



Education must adapt as AI outpaces textbooks, says Musadik Malik



Naqvi visits Beijing Police College, lauds high-tech training, professional excellence



Governor KP, AJK leadership agree to strengthen trade links

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PM Shehbaz vows to eliminate terrorism, announces major development projects for Balochistan

PEAK POINT

QUETTA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said Balochistan continues to face serious security challenges due to terrorism, with Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir leading the Pakistan Army's efforts to counter militant threats. He made these remarks during meetings in Quetta with provincial ministers, members of the National and Provincial Assemblies, allied party representatives, and opposition leaders. The discussions focused on political matters, governance, and steps being taken to improve public service delivery across the province. The prime minister announced the launch of a four-lane highway project from Karachi to Chaman and said the benefits of

recent reductions in petroleum prices were being passed on to the public.

Addressing political leaders, Shehbaz Sharif said that despite ongoing challenges, the Balochistan cabinet remains committed to serving the people.

He praised the performance of cabinet members and provincial leadership and congratulated Sarfraz Bugti on his election as the head of the Bugti tribes.

The prime minister said Balochistan has suffered greatly from terrorism, emphasizing that the sacrifices of security personnel and civilians would never be forgotten. He stressed that counterterrorism efforts would continue until militancy is completely eradicated and lasting peace is achieved.



QUETTA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits governor house Balochistan.

Air Chief Zaheer Sidhu meets Saudi counterpart

PEAK POINT



RAWALPINDI: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) called on Lieutenant General Turki bin Bander bin Abdulaziz, Commander of the Royal Saudi Air Force, and General Fayyadh bin Hameed Al-Rowaily, Chief of the General Staff of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, during his official visit to KSA.

Upon arrival, the Air Chief was accorded a Guard of Honour by a contingent of the Royal Saudi Air Force, said a press release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Thursday.

During the meetings, matters pertaining to bilateral defence cooperation, regional security environment and future avenues of collaboration were discussed.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the existing level of cooperation and agreed to further enhance engagement through joint training, operational collaboration and exchange of professional expertise, while highlighting the Pakistan-KSA Defence Agreement as a symbol of mutual trust and enduring brotherly relations.

COAS visits Lahore, witnesses specialized field training exercise

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ visited Lahore Garrison, where he was given a comprehensive briefing on the formation's operational preparedness, training standards and key initiatives to enhance combat efficiency.

The COAS & CDF witnessed a specialized field training exercise showcasing the latest technologies, underscoring the Army's emphasis on innovation, adaptability to match the dynamic future battlefield, said a press release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR)



on Thursday. He also inspected sports and recreational facilities being provided to troops, highlighting their importance in maintaining physical fitness, morale, and overall well-being.

The COAS & CDF also visited a High Care Center at CMH Lahore, lauding the efforts of the medical staff and administration in estab-

lishing a fully equipped, state-of-the-art health-care facility.

During his address, the COAS & CDF emphasized upon Pakistan Army's zero-tolerance policy towards any threat to national security, reaffirming the institution's unwavering resolve to confront multifaceted challenges with focus, professionalism and determina-

tion. Reiterating Army's core mission, he noted that the Pakistan Armed Forces remain steadfast in safeguarding the country's sovereignty, territorial integrity and internal stability, while fostering a culture of excellence, discipline, and selfless national service. Earlier, upon his arrival at Lahore Garrison, the COAS & CDF.

Venezuela's interior minister says 100 people died in US attack

PEAK POINT

VENEZUELA: Venezuela's interior minister Diosdado Cabello said late on Wednesday that 100 people died in the US attack which removed President Nicolas Maduro from power on Saturday. Caracas have not previously given a number for those killed, but the army posted a list of 23 names of its dead. Venezuelan officials have said a large part of Maduro's security contingent was killed "in cold blood," and Cuba has said 32 members of its military and intelligence services in Venezuela were killed.

No meeting scheduled between PTI delegation, NA Speaker: Spokesperson

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly Secretariat Thursday clarified that no meeting between any delegation of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq was scheduled for January 8 (Thursday).

