



Aurangzeb highlights economic reforms, investment drive at WEF



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Talal Chaudhry rejects allegations of non-responsiveness

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PM Shehbaz attends World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos

PEAK POINT

DAVOS: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday took part in the 56th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, where he is scheduled to engage in a series of high-level activities aimed at projecting Pakistan's economic outlook and strengthening global partnerships.

The prime minister has a busy day ahead in Davos. He will attend the Pakistan Breakfast event and address the gathering, highlighting Pakistan's economic priorities, reform agenda, and opportunities for international cooperation, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will also participate in an informal meeting of global leaders, held under the theme "The Importance of Dialogue in a Divided Global Landscape." The discussion is expected to focus on fostering cooperation, reducing global polarization, and promoting dialogue to address shared challenges.

On the sidelines of the forum, the prime minister is expected to meet the Managing Director of a leading international financial institution, as well as hold several bilateral and informal meetings with world leaders to discuss economic collaboration, investment prospects, and regional and global developments.



DAVOS: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund Ms. Kristalina Georgieva on the sidelines of 56th Annual meeting of the World Economic Forum.

Trump warns Iran that it would be 'blown up' if he's assassinated

PEAK POINT



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump warned Iran on Tuesday that his country would respond forcefully if Tehran acts on alleged assassination threats against him.

"They shouldn't be doing it, but I've left notification. Anything ever happens, we're going to blow the whole — the whole country is going to get blown up," he said in an interview with NewsNation, responding to a question about continued threats from Iran's leadership. Trump said former President Joe Biden "should have said something" when similar statements were first made, arguing that past leaders failed to respond forcefully. "If they were making that threat to somebody even, not even a president, but somebody like they did with me, I would absolutely hit them so hard," he said. "I have very firm instructions — anything happens, they're going to wipe them off the face of this earth." Trump added. Iran has been rocked by nationwide protests since late December sparked by the rial's steep devaluation, soaring inflation and high food prices.

Karachi's Gul Plaza fire: Death toll jumps to 61 after 30 bodies found in single shop

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: The death toll from the devastating fire at Gul Plaza on MA Jinnah Road in Karachi has risen sharply to 61 after 30 bodies were recovered from a single shop inside the building, officials confirmed on Wednesday.

DIG South Asad Raza said the bodies were found in a crockery shop located on the mezzanine floor. He explained that shopkeepers had earlier pointed out the presence of people on the mezzanine level, prompting a focused search of the area. All 30 victims were recovered from the same shop, leading authorities to temporarily



halt debris removal so bodies could be retrieved first.

Officials said that following the outbreak of the fire, several people had locked themselves inside the shop in an attempt to escape the smoke and flames. The last known mobile phone locations of the victims also traced back to the same spot. Deputy Commissioner South

ture will rest with the Sindh Building Control Authority. He added that SBCA had already declared the building dangerous and unfit for use in its assessment report. The remaining structure will be brought down once the final search is completed.

According to the police surgeon, 11 bodies have so far been identified.

DNA samples have been collected from the recovered remains, while samples from 51 relatives have also been taken to assist with identification. Meanwhile, the family of another missing individual has contacted the Missing Persons Desk.

Pakistan joins US-led 'Board of Peace' to support Gaza peace efforts

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has accepted an invitation to join the "Board of Peace" aimed at achieving sustainable peace in Gaza, the Foreign Office confirmed on Wednesday. According to a spokesperson for the Foreign Office, the invitation to join the Board of Peace was extended by US President Donald Trump to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The spokesperson said that Pakistan has announced its support for the Gaza peace.

Relief for salaried class and industry planned in next budget

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed that no mini budget will be introduced this fiscal as the government works on a comprehensive budget strategy for the next financial year focusing on relief for the salaried class and industrial sector. Official sources on Wednesday told the media persons that the government would attempt to bridge the tax shortfall through enhanced revenue collection rather than imposing new taxes.

India's Indus Waters Treaty stance poses serious security threat, Pakistan tells UN

PEAK POINT

NEW YORK: Pakistan has said that India's unilateral decision to hold the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) in abeyance in April last year, followed by material breaches including unannounced disruptions of downstream flows and withholding of hydrological information, has created an unprecedented crisis for Pakistan's water security and regional stability.

