



Pakistan seeks Australian expertise to enhance output of agriculture, livestock sectors



Rubina Khalid holds Live E-Katcheri; vows zero tolerance for rights violations



BISP budget raised to Rs 716bn, covers over 10m beneficiaries: Imran

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Pakistan signs "Board of Peace" charter to support Gaza peace

PEAK POINT

DAVOS: Pakistan on Thursday signed the charter of the Board of Peace as part of its ongoing efforts to support the implementation of the Gaza Peace Plan.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif signed the document along with other world leaders including those from Qatar, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Argentina, Kosovo, Paraguay, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Bulgaria and others.

President of the United States Donald Trump was the first to sign the charter who later witnessed the ceremony held on the sidelines of the 56th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum held here.

Pakistan had received the invitation from

President Trump to join the Board which was later accepted. Pakistan was among the eight Muslim states who announced to be part of the body on Wednesday which included Arab Republic of Egypt, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, the Republic of Indonesia, the Republic of Türkiye, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the State of Qatar. It was announced that each country would sign the joining documents according to its respective relevant legal and other necessary procedures, including Egypt, Pakistan, and the UAE, that have already announced to join. Pakistan had expressed the hope that with the creation of this framework, concrete steps would be taken towards the implementation of a permanent ceasefire.



DAVOS: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif signs charter of Board of Peace on the sidelines of 56th Annual meeting of the World Economic Forum.

Karachi's Gul Plaza fire: 67 killed, 77 missing; DC South rules out short circuit

PEAK POINT



KARACHI: At least 67 people have been confirmed dead and dozens remain unaccounted for following the devastating fire at Gul Plaza in Karachi, Deputy Commissioner South

Javed Nabi Khoso said on Thursday. Speaking to the media, the deputy commissioner stressed that the incident would not be attributed to a short circuit alone and that a comprehensive investigation was under way. He said rescue operations were continuing inside the damaged building, despite the structure being in an extremely hazardous condition.

Heavy machinery had been temporarily halted to allow rescue workers to enter safely, he added and warned that the building could collapse at any moment due to severe structural damage.

According to the DC South, around 40 percent of the plaza has already collapsed. Search operations have been completed in all accessible areas except for the portion that has fallen on both sides of the building. Rescue teams are continuing efforts to retrieve any possible bodies trapped under the rubble.

Nestlé announces \$60 million additional investment in Pakistan

PEAK POINT

DAVOS: The multinational food and beverage company, Nestlé, on Thursday announced an additional investment of \$60 million in Pakistan during a roundtable discussion on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chaired the high-level business roundtable, bringing together Chief Executive Officers and senior leaders of leading global corporations to discuss Pakistan's reform trajectory, investment climate, and long-term growth potential. The announcement of additional investment was made by Remy Ejel,

Executive Vice President and Chief of Pakistan's ongoing engagement



Executive Officer for Asia, Oceania, and Africa at Nestlé, according to a press release issued by the finance ministry.

He said that Nestlé would undertake a robust expansion of its operations in the country, reaffirming its long-term commitment to Pakistan.

The roundtable formed part of the gov-

ernment of Pakistan's ongoing engagement

dence in Pakistan's economic outlook. Ejel foresaw robust growth in Nestlé's business in Pakistan in the coming years.

The announcement builds on Nestlé's recent engagement with the Finance Minister in Islamabad, where the company had outlined its strategy centered on localization, advanced manufacturing, sustainability, and agricultural transformation.

Nestlé has made significant progress in technology-driven manufacturing, with highly automated facilities, expanded use of renewable energy, improved packaging solutions, and digitalized supply chains, strengthening efficiency while reducing environmental.

President Zardari summons joint session of Parliament on today

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has summoned a joint session of Parliament under Article 54(1) of the Constitution of Pakistan, on Friday, January 23, at 11:00 a.m.

According to the National Assembly Secretariat, an official notification for the meeting has been issued. Members of both the National Assembly and the Senate are expected to attend the session. Details regarding the agenda of the joint session.

Storms, heavy rain kill 9 children across Afghanistan

PEAK POINT

KABUL: Severe storms and a rain-triggered landslide have killed at least nine children across southern and eastern Afghanistan, officials said, with residents facing further risks on Thursday as heavy snow hit the country. Strong wind and heavy rain in Kandahar killed six children on Wednesday, and caused significant financial losses in several districts, the emergency department in the southern province said. The storms also damaged homes, it said. In a separate incident in eastern Nuristan province.