According to Spokesperson of National Assembly said that Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq is currently not present in Islamabad.

The spokesperson urged the media to verify information.

No amount of bluster can conceal India's role as a disruptor of peace, terrorism exporter: FO

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday calling out India's continued policies of coercion, extrajudicial killings and marginalisation of minorities, said that no amount of bluster could divert attention or conceal India's role in the disruption of peace, exporting terrorism into Pakistan, and interference in the internal affairs of neighbouring states. "New Delhi's fixation on Pakistan cannot conceal its own role as a serial disruptor of peace. India has carried out extrajudicial killings abroad, interfered in the internal political affairs of neighbouring states, exported terrorism into Pakistan... For smaller states in the region, India too has been a source of coercion rather than coop-

eration while minorities within its borders face attention from the recently surfaced documentary evi-



escalating intimidation and repression," Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said in his weekly press briefing. Rejecting the recent statement by the Indian External Affairs Minister against Pakistan, he said that India's record as a neighbour was marked by the promotion of terrorism and contributions to regional instability and the statement constituted a blatant attempt to divert

ence indicating that New Delhi sought a third country's intervention to secure a ceasefire with Pakistan during the May conflict.

The spokesperson also condemned the demolition of Faiz-e-Elahi mosque in India, which reflected a very systemic and deliberate campaign by the RSS-BJP nexus to target and erase the Muslim heritage across India, also referring to the destruction of Babri

Mosque in 1992 by extremist mobs.

He told the media that numerous other historic mosques now faced similar threats of desecration or demolition and called upon the United Nations and international community to take serious notice of this alarming rise in Islamophobia, hate speech and hate-motivated violence in India.

The spokesperson highlighted that India had made consistent efforts to silence the genuine leadership of the Kashmiri people and muzzle the media. "The number of Kashmiri political prisoners in prison is ever-increasing, and a number of political activities have been outlawed by the authorities. The profiling and harassment of innocent Kashmiris.

PTI calls for implementing National Action Plan to eliminate terrorism



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar said that PTI has always maintained that terrorism is a menace which must be eradicated from the country. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad along with other PTI leaders, Barrister Gohar said that PTI's government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ranks highly in terms of good governance. Barrister Gohar stressed that eliminating the scourge of terrorism is essential and called for effective implementation of the National Action Plan. He said that terrorists have no religion or political affiliation, adding that claims suggesting PTI's KP government is not cooperating are inappropriate and contrary to facts. Speaking on the occasion.



SPORTS



PSL creates history as Hyderabad and Sialkot franchises sold for record Rs360 crore



PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Super League marked a historic milestone on Thursday as the auction for two new franchises concluded in Islamabad, with Hyderabad sold for Rs175 crore and Sialkot fetching a record Rs185 crore. The high-profile auction, held at the Jinnah Convention Centre, has officially expanded the PSL from six to eight teams ahead of its 11th season in 2026.

The ceremony was attended by PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi, after former Multan Sultans federal ministers, senior cricket

officials, former players and representatives of bidding groups. Proceedings formally began after Mohsin Naqvi rang the ceremonial bell, signalling the opening of the auction, while former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram performed duties as the auctioneer. At the start of the event, nine bidders and six shortlisted cities were introduced. The base price for the franchises was set at Rs110 crore, with a mandatory minimum increment of Rs1 crore per bid. The bidding field had been reduced from 10 to nine after former Multan Sultans owner Ali Tareen withdrew short-

ly before the auction began. The first franchise, PSL's seventh team, witnessed an intense contest. i2e initially raised the bid to Rs155 crore, while Prism opted not to continue after a brief pause, FKS then accelerated the bidding, eventually edging past i2e with a winning offer of Rs175 crore. Following the successful bid, FKS confirmed Hyderabad as the name and home city of the new franchise.