Speaking during the Global Water Bankruptcy Policy Roundtable hosted by the Permanent Mission of Canada and the United Nations University (UNU), Ambassador Usman Jadoon, acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, described the Indian decision as that of a



dictable management of the waters of the Indus River basin.

The Basin, he said, sustains one of the world's largest contiguous irrigation systems, providing over 80 percent of Pakistan's agricultural water needs, and supporting the lives and livelihoods of over 240 million people.

He stated that across regions, water insecurity

has become a systemic risk, affecting food production, energy systems, public health, livelihoods, and human security.

"For Pakistan, this is a lived reality. We are a semi-arid, climate-vulnerable, lower-riparian country facing floods, droughts, accelerated glacier melt, groundwater depletion, and rapid population growth; all of which are placing immense pressure on already stressed water systems," he maintained.

Throwing light on the steps Pakistan has taken to deal with the water challenge, Ambassador Usman Jadoon said that Pakistan is strengthening its water resilience through integrated planning, flood protection, irrigation rehabilitation.

DPM Dar inaugurates Pathfinder Group's Pakistan Pavilion on WEF meeting 2026 sidelines

PEAK POINT



DAVOS: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday inaugurated the Pathfinder Group's Pakistan Pavilion on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting 2026 in Davos.

The DPM/FM appreciated the initiative to showcase Pakistan's vast economic potential and emerging opportunities on a global platform, while highlighting the dynamism and innovation of Pakistani start-ups, a DPM Office's news release said.

He underscored the critical role of start-ups in advancing socio-economic development and driving innovation across diverse sectors.



SPORTS



Sialkot Stallionz unveiled as new PSL franchise ahead of 2026 season



PEAK POINT
LAHORE: The Pakistan Super League's newest franchise has officially been unveiled, with owner Kamil Khan confirming the team will compete under the name Sialkot Stallionz in the league's 11th edition.

Khan announced the franchise's name and logo on Wednesday via a 3D animated video shared on social media platform X, bringing an end to weeks of speculation following the recent PSL expansion auction.

"You guessed it. You waited. Now, I am proud to officially introduce SIALKOT STALLIONZ."

Khan wrote, adding: "Excited to be part of the Pakistan Super League journey."

The announcement comes ahead of PSL 11, which is scheduled to run from 26 March to 3 May 2026, marking the league's return with an expanded eight-team format. Faisalabad has also been added as an additional venue, further widening the competition's national footprint. Ownership of the Sialkot franchise was secured earlier this month when OZ Developers, owned by Hamza Majeed, emerged as the winning bidder at a high-profile auction held at the Jinnah Convention

Centre on 8 January. The company acquired the franchise for Rs 1.85 billion, exceeding the base price of Rs 1.70 billion after intense bidding among eight qualified parties. The FKS Group had earlier secured the first expansion franchise with a bid of Rs 1.75 billion. The choice of the name Sialkot Stallionz revives one of Pakistan's most celebrated domestic T20 identities. The original Sialkot Stallions dominated the National T20 Cup between 2005 and 2012, winning six titles and registering a world-record 25-match unbeaten streak, a feat that established them as the most successful side in

Pakistan's domestic T20 history. That era produced several prominent Pakistan cricketers, including Shoaib Malik, who captained the side during its most successful period, alongside Imran Nazir, Haris Sohail, and Shakeel Ansar. Their success helped turn Sialkot into a major domestic cricket centre, a legacy the new PSL franchise aims to reconnect with. The unveiling follows another significant development for the league, as the Pakistan Cricket Board confirmed a player auction system for the first time in PSL history, replacing the traditional

player draft.

ICC rejects Bangladesh's request to skip India for T20 World Cup



PEAK POINT
DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has rejected the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) request not to travel to India for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, sources confirmed on Wednesday.

According to the decision taken after voting during an ICC Board meeting, Bangladesh has been informed that if it refuses to travel to India, arrangements will be made for a replacement team.

The ICC has, however, given Bangladesh a one-day window to reconsider its decision.