Govt defends decision to join Trump's Board of Peace amid opposition outcry in NA

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Amid an outcry by the opposition in the National Assembly, the government on Thursday defended its decision to join the Board of Peace led by US President Donald Trump, saying it was taken in the interest of the Palestinian people.

Originally meant to oversee peace in Gaza after Israel's two-year war on the Palestinian enclave, the Board of Peace's charter envisions a wider role in resolving international conflicts.

A group of leaders and senior officials from 19 countries — including Pakistan — gathered on stage on Thursday with Trump at a signing ceremony in Davos, Switzerland, to put their names to the founding charter of the body.

Speaking in the National Assembly, the government defended its decision to join the Board of Peace, adding



Parliamentary Affairs Minister Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said Pakistan had a principled position on the Palestine issue and always raised it at international forums. He said Pakistan's decision to join the board was guided by national interest and the collective priorities of the Muslim Ummah, not political considerations. He noted that UN Security Council resolutions called for a perma-

nent ceasefire and recon-

struction of Gaza, adding

He said that those responsible for the Palestinians' plight were part of the board.

"Expecting peace from Trump tantamounts to living in [a] fool's paradise," he said on the floor of the house.

He highlighted that Trump was the board's chairman and appointed members at his own discretion, while also noting that he had abducted the Venezuelan president and his spouse.

Fazl also said that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should have refused to sit on the board. "We must not accept the Board of Peace under any circumstances. No so-called peace board in the form of Trump and Netanyahu is acceptable at all", he stressed.

Govt submits report to IHC seeking suspension of Imran Khan's X account

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government has submitted a report to the Islamabad High Court (IHC) regarding suspension of the X account of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan.

According to the report presented by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), the government has been attempting for the past three and a half years to block Imran Khan's X account. The PTA first wrote to X on August 21, 2022, requesting suspension of the account. A subsequent request was sent on April 18, 2024, citing convictions in the Toshakhana, cipher, and sidat cases. The report further stated that on November 27, 2025, the PTA asked X to block 47 posts from Imran Khan's account. However, despite three formal requests over the past three and a half years, X rejected most of them and blocked only one post from the latest request. The PTA informed the court that it had asked social media companies to register with the authority in Pakistan.





SPORTS



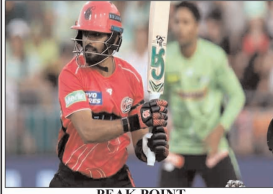
U19 World Cup: Pakistan beat Zimbabwe by 8 wickets, advance into Super Six round



PEAK POINT group rankings, with England on top. DUBAI: Pakistan clinched a comfortable 8-wicket victory over Zimbabwe in Harare during the team's last group-stage match in the ongoing U19 World Cup, advancing into the Super Six round. After facing a 37-run defeat by England in their tournament opener, the Green Shirts made a comeback, beating Scotland and Zimbabwe in back-to-back matches. With the win, Pakistan has secured second place in the

As per the tournament's format, the top three teams from the four groups will qualify for the Super Six round, where they will be divided into two groups of six teams, each playing two matches. This means that despite the loss, Zimbabwe will also advance into the Super Six stage. Pakistan U19 captain Farhan Yousaf had won the toss and elected to field first at Takashinga Sports Club. Pakistan's bowlers maintained a strong grip over the Zimbabwean batters, with a dominating performance by Ali Raza, who took three wickets and bowled four maiden overs. Mohammad Sayyam, Abdul Subhan, and Momin Qamar also grabbed a couple of wickets each for Pakistan. For Zimbabwe, Nathaniel Hlabangana could only score 59 runs; no other batter could assist him in keeping the momentum and building the partnerships. Eight Zimbabwean batters could not even reach double figures.

PCB calls back Babar Azam from ongoing BBL as Sixers face crucial final



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Babar Azam, the star batsman from Pakistan, will miss the crucial Challenger final for the Sydney Sixers in ongoing Big Bash League (BBL) after being called back by the Pakistan Cricket Board ahead of their upcoming series against Australia. As a result, he will be unavailable for the remainder of the Sixers' finals run, should they advance by defeating Hobart at the SCG, setting up a potential rematch with the Scorchers in Sunday's BBL Final in Perth. Pakistan has not yet revealed their squad for the T20 World Cup next month, but Babar will focus on the three T20 internationals against Australia in Lahore starting next Friday, which will serve as preparation for the global tournament. In a statement released earlier, Babar expressed his gratitude to the Sixers' fans, coaches, and teammates for their support during his time with the club. "I have very (much) enjoyed my time," he said. "Unfortunately, I will now have to leave the team, to go to the national duty. I have a lot of things I have to take back home — a lot of fun, a lot of positive things, so I have enjoyed it a lot."