The auction for the eighth team proved even more competitive. The base price was fixed at Rs170 crore, with i2e, Aim Next and OZ Developers all actively

involved. After a series of rapid bids and time-outs, OZ Developers made a decisive jump to Rs185 crore, the highest price ever paid for a PSL franchise. Hamza Majeed of OZ Developers later confirmed that the team would be named Sialkot, cementing the city's entry into the league as the most expensive franchise in PSL history. Before the bidding commenced, the PCB honoured Pakistan Shaheens for winning the Men's Rising Stars Asia Cup and the national side that claimed the Hong Kong Super Sixes title.

Bangladesh Cricket Board writes to ICC over security concerns in India



PEAK POINT
BANGLADESH: The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has sent a detailed letter to the International Cricket Council (ICC).

According to sources, the BCB has responded to all questions raised by the ICC, providing evidence in support of its stance.

Sources said that the BCB also highlighted security and visa issues concerning not only the national cricket team but also media personnel, fans, and other stakeholders.

The letter reportedly included the government's position and official statements, supported by documented evidence.

The BCB reiterated its concerns regarding the team's security and restated the government's policy on the matter.

It is worth noting that a few days ago, following threats from extremists in India and on the directive of the Indian cricket board, IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders released Bangladeshi fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman from their squad. In response, the BCB stated that India is not safe and that the team would not travel there under any circumstances.

Australia win final Test to complete 4-1 Ashes triumph over England



PEAK POINT
AUSTRALIA: Australia clinched the final Ashes Test against England Thursday by five wickets to complete a dominant 4-1 victory after a gruelling series, sending the retiring Usman career and a great way Khawaja out on a high.

The nervy hosts saw wickets tumble as they chased their target, which they along with captain Steve Smith (12) and

day five with Khawaja who made Cameron Green not six in his final knock out 22 and Alex Carey on 16. "That's Ashes cricket. Everyone got tense," said Carey who hit the winning runs. "Usman is going to be missed. A great career and a great way to finish." Australia lost bowled by Josh Tongue. "The whole Test match I found it hard to control my emotions," Khawaja added 154.

after his 88th and final appearance on the Test stage.

"I'm grateful I've had the career I've had. I have full gratitude," he said, adding that Australia were relieved to have got over the winning line. "It definitely got a bit too tight. You never count your chickens. We got the job done though."

Marnus Labuschagne, dropped on 20, compiled 37 before needlessly running himself out to give Ben Stokes's men a flicker of hope as they reduced Australia to 121-5.

But victory was never seriously in doubt after England were dismissed for 342 on the back of Jacob Bethell's stylish

Leopards win 6th Zalmi Madrassa League title



Muzammil, Mahin and Hamza claim singles crowns at National Ranking Tennis

PEAK POINT
LAHORE: Top seed Muzammil Murtaza, Mahin Aftab Qureshi and Hamza Roman emerged as the stand-out performers as they clinched the men's, ladies' and boys' U18 singles titles respectively at the 11th Begum Kulsum Saifullah Khan National Ranking Tennis Championship 2025-26, which concluded at the PTF Tennis Complex in Islamabad.

The championship's closing ceremony was attended by several distinguished personalities, with Federal Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada gracing the occasion as chief guest, while Senator Salim Saifullah Khan, Patron of Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF), was present as guest of honour. Other prominent attendees included Asif Saifullah Khan, Nasir Jaffer, H.E. Ladislav Steinhübel, Ambassador of

the Czech Republic to Pakistan, Col Zia-ud-Din Tufail, Secretary General PTF, Akhtar Nawaz Ganjera, former DG PSB, Saeed Ahmad Khan, Senior Vice Presidential PTF, and Col Gul Rehman, Director Security

Muzammil Murtaza displayed composure and tactical maturity to defeat seasoned campaigner Aqeel Khan in straight sets, 7-6(2), 6-2. The ladies' singles title was claimed emphatically by Mahin Aftab Qureshi, who produced a



and Complex. Humayun Saifullah Khan and Anwar Saifullah Khan were also present, alongside a large gathering of players, coaches, parents, tennis enthusiasts and media representatives. PIA to resume Lahore-London flights after six-year hiatus

dominant performance to overwhelm Soha Ali 6-1, 6-1. In the boys' U18 singles final, Hamza Roman overcame Abubakar Talha 6-4, 7-6(4) in a competitive encounter. Meanwhile, Muhammad Junaid captured the boys' U14 singles title with a convincing 6-1, 6-4 victory over Muhammad Muaz.