It is pertinent to note that Bangladesh has decided not to travel to India for the T20 World Cup citing security concerns and has maintained its stance during negotiations with the ICC. Sources said that tensions escalated after the Indian cricket board excluded Bangladeshi fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman from the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Following the exclusion, Bangladesh reportedly refused to play World Cup matches in India. Bangladesh are placed in Group C of the T20 World Cup, with all of their group-stage matches scheduled to be played in India.

The situation has raised uncertainty over Bangladesh's participation in the tournament, with the ICC closely monitoring developments ahead of the global event.

PEC Interdepartmental Table Tennis tournament 2026 inaugurated



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) has inaugurated the PEC Interdepartmental Table Tennis Tournament 2026 as part of its Golden Jubilee celebrations marking 50 Years of Excellence.

The inauguration ceremony was held at PEC Headquarters and was attended by Registrar PEC Engr.

Khadim Hussain Bhatti, Vice Chairman PEC Punjab Dr. Sohail Aftab Qureshi, Vice Chairman PEC Sindh Engr. Mukhtiar Sheikh, and Members of the Governing Body including Dr. Hafza Jamshed, Dr. Ijaz Bashir Janjua, Dr. Inayatullah Babar, Dr. Mansoor Baloch, Dr. Pradeep Kumar, Engr. Abid Shah, along with senior officials of PEC.

Speaking on the occasion, Registrar PEC Engr. Khadim Hussain Bhatti said that the interdepartmental table tennis tournament reflects PEC's commitment to promoting a healthy and engaging work environment. He stated that male and female teams from different PEC departments are actively participating, demonstrating inclu-

sivity and equal opportunities.

He added that the tournament is being organized in line with the vision of Chairman PEC Engr. Waseem Nazir, which emphasizes employee wellbeing, engagement, and a positive organizational culture.

Vice Chairman PEC Punjab Dr. Sohail Aftab Qureshi and Vice Chairman PEC Sindh Engr. Mukhtiar Sheikh said that sports activities are essential for promoting physical fitness, teamwork, and discipline among employees, and such initiatives help strengthen inter-departmental harmony and foster a healthy work-life balance within PEC.

Pakistan's Farrukh Nadeem wins gold at Asian Shotgun Championship



Four-day sports festival for orphans begin in Peshawar

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: A four-day sports festival for orphaned and destitute children was inaugurated on Wednesday at the Model Institute for State Children, Zamung Kor, on Charsadda Road under the auspices of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sports Department. The opening ceremony was attended by Adviser to the Chief Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Taj Muhammad Tarand as the chief guest. Secretary Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Asif Khan, Director General Sports Tashfeen Haider, Deputy Director Riaz Khan, Additional Director General Sports Rashida Ghaznavi, Director Operations Jamshed Baloch and other officials were also present. During the ceremony, children from Zamung Kor presented martial arts demonstrations and

performed the traditional Attan dance, which drew appreciation from the participants and guests. Addressing the gathering, Mr Tarand said that seeing smiles on the faces of children brought immense happiness. He

and added that the participating children lacked no talent.

He said the provincial government was committed to providing them with opportunities to help nurture and polish their abilities. He added that the primary objec-



the children were the responsibility of the state and assured that the provincial government would continue to take all possible measures for their welfare and wellbeing. He said sports and co-curricular activities played an important role in engaging children in healthy pursuits

and added that the primary objective of such events was not only recreation but also the identification and promotion of hidden talent. The adviser also said that similar initiatives, including Inter-Madrassa Games, Minority Games, Under-21 Games and Transgender Games, would be organised in the future.

Karachi holds trials for National Wrestling C'ship





Parliament reviews declining public trust, highlights reforms to strengthen state institutions

NADEEM TANOLI
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Parliament has acknowledged growing public concern over declining trust in key state institutions and outlined a series of legislative and oversight measures aimed at improving transparency, accountability, and governance, according to a detailed report prepared by Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal, Director General (Library & Research) at the National Assembly Secretariat. Published in the Parliamentarian, the report

examines challenges faced by institutions such as the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, electoral bodies, and political leadership, noting that weakened public confidence can affect democratic stability, policy implementation, and social cohesion. The report identifies several areas contributing to the trust gap. Electoral processes continue to face skepticism due to recurring allegations of irregularities and disputes over results, which have led to voter disengagement and prolonged political contestation. The judiciary,