Bangladesh firm on not playing T20 World Cup in India



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Bangladesh will not travel to India to play in next month's T20 World Cup, its cricket board said on Thursday, a day after the game's governing body rejected the country's plea to shift its games to Sri Lanka. "Our only demand is to play the World Cup — but not in any

World Cup schedule or groups, days after Cup. It will be their loss ... ICC is calling that its matches be moved to Sri Lanka after refusing to play in India. According to Cricinfo, Islam also said: "We will go back to the ICC with our plan to play in Sri Lanka. They did give us a 24-hour ultimatum but a global body can't really do that. "ICC will miss out on 200 million people watching the World Cup. It will be their loss ... ICC is calling that its matches be moved to Sri Lanka after refusing to play in India. It is a hybrid model. Some of the things I heard in the ICC meeting was shocking," Islam said, according to Cricinfo. "There is no scope for changing our decision," Nazrul said, adding that Bangladesh's security concerns "did not arise from speculation or theoretical analysis."

Pakistan likely to boycott T20 World Cup in solidarity with Bangladesh
There is a possibility that Pakistan may also boycott the World Cup if Bangladesh does not participate in the ICC T20 World Cup, said sources on Thursday. Bangladesh will decide today whether or not to participate in the T20 World Cup. Several senior players of the Bangladesh team are in favour of participating, and the Bangladesh government will take the players into confidence.

Match officials announced for Pakistan v Australia T20I series

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board has announced the match officials' panel for three-match T20I series between Pakistan and Australia at the Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore from 29 January to 1 February.

The games will start at 4pm PKT with the coin toss set to take place at 3.30pm PKT. ICC International Panel Match Referee Ali Naqvi will lead the playing control team in all the three matches. The second game will be his 50th T20I as match referee as he officiated his first game in the format at the same venue in April 2023.

Ahsan Raza, member of the ICC Elite Panel of Umpires, will be one of the on-field umpires during the first two T20Is, while Asif



Yaqoob of ICC Emerging Elite Panel of Umpires member Zulfikar Jan being the fourth umpire. Apart from being the fourth umpire in the second game, Nasir will begin the series as third umpire, while Asif and Tariq Rasheed of PCB National Elite Panel of Umpires will perform the third umpire duties in the second and third T20I.



SARGODHA: Players compete in wushu trials during the "Khetla Punjab Pind Games Trials" held at a sports gymnasium, organized by the Sports Department.

Semi-Final matches of the 3rd Chief of Army Staff Inter-Club National Hockey championship 2026 conclude

WAJIHA TAMSEEL MIRZA

MULTAN: Semi-Final Matches of the 3rd Chief of Army Staff Inter-Club National Hockey Championship 2026 Conclude. The thrilling semi-final stage of the 3rd Chief of Army Staff Inter-Club National Hockey Championship 2026, currently underway in Multan, has been successfully concluded. Hockey fans witnessed high-quality and competitive hockey in both semi-final matches, which remained intense until the final moments. The chief guest on the occasion was Chaudhry



Ghulam Sarwar, Owner of Ali Asghar Traders Multan, who met the players and emphasized the importance of organizing such events for the promotion of the national sport, hockey. He stated that encouraging young players is the key to reviving the glory of Pakistan hockey. During the matches, the stadium echoed with cheers and applause from enthusiastic spectators. The teams emerging victorious in the semi-finals have qualified for the final, while the organizers confirmed that all arrangements for the final match have been completed.



SZABMU unveils new campus, Digital exams, and clinical training plan for overseas Pakistani medical students

NADEEM TANOLI
ISLAMABAD: Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University (SZABMU) has announced a major expansion and reform agenda, featuring the launch of a new campus, introduction of digital examinations, and a structured clinical training program for Pakistani medical students studying abroad. The developments were shared by Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Tanwir Khaliq during a media briefing on the university's progress and future direction. Speaking to journalists, Dr. Khaliq said SZABMU will formally shift to its new purpose-built cam-

pus adjacent to NORI Hospital in Sector G-8/3 from July 1, 2026. He said the project, initiated during his earlier tenure and approved by Federal Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, had faced delays in the past but is now nearing completion. He said the new campus will substantially enhance academic, research, and clinical facilities, enabling SZABMU to evolve from a hospital-centered setup into a fully integrated medical university. A major highlight of the briefing was the announcement of a paid three-month elective and clinical training program for Pakistani medical students