Pakistan's Usman Khan tops FEI Middle East & Africa Eventing Rankings





Insulin shortages, discount drug fears, and antibiotic alarm: parliament takes health system to task

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: A session of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Health exposed critical cracks in Pakistan's health-care supply chain, with lawmakers warning that shortages of life saving medicines, doubts over discounted drugs, and unchecked antibiotic misuse are pushing the public health system toward a dangerous tipping point. Chaired by Mahesh Kumar Malani, the committee confronted officials over persistent shortages of diabetes medicines and insulin, alongside erratic availability of specific brands. Members demanded full disclosure of which medicines are unavailable, which are being supplied at discounted rates, and whether quality is being compromised in the process. Serious concern was raised over a 69 percent discount on medicines provided to parliamentarians, with members

openly questioning whether cheaper prices are coming at the cost of safety. Officials confirmed that drug samples had been collected from the Parliamentarians' Dispensary and from PIMS for laboratory testing, with reports to be shared with the committee. The Minister assured lawmakers that pharmaceutical companies and relevant entities would be summoned for a detailed explanation, signaling that the issue is far from closed. The committee also questioned whether the massive discounts offered under federal hospital pharmacy tenders are actually benefiting ordinary patients or remaining confined to institutional procurement. The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan clarified that inspections are ongoing in coordination with ICT authorities and that procurement follows PPR rules, but members warned that regulatory compliance on paper does not always



translate into relief for patients on the ground. Beyond immediate shortages, lawmakers turned their attention to what they described as a silent health emergency: the overuse of antibiotics and the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance. The Minister warned that excessive antibiotic use in livestock is accelerating resistance in humans, calling it a long-ignored crisis with potentially catastrophic consequences. The committee supported a shift from "sickness care" to preventive and lifestyle medicine, directing that lifestyle education be pushed into medical curricula and Dental Council and broader education syllabi. The meeting also brought a decisive turn in nursing sector reforms. With the promulgation of a new nursing and midwifery framework, lawmakers were informed that the earlier Pakistan Nursing Council law now stands repealed. The Ministry of Law confirmed that the new ordinance will be laid before the National Assembly, while the Minister assured that long-standing concerns of the committee would be addressed once the reconstituted council begins work. In light of these developments, the committee formally disposed of the pend-

ing nursing amendment bill, marking a legal reset for nursing governance. Amid the scrutiny, the Health Services Academy received rare praise. Its leadership briefed the committee on training programs for in-service doctors, collaboration with United Nations agencies, and progress on One Health initiatives. However, the discussion quickly turned pointed as members grilled the academy on admissions transparency, faculty recruitment, budget constraints, plagiarism controls, use of artificial intelligence, and representation from Balochistan. The academy pledged to provide full documentation and defended its processes as merit-based and rule-compliant. A tense exchange followed over HIV testing surveys, availability of testing kits, and transparency of findings. Lawmakers stressed that public trust depends on clear, coordinated reporting rather than frag-

mented data. The academy's leadership warned that misinformation campaigns by private interests are actively attempting to discredit public institutions and said it would pursue all available channels to counter what it described as deliberate defamation. By the close of the meeting, the committee's message was unmistakable: medicine shortages, quality concerns, and regulatory gaps are no longer technical issues they are matters of public survival. Lawmakers demanded tighter coordination between the Ministry and its attached departments, timely sharing of verified data, and concrete action instead of assurances. The warning was clear: if accountability does not improve, the cost will be paid not in committee rooms, but by patients who cannot afford shortages, substandard medicines, or delayed reform.

