibility, albeit due to big power politics and clashing interests. The result is a loss of faith in multilateralism with trust in global institutions at a record low. The recent withdrawal by the US from 66 international organisations including 31 UN entities is another setback for the multilateral system and will further weaken it. The world has now entered an era of a 'new great game' which involves intense resource tussles between the big powers. It is reflected in the competition between the US and China over rare earths and critical minerals essential for semiconductor and defence industries. In this regard, the US under Trump is trying to catch up with China, which has built a virtual monopoly, having made strategic investments in these sectors over decades, including in Africa. China has a near-monopoly in the extraction and processing capacity of rare earth minerals, which are used in electronics, electric cars and military weapon systems including fighter jets.

Courtesy Dawn

## Schooling and free thinking

M NADEEM NADIR

WHILE schools are considered the intellectual, educational and civilisational nurseries - being a prerequisite for furthering the journey of human civilisation that had started from the barbaric Stone Age and has reached the age of artificial intelligence - they are also the barriers against the human civilisational retrogression which is marked by the clipping of the wings of imagination and by the unabated moral turpitude ending on animalism. The regression was precipitated when schools started using fear as a tool to administer instruction. Over time, schooling has become synonymous with policing the human mind.

Schooling and human civilisation have been concomitant to each other. Both complement each other through the agency of the mind, as Bertrand Russell writes in his essay 'The Functions of a Teacher', "Civilisation, in the more important sense, is a thing of the mind, not of material adjuncts to the physical side of living." To bolster the cause of a civilised humanity is made possible only through fostering in learners a spirit of free thinking to resist the powers that are hellbent upon depluming man of his unrivalled status of being the paragon of all creatures. Free thinking has to be made the raison d'être of schooling because only then is it possible for man to come up with plans to deal with the challenges threatening his peaceful existence. For the pursuit of free thinking, the likes of Charles Darwin, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Mark Zuckerberg and many Nobel laureates like Alvin Roth had bad school experiences of being either backbenchers or dropouts, as free spirit resists being imprisoned. Despite all the odds, their eminence in the fields depending upon education raises questions or perhaps doubts about the role of schools in early education. One common factor is school formalism stipulating conformity. Courtesy Tribune

## Iran climbdown

DEVASTATING conflict pitting Iran against the US and Israel may have been averted for now, but unless there is a long-term resolution addressing the underlying tensions, particularly between Tehran and Washington, a fresh conflagration may not be too far off. What started out as protests by traders against Iran's plummeting economy in late December morphed into large anti-government demonstrations. As some of these protests turned violent, the security forces responded harshly, resulting in the deaths of several protesters; the actual numbers are hard to verify due to an information blackout in Iran. However, the Islamic Republic's external foes, primarily the US and Israel, sought to manipulate genuine domestic rage against economic distress into a regime change operation. At one point, war seemed imminent, with President Donald Trump saying that the US was "locked and loaded". Yet on Jan 14, the US leader rowed back, claiming that Iranian officials had told him that protesters would not be executed. He even expressed gratitude to Iran. While Mr Trump's foreign policy decisions may seem inconsistent, some saner voices within the US administration might have cautioned against attacking Iran.

## Atta Tarar calls on Chairman Senate along with Federal Secretary & PIO



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday called on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani at his residence to discuss outcomes of the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference hosted by Islamabad recently.

The minister, who was accompanied by Federal Secretary for Information Ashfaq Ahmad Khalil and Principal Information Officer Mobashir Hassan, presented a digital

album documenting the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference. During the meeting, the Senate Chairman expressed his sincere appreciation for the Ministry of Information's role in providing exceptional media coverage, noting the positive outcomes of the conference for Pakistan at the international stage. The Chairman Senate emphasized that the conference, which focused on the core themes of peace, security, and development, served as a significant milestone for parliament-

ary diplomacy in Pakistan.

He highlighted the unanimous adoption of the Islamabad Declaration as a major achievement, noting that the document stressed the promotion of global peace and sustainable development while reaffirming a commitment to a global order based on United Nations principles.

He praised the collective efforts of the Information Minister and his team for their dedication in making the event a success.

Federal Minister Attaullah Tarar remarked that the successful hosting of the conference by the Senate of Pakistan has greatly enhanced the country's positive image globally. He credited the leadership of Chairman Gilani for bringing together distinguished speakers and parliamentarians from across the world onto a single platform. The event effectively amplified Pakistan's stance on vital issues across international forums and represented a historic and decisive step forward for the nation's diplomatic efforts, Atta Tarar stated.

## Pakistan, WB, IsDB pledge deeper cooperation for power sector reforms

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Monday held meetings with senior delegations of the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) to discuss strategies for strengthening Pakistan's energy sector with a focus on sustainability and efficiency. A World Bank delegation led by Ousmane Dione, Vice President for the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan Region, called on the minister, while Dr. Rami Ahmad, Vice President (Operations) of the Islamic Development Bank, also met him to explore avenues for enhanced cooperation in energy development initiatives, said a press release. Welcoming the World Bank delegation, the minister expressed gratitude for its historical support in development



projects. He referenced his recent visit to the World Bank's headquarters, which highlighted the ongoing need for robust partnerships to address energy challenges effectively. During the discussions, the World Bank team emphasized the value of reliable and affordable energy systems. Dr. Rami Ahmad from the Islamic Development Bank outlined opportunities for joint initiatives in promoting sustainable energy practices. The Minister reaffirmed his dedication to reinforcing the power sector through targeted reforms.