while central to constitutional governance, faces public criticism over delays in justice delivery and perceptions of unequal access to legal remedies. Law enforcement agencies are also highlighted as institutions requiring reform, with concerns raised about accountability, professionalism, and public engagement. Political polarization and economic pressures further compound these challenges. The report notes that confrontational political discourse and rising inflation have added to public frustration, underscoring the need

for both institutional reforms and responsible political conduct. In response, Parliament has taken several steps to address these concerns. Judicial reforms introduced through the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023 aim to improve case management, introduce clearer appeal mechanisms, and reduce delays in matters of public importance. Electoral reforms under the Election Act, 2017 seek to enhance transparency in constituency delimitations, campaign financing, and election oversight.

Parliament has also strengthened financial accountability by expanding the role of the Public Accounts Committee, allowing greater inter-house participation in reviewing government expenditure. On the security front, lawmakers continue to emphasize police reforms, improved training, and community-based policing under the framework of the National Action Plan. The report stresses that legislative measures alone are not sufficient and calls for improved political dialogue, institutional coordination, and economic

stability to rebuild public confidence. It highlights the importance of sustained oversight, implementation of reforms, and a focus on service delivery to ensure that governance institutions respond effectively to public expectations. According to the National Assembly Secretariat, addressing the decline in public trust requires continuous engagement, policy consistency, and cooperation across institutions to strengthen democratic governance and promote long-term stability.

Justice prevails as abducted hindu girl rekha reunited with parents

WAJHA TAMSEEL MIRZA
MULTAN/ SINDH: Today marked a day of great joy and justice as an abducted Hindu girl, Rekha, belonging to Sindh, was successfully recovered and reunited with her parents after a decisive legal battle. The case was pursued and won through the dedicated efforts of Advocate Shehryar Khan Mehsud, Advocate Ikrum Khan, and Advocate Mohsin Saqlain Kazmi. According to the lawyers, Rekha had been abducted and deprived of her fundamental human rights. Through persistent legal struggle and commitment to justice, the victim was safely recovered



and handed over to her parents. Speaking on the occasion, Advocate Shehryar Khan Mehsud stated, "We are the voice of the oppressed. Regardless of religion, caste, or background, we stand with every victim and will continue to provide legal support to those who suffer injustice." Advocate Ikrum Khan

and Advocate Mohsin Saqlain Kazmi reiterated their resolve to continue fighting for the rights of the oppressed and ensuring justice for all, without discrimination. Rekha's parents expressed heartfelt gratitude to the legal team, stating that they had nearly lost hope of seeing their daughter again, but the tireless efforts of the lawyers restored their faith and brought happiness back to their family. This successful recovery stands as a strong example of the rule of law, human rights protection, and interfaith harmony in society.

Nepal Army command and staff college delegation visit to CASS

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, hosted a delegation from the Army Command and Staff College, Nepal on 20 January 2026. The visit focused on the growing significance of the aerial domain in contemporary and future conflicts and the need to deepen cooperation between Pakistan and Nepal. As an independent think tank, CASS continues to engage with national and international academia and practitioners interested in national security in its wider context. President CASS, Air Marshal (Retd.) Javid



Ahmed welcomed the delegation and highlighted the depth of Pakistan-Nepal relations. He noted that both countries have enjoyed cordial relations, with cooperation and collaboration across several sectors. He also emphasised on cooperative ties between the armed forces, marked by regular exchanges, professional collaboration, and sustained

institutional linkages. He further underscored Pakistan and Nepal's constructive engagement within the SAARC framework, in advancing collective regional objectives. Following the welcome address, presentations on conclusions from CASS research and salient features of future aerospace developments were delivered.

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The world according to Trump

Zahid Hussain
AMERICAN President Donald Trump now seeks to create a new international organisation to rival the United Nations. His idea of the 'Board of Peace' goes beyond its original UN mandate of overseeing the rehabilitation of Gaza, which has been devastated by two years of Israel's genocidal war. Reportedly, so far nearly 60 countries have been invited to join the 'board' chaired by the American president. It is supposed to operate as a "more nimble and effective international peacebuilding body". It will cost \$1 billion for nations to buy a permanent seat on the so-called board. Many heads of government and state representing potential member countries have been invited to join. The full list of the invitees is still not known.