CDA reclaims 320 kanals of encroached land in Islamabad National Park

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) on Thursday reclaimed around 320 kanals of valuable state land from illegal occupation during an anti-encroachment operation in the Saidpur area of Islamabad National Park.

According to the CDA, the operation was carried out on the directives of CDA Chairman and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa to protect the capital's natural heritage and restore the original boundaries of the National Park. Officials said the

Planning Wing, using satellite geo-mapping and digital maps, identified the original demarcation of the National Park and state land, following which illegal encroachments were removed with the assistance of the district administration and Islamabad police. The CDA said the National Park plays a crucial

role in maintaining environmental balance, protecting natural water reservoirs, preserving wildlife and reducing urban pollution. However, illegal settlements in recent years had caused damage to the ecosystem and posed serious environmental concerns. The reclaimed land will be used for large-scale

tree plantation and environmental restoration projects during the upcoming spring season, officials added.

The authority said this was the first major anti-encroachment operation in the National Park area in the past decade and reflected the government's commitment to protecting state land and

implementing environment-friendly policies.

During the operation, strict procedures were followed to ensure transparency and accountability. A formal inquiry has been initiated against two CDA officials and a police official on suspicion of facilitating illegal encroachments.

Opinion & Editorial

Trust no one

F.S. ALJAZUDDIN

LEADERS should trust no one. Dictators in particular should be careful when choosing their security staff. Many have paid the price for their negligence.

Mrs Indira Gandhi trusted her Sikh bodyguards and died at their hands in October 1984. In 2003, Iraqi militants led US-led forces to Saddam Hussein who was found hiding in a small underground bunker. He was tried and hanged by his own people. Libyan leader Col Muammar Qaddafi remained paranoid about security. Even on his travels abroad to Europe, Russia or the US, he preferred to live in a bulletproof tent. Such precautions could not protect him from attacks by Nato bombers and vengeful Libyans.

Perhaps the most dramatic betrayal of a dictator occurred in South Korea in 1979, when president Park Chung-hee was shot by Kim Jae-gyu, head of his own Korean Central Intelligence Agency. The killing took place over dinner in a KCIA safe house.

Is no refuge sacred? Apparently not, as Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro discovered when US troops burst into his bedroom in the presidential palace in Caracas and abducted him and his wife. One report has described it as "the riskiest and most high-profile military operation sanctioned by Washington since the US Navy's SEAL team killed Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, in a safe house in

Pakistan's Abbottabad in 2011".

Is no refuge sacred? Apparently not.

Similarities between the two are more than cosmetic. Operation Neptune Spear to capture Bin Laden had been planned for months. The assault team of SEALs practised on a full-scale replica of OBL's compound. The actual operation was carried out by four helicopters, 79 SEAL commandos and a dog. It took 38 minutes to accomplish. The action was watched live by president Barack Obama, secretary of state Hillary Clinton and their team.

Operation Absolute Resolve on Jan 3 aimed at capturing Venezuelan president Maduro. According to Gen Dan Caine (chairman, US Joint Chiefs of Staff), it had been "carefully rehearsed for months". President Donald Trump revealed that "they actually built a house, which was identical to the one they went into, with all the same — all that steel all over the place".

About 150 aircraft were involved, taking off from 20 different air bases across the Western Hemisphere. US forces disabled Venezuela's air defence systems and plunged its capital Caracas into darkness, allowing US helicopters to land in Maduro's palace grounds at 2:01 am.

Within 30 minutes, the Venezuelan president and his wife were in US custody. An undisclosed number of casualties included Maduro's

more loyal security staff.

Trump watched the operation live from his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida, attended by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and CIA director John Ratcliffe. "It was an incredible thing to see," he crowed: "If you would have seen what happened, I mean, I watched it literally like I was watching a television show. And if you would've seen the speed, the violence ... it was an amazing thing."

Ironically, now that Maduro is out of the way, Trump's plans to jump-start democracy in Venezuela do not include its opposition leader Maria Machado (a Venezuelan counterpart to Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi). Aung San Suu Kyi won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. Machado was awarded the same prize in 2025 (as an affront to Trump). Even though she dedicated her award to Trump, it has obviously not been enough to relieve his bile.