## NA speaker, parliamentary delegation arrives in China

PEAK POINT

BEIJING: A parliamentary delegation led by the National Assembly Speaker, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq arrived in Beijing for a three-day official visit to the People's Republic of China. The visit is being undertaken at the special invitation of Zhao Leji, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) of China.

Upon arrival at Beijing Capital International Airport, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and his delegation were warmly received by Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Pakistan, Aizaz Khan, along with senior Chinese officials, including Ouyang Changqiong, Member of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee of the NPC, and Bai Dandan, Deputy Director-General of the Affairs Bureau of the General Office of the NPC Standing Committee.

During the visit, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and the parliamentary delegation will hold meetings with senior Chinese

leadership, including Zhao Leji, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the 14th NPC, and Wang Huning, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The discussions will focus on further strengthening parliamentary cooperation and deepening bilateral relations between Pakistan and China. In addition to official engagements, the delegation will visit the Party School of the CPC Central Committee and the Museum of the Communist Party of China to gain deeper insight into China's political and legislative framework.

The Pakistani parliamentary delegation comprises the Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination and Convenor of the Pakistan-China Parliamentary Friendship Group, Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam; MNA Muhammad Numan; Parliamentary Secretary Ms. Zeb Jaffar; and MNA Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri.

## Pakistan, Rwanda explore collaboration in higher education, TVET

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Rwanda's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Fatou Harerimana, on Monday called on Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Wajih Qamar, at her office and discussed avenues for strengthening bilateral cooperation in the education sector. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on collaboration in advance education through the Higher Education Commission (HEC), development of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector, and sharing of best practices in teachers' training. The discussion also focused on emerging areas including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Information Technology (IT), with an emphasis on preparing youth for future skills and digital transformation.

Opportunities for student scholarships and academic exchanges were also explored to enhance people-to-people contacts and promote mutual learning between the two.

## Youth empowerment through technology key to self-reliant Pakistan: Rana Sanaullah

PEAK POINT

FAISALABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Political & Public Affairs Senator Rana Sanaullah Khan on Monday said that empowering youth through education, research and technology was imperative for building a self-reliant Pakistan.

He was addressing a laptop distribution ceremony held under Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme at Government College University Faisalabad (GCUF) where laptops were awarded to 1,934 students.

He said the youth were the most valuable asset of any nation and termed the laptop distribution initiative a clear reflection of Pakistan's bright future.

Congratulating the Prime



Minister's Youth Program team, he said that the scheme was designed to promote merit and provide equal opportunities to talented students across the country. He said that technology had become indispensable in the digital age and under Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme, around 600,000 laptops had so far been distributed nationwide.

He said that 100,000 laptops were distributed during the previous year, including 58,000 laptops to female students.

## PTI's participation in JCP meetings conditional upon consultation with Imran: Barrister Gohar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has said that the party's future participation in meetings of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) was conditional upon whether consultations would be allowed with incarcerated party founder Imran Khan. Neither Barrister Gohar nor Barrister Syed Ali Zafar — who represent PTI in JCP meetings — have attended recent sessions of the council during which, in separate meetings last week, the commission had recommended the confirmation of 31 additional judges as permanent judges. Speaking to the



media at the Supreme Court today, Gohar said, "The party will take a final decision whether or not to attend future meetings of the JCP after having consultation with the PTI founder". When asked why PTI skipped meetings of the commission, Barrister Gohar explained that the status of the commission had changed after the passage of the 27th Constitutional Amendment.



Pakistani Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq arrives in Beijing China.

## Pakistan's Kinnow exports remain on strong trajectory despite Afghan market closure

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Under the proactive leadership of Jam Kamal Khan, Federal Minister for Commerce, Pakistan's kinnow exports have continued to register strong growth despite the closure of the Afghan market, highlighting the success of timely policy measures and export diversification efforts led by the Ministry of Commerce. Despite the disruption of a traditionally significant export destination, the Ministry of Commerce, in close coordination with the Trade Development

Authority of Pakistan, moved swiftly to facilitate exporters and redirect consignments toward alternative international markets, said a release issued here on Monday. These efforts ensured continuity in shipments and protected growers and exporters from potential losses. According to official export figures, Pakistan earned approximately \$ 40 million from kinnow exports within a span of just 45 days, covering the peak export period of December and the first half of January. The data shows that exports main-

tained a steady pace throughout December, followed by sustained momentum during the first 15 days of January—an encouraging sign amid regional trade constraints. The Federal Minister for Commerce lauded the collective efforts of the Ministry of Commerce team, TDAP, Pakistan's trade missions abroad, exporters, growers, and logistics partners, acknowledging that the strong performance was the result of close coordination and shared commitment. Jam Kamal Khan emphasized that overcoming the

impact of the Afghan market closure required a whole-of-government and whole-of-sector approach, and appreciated the dedication of officers and stakeholders who worked tirelessly to keep export channels open and competitive.

Officials attributed this performance to focused market outreach, enhanced trade facilitation, and close engagement with exporters.

Under Jam Kamal Khan's direction, priority was given to expanding access to markets in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and other

non-traditional destinations, while ensuring compliance with international quality and phytosanitary standards.

The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan complemented these efforts through targeted export promotion, coordination with overseas trade missions, and continuous support to exporters in logistics and documentation. Improved coordination between federal authorities and the private sector helped maintain shipment schedules and preserve Pakistan's reputation as a reliable citrus supplier.

The sustained export performance has provided critical foreign exchange earnings and reinforced confidence across the kinnow value chain, benefiting farmers, processors, packers, and exporters.

Stakeholders noted that the strong trajectory, despite external challenges, reflects the resilience of Pakistan's agri-exports and the effectiveness of government-led export facilitation. The continued momentum in kinnow exports is being viewed as a positive signal for the broader agricultural.