Interestingly, there is no mention of Gaza in the Board of Peace charter. Last year, a UN Security Council resolution had authorised the formation of the board to oversee the post-war administrative transition of the enclave. Trump has separately named an 11-member executive board for Gaza as part of the 20-point peace plan for the enclave.

But the charter reportedly sent out by the Trump administration to potential members projects the Board of Peace as an international conflict resolution body along the lines of the UN. One wonders under what mandate this international body is being set up. It

is the brainchild of the American president who seems to consider himself as the sole arbiter of the global order.

According to international media, the charter gives wide-ranging powers to Trump as the board's chair, allowing him to appoint and remove member states — a decision that could only be overturned by a two-thirds majority of members. It also provides him with the "exclusive authority to create, modify, or dissolve subsidiary entities as necessary or appropriate to fulfil the Board of Peace's mission".

The so-called Board of Peace is meant to be used to advance US hegemony. Trump has been a fierce critic of the UN and under his presidency America has pulled out of several of its agencies. His Board of Peace is also meant to undermine the global body. He aspires to create a new world order dictated by American military might.

Interestingly, the charter says the objective of the board is "to promote stability, restore dependable and lawful governance, and secure enduring peace in areas affected or threatened by conflict". It is ironic that this talk of lawful governance comes from an administration that recently kidnapped the president of a sovereign state (Venezuela) and his wife in a military operation that trampled over all international laws. Trump has dismissed international law, saying only

his "own morality" can curb the aggressive policies he is pursuing across the world.

Trump has also threatened to use military force against other South American countries and has bombed Iran last year. It aided Israel's genocidal war in Gaza that has killed more than 70,000 Palestinians and destroyed the entire enclave. The same administration, whose imperialistic designs have been fully exposed, claims to uphold the idea of a rules-based world order.

Describing the need for setting up a new international organisation, the charter maintains: "Durable peace requires pragmatic judgement, common sense solutions, and the courage to depart from approaches and institutions that have too often failed". It doesn't, of course, talk about the fact that America's own disdain for the rule of law has been the main reason for the failure of the UN and other international institutions. This board cannot provide global peace and stability. It is meant to be used to advance America's hegemony. Curiously, the idea of this American-led multinational organisation has been floated as the Trump administration prepares to take over Greenland, which has brought Washington into conflict with its European Nato allies. He has imposed an initial 10 per cent tariff on European countries opposing his plan to seize the Danish-controlled autonomous island.

Courtesy Dawn

Rethinking deterrence

Anna Hashmi
Deterrence was once meant to prevent war. Today, it is designed to make war manageable. When the United States attacks Iranian-connected targets, but does not attack Iranian territory, when Iran retaliates using its proxies, but not its missiles flying its flags, when neither side says anything, but both sides act in a manner calculated as cautiously as their words, we are informed that deterrence is holding. And it is — but not as we think. What we are witnessing is not the success of classical deterrence, but a quiet redefinition. The Iran-US relationship is symbolic of this change. The drone attacks, cyber attacks, targeted assassinations and sanctions are used as an unending pressure campaign as opposed to a move towards resolution. Each move is calculated to be painful yet absorbable, visible yet deniable. Revenge will be meted out, even anticipated, but in moderation. This is deterrence by calibration, not fear. A parallel reasoning takes place elsewhere. Russia and NATO are in an intense, restrained war in Ukraine. The high-tech ammunition is infused, but there are also systems that are left out or stalled. There are red lines, but they are soft, and they are not imposed on people openly but are silently fine-tuned. This is deterrence, which does not mean to stop violence, but to stop face-to-face conflict, despite the battlefield being on fire. Israel and Hezbollah strike each other with ritualistic predictability in the Middle East as both parties push the limits without descending into an actual war. In the Red Sea, ship attacks do not provoke a decisive military response, and disrupt global trade. Even on the Taiwan side of the strait, deterrence is not dependent on the prospect of success as much as the art of military drills, naval routes and ambiguous strategies. Modern military technology is what enables this new deterrence. Precision-guided munitions would allow states to castigate without the provocation of mass killings.