A recent exposé — The Mission: the CIA in the 21st century by the Pulitzer prize-winning author Tim Weiner — concludes with these questions: "What would stop the president from declaring martial law or cancelling elections? Could Congress or the supreme court oppose him? Who would disobey him if he ordered the clandestine service to rebuild the secret prisons, overthrow a sovereign nation, or assassinate his political enemies?"

Courtesy Dawn

Drill baby drill

IMRAN JAN

IN the movie Interstellar, there is a character who is actually a robot, called TARS. It is programmed to use 90% honesty in its communications with human beings, because, as it says, absolute honesty is not the most diplomatic nor the safest form of communication with emotional beings.

George Carlin once said that the American people actually want a good amount of doses when it comes to lies in politics. Lies are a key element in some of the most profitable and largest industries in the world, especially in the United States. From cigarette ads to political campaigns, a good whiff of lies keeps the machinery lubricated.

This reality was exhibited more in the case of the abduction of Nicolas Maduro last week than in any major political reality in recent memory. Everyone knows Venezuela is home to the largest known oil reserves in the world. Trump was very straightforward in his announcement that the mega oil corporations would go to Venezuela, tap into their oil reserves, pay for the operation and recover their own investment and earn profit thereafter. I cannot think of a situation in my study of politics where things have been laid out so raw and with sheer honesty. I watched a journalist ask US Secretary of State Marco Rubio why the US only went after Maduro and not also capture other characters (pirates) inside his country that were doing nefarious things that the emperor (USA) did not approve of. A genuinely journalistic question should have been to ask what right the US had to go into a sovereign state and kidnap its sitting leader. Sadly, such thinking is not allowed inside the American mainstream. But then I really thought about what the journalist asked and how she had said that she was confused as to why only one man was captured and not the rest. What she was really trying to express was a demand from her addictive mind that has been fed large amounts of propaganda through decades, where a fiction is attached to every American foreign entanglement.

Courtesy Tribune

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Flawed pricing regime

THE government's reported plan of containing the gas sector circular debt of Rs3tr by further raising the petroleum development levy, rather than increasing gas prices as determined by Ogra, underscores the entrenched policy distortions in our energy pricing regime. The gas debt has already grown much larger than the power sector debt. The regulator is recommending an increase of up to 7pc in gas tariffs to generate an additional Rs118 per unit to meet an estimated requirement of Rs886bn in revenue for the two gas utilities in FY26. Under the law, the federal government was required to notify revised consumer prices from Jan 1. Yet, during a parliamentary hearing, the petroleum minister has ruled out an increase for at least the next six months. He did not deny reports that the government may further boost the petroleum levy by Rs5 per litre on petrol and diesel, already taxed at up to Rs82 per litre, to subsidise industrial and urban residential gas consumers. This socialisation of the gas sector's inefficiencies across the entire population is neither reform nor a sound economic decision. It is, in fact, rooted in politics. Gas utilities point out that tech-driven interventions have helped to reduce system losses and 'quell' the flow of fresh debt.

Aurangzeb meets Visa CEMEA leadership to advance digital payments, financial inclusion agenda



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday held a meeting with Visa delegation led by Tareq Muhmood, Regional President for Central Europe, Middle East and Africa (CEMEA) and discussed advancing digital payments, financial inclusion, and ongoing economic reforms. The minister welcomed the delegation and appreciated Visa's continued engagement with Pakistan's financial sector. The discussion focused on Pakistan's

improving macroeconomic indicators, ongoing stabilization efforts, and the government's priorities for achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth, said a news release.

Aurangzeb briefed the delegation on progress made under the International Monetary Fund (IMF)-supported program, external validation from international credit rating agencies, and the government's reform agenda covering taxation, energy, state-owned enterprises, public debt management, and privatization, including recent steps taken to accelerate the privatization process.

Both sides exchanged views on the acceleration of Pakistan's digital transformation, with particular emphasis on digital infrastructure, payment systems, and the digitization of government payments, it added.

Aurangzeb highlighted that digitalization is being led at the highest level by the Prime Minister to ensure coordinated, cross-government imple-

mentation. He outlined ongoing initiatives including the establishment of the Pakistan Digital Authority, reforms in payment rails under the State Bank of Pakistan, and efforts to digitize government receipts and expenditures to enhance transparency, efficiency, and service delivery. The Visa delegation shared insights from their engagement with banks, fintechs, and other stakeholders in Pakistan, noting strong confidence driven by macroeconomic stabilization and growing interest in expanding digital payments, financial inclusion, and innovation. Discussions covered cash displacement, fraud prevention, support for small and nano businesses, QR and tap-to-phone solutions, and the importance of expanding acceptance infrastructure, particularly in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. The delegation also emphasized the value of maintaining optionality and competition across payment channels to foster innovation, manage risk,

Naqvi visits Beijing Police College, lauds high-tech training, professional excellence

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Beijing Police College, where he inspected several sections dedicated to high-tech police training on Thursday.

Minister Naqvi witnessed an impressive demonstration showcasing how Beijing Police use specialized vehicles to apprehend suspects. He praised the officers' professionalism and the high standards of training at the institution, commending the special vehicle squad for their exemplary performance. "I am highly impressed by the professional capabilities and outstanding training of the vehicle squad," Naqvi remarked. The minister announced that all ASPs from Pakistan's National Police Academy will undergo a one-month training program at the

Beijing Police College. He emphasized that cooperation between the National Police Academy and the Beijing Police College will be further strengthened. "Pakistani police officers will also receive education and professional training according to modern requirements," he said, adding that a formal agreement between the two institutions will soon be finalized.

During the visit, Minister Naqvi also tested an advanced driving-test simulator. The President of the Beijing Police College briefed.

Education must adapt as AI outpaces textbooks, says Musadik Malik

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr Musadik Malik on Thursday said that traditional textbook-based education is rapidly losing relevance as artificial intelligence, biotechnology and emerging technologies reshape the world at an unprecedented pace.

Addressing students as the chief guest at the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Distribution Ceremony held at COMSATS University Islamabad, the minister urged universities to move beyond rote learning and focus on preparing students for an uncertain and fast-evolving future.

"Whatever you are being taught from textbooks has already happened," Dr Malik said, adding that most academic material is five to seven years behind real-world developments.

"The speed at which technology is advancing means memorisation alone will not help you survive." Highlighting the rise of artificial intelligence, biotechnology, nanotechnology and cognitive sciences, he said these fields were not futuristic concepts but active forces already redefining life, work and education.

He noted that AI tools such as ChatGPT had transformed how knowledge is created and used, forcing universities worldwide to rethink their approach.

"Just a few years ago, universities were trying to catch students using ChatGPT. Today, they are teaching prompt engineering," he remarked, calling it evidence of how quickly the rules of learning are changing.

Dr Malik said the purpose of initiatives such as the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme was not merely to distribute devices but to empower students with skills, adaptability and critical thinking.

"The goal is not laptops or degrees. The goal is to prepare you for a world where even your teachers may not fully understand what is coming next," he said.

He emphasised that universities must cultivate understanding, decision-making ability and the courage to make mistakes, warning that institutions failing to do so risk becoming irrelevant.

"If universities cannot teach students how to think and adapt, then education loses its meaning," he added.

Terrorists using BYC's platform to induct Balochistan's youth into their networks: CTD official

PEAK POINT

BALUCHISTAN: Balochistan Counter-Terrorism Department's (CTD) Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Aitzaz Goraya on Thursday said terrorists were using the platform of Balochistan Yakehti Committee (BYC) to induct youth into their networks. Goraya made the remarks while addressing a joint press conference alongside Balochistan Additional Chief Secretary Hamza Shafiqat in Quetta, where he gave details about a terrorist arrested during an operation in Panjgur.