Courtesy Tribune

No private matter

THE Supreme Court's recent judgement upholding the conviction of Khurshid Ahmad for the killing of his wife, Gulshan Bibi, is a searing indictment of how domestic violence is normalised and enabled in Pakistan. In language rare for judicial verdicts, the bench acknowledged "with a heavy heart" the cruel societal norms that force women back into the homes that are no less than a "living hell". The judgement deserves to be read beyond courtrooms. Writing for the bench headed by Justice Muhammad Hashim Kakar, Justice Ishiaq Ibrahim went beyond assessing the evidence, linking the murder to a wider chain of abuse. Gulshan Bibi had left her husband after repeated beatings, only to be persuaded by family elders to reconcile. That fatal decision, rooted in social pressure, stigma and misplaced notions of family honour, ended up costing her her life. Sadly, this pattern extends well beyond one household. Families often act as unwitting enforcers of abuse, prioritising marital continuity over women's safety. Law enforcement, too, frequently treats domestic violence as a private matter — until it is too late. Protection mechanisms are weak in Pakistan. Shelters are hard to come by and prosecutions rare, unless death is part of the equation.

Junaid Ch calls for space-based monitoring for port expansion, maritime safety



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry on Wednesday said advanced space-based monitoring systems could play a vital role in safeguarding seas, improving maritime management and strengthening responses to environmental threats.

Junaid Chaudhry made the remarks during a visit to the headquarters of the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), marking the first-ever such visit by any maritime affairs minister in the country.

During the visit, Chairman SUPARCO Yusuf Khan and senior officials provided the minister with a detailed briefing on the organisation's operations and technological capabilities. The discussions highlighted SUPARCO's role in satellite monitoring, maritime safety, and port management.

The minister was also presented with a satellite-based assessment of potential sites for new ports, reflecting Pakistan's focus on expanding its maritime infrastructure. In addition, officials outlined plans for relief and rescue operations within national

maritime boundaries, leveraging satellite technology and artificial intelligence to enhance efficiency and response times.

Addressing the participants, Junaid Chaudhry stressed the importance of leveraging satellite technology to tackle environmental and ecological challenges, including the impacts of climate change and disaster risks facing the country's coastline and maritime sector.

He underscored the need to conserve ocean biodiversity, ensure the sustainable use of marine resources and enhance cooperation on marine environmental protection, saying Pakistan was working to align its national maritime policies with global conservation commitments.

The minister said the protection of marine life, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction, had become increasingly important, noting that Pakistan is a member of the Ocean Biodiversity Treaty. As a participating country,

Aurangzeb highlights economic reforms, investment drive at WEF

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a series of important meetings in Davos on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual meeting, focusing on advancing Pakistan's economic reform agenda, strengthening international partnerships, and promoting investment-led growth. The minister met with President of the Asian Development Bank, Masato Kanda, to review Pakistan's ongoing economic reforms and discuss ways to further deepen the long-standing partnership between Pakistan and ADB, said a press release issued by the finance ministry here on Wednesday.

During the meeting, the ADB President noted that Pakistan was



entering a significant phase of economic transformation, with renewed momentum in reforms and growing confidence in the market. He highlighted ADB's strong and expanding engagement in Pakistan and expressed optimism about the country's economic direction, underscoring ADB's commitment to supporting Pakistan through a close and forward-looking partnership. He thanked the ADB President for his continued support and guidance, noting that Pakistan's relationship with ADB had entered a new and more strategic phase.

Pakistan, Canada explore enhanced cooperation in minerals, energy sectors

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik held a meeting with the High Commissioner of Canada to Pakistan Tarik Ali Khan, to discuss strengthening bilateral cooperation in the minerals and energy sectors. During the meeting, High Commissioner Tarik Ali Khan stated that the success of Barrick Gold at Reko Diq is a strong example to build upon Pakistan Canada mineral cooperation, said a press release issued here Wednesday. He said that Canada is actively working to bring more Canadian companies to the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum (PMIF). Highlighting the evolving global landscape, the High Commissioner remarked that in a changing multilateral world order based on networks, shared values, and common interests, there is openness and willingness to engage with Pakistan. The High Commissioner further conveyed that the Ministry of Natural Resources Canada is ready to support miner-

al sector cooperation with Pakistan. Sharing his personal experience, he said he had visited the Reko Diq site and was delighted to witness tangible community uplift initiatives, including the development of schools, hospitals, and water purification projects.