According to Goraya, the CTD, police and law enforcement agencies arrested a man, Sajid Ahmad alias Shahwaiz, who was a resident of Turbat during the operation. He said the man had received a Master's degree in Sociology from the International Islamic University in Islamabad, then worked on contract at Zubaida Jalal Government College for three years, before teaching at the University of Turbat. The CTD DIG said Sajid had "remained.

Governor KP, AJK leadership agree to strengthen trade links

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, held a meeting with Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq Rathore and former Prime Minister AJK Sardar Tanveer Ilyas here on Thursday.

The leaders agreed to play a joint and proactive role in strengthening ties between the business communities of KP and Kashmir.

The meeting emphasized the need to promote closer coordination and cooperation between traders of both regions to enhance economic activity and explore new avenues of mutual trade and investment.

They also termed youth



engagement in Kashmir as critically important, stressing that empowering young people through education, entrepreneurship, and economic opportunities is essential for sustainable development. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi appreciated Prime Minister Faisal Mushtaq Rathore's active and effective leadership in a short span of time, acknowledging his efforts toward governance and development in Azad Kashmir. He extended an invitation to AJK PM.

Minister vows priority implementation of accord with Diامر-Bhasha dam affectees

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and Saffron Engineer Amir Muqam on Thursday said that the agreement reached with the affectees of the Diامر-Bhasha dam would be implemented on a priority basis.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting of the committee formed to address the grievances of the dam affectees. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, Federal Minister for Water Resources Mian Muhammad Moeen Wattoo (via video link), Caretaker Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Justice (retd) Yar Muhammad, (via video link), Wapda



Chairman Lt Gen (retd) Muhammad Saeed, Secretary Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and Saffron Zafar Hassan, Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Secretary Abrar Ahmed Mirza, Additional Secretary Kashmir Affairs Kamran Rehman Khan and Joint Secretary GB Council Sudhair Khattak. Speaking on the occasion, Engineer Ameer Muqam said that the development of Gilgit-Baltistan.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr Musadik Malik addresses the Laptop distribution ceremony at COMSATS University.

Pak, US resolve to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in economy, security

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the United States have reaffirmed the commitment to further strengthen their bilateral cooperation across various fields, with special focus on economic and security. The pledge came during a meeting between Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S., Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, and the Chairman of the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, Congressman Brian Mast, in Washington, according to a press statement issued by

the Foreign Office on Thursday.

Both sides expressed a shared resolve to enhance the multifaceted partnership, underscoring its importance for mutual and regional stability. During the meeting, the two sides exchanged New Year greetings and reaffirmed the commitment to work together to further strengthen bilateral relations.

The ambassador thanked Chairman Mast for his leadership, efforts, and consistent support in promoting Pak-U.S. relations.



Referring to U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio's commitment to transform bilateral ties into a long-term, sustainable partnership based on economic cooperation, Rizwan Sheikh said 2026 should be

declared a year of action.

He emphasized the need for a high-level economic dialogue between the two countries to commence at the earliest. Stressing the importance of initiating a comprehensive and immediate dialogue in the fields of energy, defense, minerals, information technology, and artificial intelligence, the ambassador said Pakistan, with its low-cost and high-quality capabilities, has the potential to meet the growing needs of the American market. Surgical instruments and

products manufactured in Pakistan are renowned worldwide for their quality, he said adding that a favourable trade environment and due attention will lead to a guaranteed increase in textile and other Pakistani exports. Furthermore, he informed that the continuous use of footballs manufactured in Sialkot in the last five FIFA World Cup matches is a testament to Pakistan's capabilities in the sports goods sector. Meanwhile, exchanging views on the regional situation,

Ambassador Rizwan Saeed pointed out that terrorism emanating from Afghanistan poses serious threats to Pakistan's security situation and regional and international peace.

Due to the activities of terrorists taking refuge in Afghanistan, terrorist incidents in Pakistan increased by 40% in 2024 and by a further 25% in 2025, he said and expressed serious concern over the continued illicit and aggressive use of weapons left behind at the time of withdrawal from Afghanistan.