Federal Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik underscored that Reko Diq has secured international financing, making it one of the most significant funding rounds for Pakistan. He emphasized that the Government of Pakistan is committed to ensuring the highest standards of labour safety and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) compliance, and that such projects are being developed for the long-term benefit of the people of Pakistan.

High Commissioner Tarik Ali Khan also extended an invitation to Pakistan to participate in PDAC 2026, the world's premier mineral exploration and mining convention, scheduled to be held in March 2026 in Canada.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik held a meeting with the High Commissioner of Canada to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Tarik Ali Khan.

Mohsin Naqvi praises role of Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman in national unity; Committee formed to resolve issues

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry held a meeting with a delegation led by the Grand Mufti of Pakistan, Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid tribute to the services of Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman and other religious scholars for their role in maintaining peace and stability in the country. He assured the delegation that their issues would be addressed, and it was agreed during the

meeting that these issues would be thoroughly reviewed and concrete steps would be taken for their resolution.

In this regard, a committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry.

Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman and other respected religious scholars will also be members of the committee.

The committee will present viable recommendations for resolving the issues.

Speaking on the occasion, Interior Minister Mohsin



Naqvi said that Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman is respected by all and has always advocated unity, har-

mony, and national cohesion. He added that Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman plays an important role in keeping the

nation united and emphasized, "We are all one, and Pakistan comes first." Minister of State Talal

Chaudhry said that the services of religious scholars for Pakistan are commendable.

Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman offered prayers for the integrity, development, stability, and prosperity of the country.

The delegation included Allama Liaquat Hussain Azhari, Mufti Abid Mubarak Madani, and Malik Muhammad Ibrahim.

Federal Secretary Interior Muhammad Khurram Agha, IG Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi, and other officials were also present on the occasion.

Govt balanced sugar trade to protect farmers, consumers: Rana Tanveer

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain told the National Assembly on Wednesday that the government allowed sugar exports last year to protect farmers and the sugar industry from losses caused by surplus production, and later permitted limited imports to stabilise prices for consumers. Replying to questions in the House, the minister said climate-related factors later affected production estimates. Initial projections of around seven million tonnes were revised downward, with actual production standing at about 6.8 million tonnes.

After accounting for domestic consumption and reserve requirements, the shortfall made limited imports necessary to stabilise the market. He acknowledged that sugar prices rose due to market manipulation by manufacturers and producers.

Talal Chaudhry rejects allegations of non-responsiveness

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Interior Talal Chaudhry told the National Assembly on Wednesday that his attendance in the House and parliamentary committees ranged between 100 to 110 per cent, rejecting allegations of non-responsiveness or non-compliance. Speaking on a point of order, he said no member of the National Assembly or Senate could claim that replies were not provided or that standing committees were ignored. He said heads of departments regularly attended committee meetings and full compliance was ensured. Referring to concerns about detained individuals in Rawalpindi, the minister said he had personally spoken to senior



police officials and was informed that no Pakistani children were being held. He said a list of seven individuals was under review and the verification process was expected to be completed the same day, after which verified Pakistani nationals would be released. On the issue of Afghan nationals in Pakistan, Talal Chaudhry said he had discussed the matter with Sheryar Afridi and clarified that the process was being carried out in accordance with the law.

USF Launches PKR 1.16bn Broadband projects for 9 districts

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: In a major push toward nationwide digital inclusion, the Universal Service Fund (USF) on Wednesday signed contracts worth PKR 1.16 billion with Jazz to roll out high speed broadband across nine underserved districts of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, aiming to connect over 533,000 rural residents within 6 to 18 months as part of the Prime Minister's "Digital Pakistan" vision.

The signing ceremony, held at the USF Head Office in Islamabad, was attended by Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Ms Shaza Fatima Khawaja as Chief Guest.



The agreements were formally signed by USF Chief Executive Officer Chaudhry Mudassar Naveed and Jazz Chief Executive Officer Aamir Ibrahim for four Next Generation Broadband for Sustainable Development projects. Addressing the ceremony, Ms Shaza Fatima Khawaja said the government was not merely awarding contracts but laying the digital foundation of a "Digital Nation."