enrolled in foreign universities, particularly in Tajikistan. Dr. Khaliq acknowledged that many such students face difficulties clearing the National Registration Examination (NRE) due to limited clinical exposure abroad. Under the new initiative, students will be able to return to Pakistan during summer breaks and receive hands-on clinical training at SZABMU affiliated hospitals to help meet licensing requirements. On the financial side, the Vice Chancellor said SZABMU is moving toward greater autonomy, with an annual budget of Rs 370 million. Of this, Rs 250 million is self-

generated, while Rs 120 million is provided by the Higher Education Commission. He said the university has grown rapidly from an initial intake of 300 transferred students to nearly 10,000 students across 60 disciplines, including 14 undergraduate and around 45 postgraduate programs. Proposals for 15 new PhD programs have also been submitted to the HEC. Dr. Khaliq said the university is also undergoing rapid modernization, with a transition to a fully digital examination system and upgrades in molecular genetics and stem cell research facilities. In collaboration with Pakistan

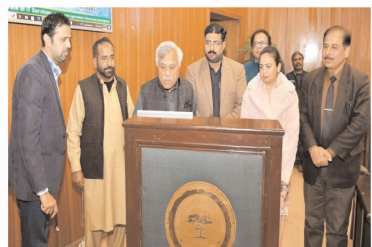
Institute of Medical Sciences, SZABMU is launching training programs in robotic surgery, while international research collaboration with UNESCO is underway in the field of infectious diseases. He added that SZABMU has revived its international academic linkages by signing memoranda of understanding with institutions in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, and Sri Lanka. Under an agreement with a university in Liverpool, SZABMU students will receive specialized training in emergency medicine in the UK. Highlighting community engagement, the

Vice Chancellor announced that SZABMU is offering free Basic Life Support (BLS) training for journalists, educational institutions, and other groups. He said master trainers have already been trained at Rawalpindi Medical University, and similar sessions can be arranged for media professionals. The media briefing concluded with a question-and-answer session, during which journalists noted improved administrative stability and clearer planning at SZABMU after years of uncertainty under acting leadership arrangements.

Towards Smart Campus Governance: E-File system launched at Arid Agriculture University

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) has launched an E-File Management System in a special ceremony held on campus. The system was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor PMAS-AAUR Prof. Dr. Qamar-uz-Zaman, who was the chief guest of the event. Addressing the ceremony, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Qamar uz Zaman stated that the launch of E-File Management System

reflects the university's long-term vision for institutional modernization and digital transformation. He noted that leading universities across the world are adopting paperless governance models to promote efficiency, transparency, inclusivity, and environmental responsibility. He added that this initiative places Arid Agriculture University on a progressive path aligned with international best practices. He further emphasized that the E-File Management System is not



merely a technological upgrade but a strategic reform aimed at strengthening governance, accelerating

decision-making, and enhancing service delivery for faculty, staff, and students. The Vice Chancellor

added that such forward-looking digital initiatives are essential for universities seeking to remain relevant and competitive in the global academic ecosystem, while also contributing meaningfully to sustainability through reduced paper consumption. Speaking on the occasion, Director IT Services, Dr. Nadeem A. Malik, said that the Directorate of IT Services is making continuous efforts to transform the university into a smart campus through the adoption of modern digital

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New beginnings

BOTH Houses finally have an opposition leader endorsed by the majority on the opposition benches. The missing pillars of parliament have thus been restored, and both the government and opposition parties deserve commendation for showing maturity on this matter. After years of acrimony in the political atmosphere, the development certainly feels like a breath of fresh air. It promises what could be a fresh start to the process of political reconciliation. Both Allama Raja Nasir Abbas, appointed opposition leader in the Senate, and Mehmood Khan Achakzai, the new opposition leader in the National Assembly, have made positive overtures in their inaugural speeches, extending an olive branch to the government with the appeal that politics be run by politicians. It also seems that their speeches have been generally well-received, albeit with some reservations. The chasm between the government and opposition may seem very large to bridge quickly or easily, but, after a long time, there seems to be a glimmer of hope. Now that they have been notified, the big challenge before the two leaders is to marshal the opposition behind them. While the PTI, the largest and most influential party in the opposition, had endorsed their candidature and former prime minister Imran Khan publicly placed his trust in both Mr Achakzai and Mr Abbas.

Head transplants

F.S. ALJAZUDDIN
HEART transplants are a recent phenomenon. Stomach transplants have yet to be attempted. (Gluttons are counting the days.) Head transplants, however have been practised for millennia, especially when the head is crowned. For example, Alexander's vast empire was large enough — stretching from Greece to the Indus — to satisfy the covetous ambitions of his many generals. After Alexander's death, one of them — Ptolemy I Soter — ousted the earlier rulers of Egypt and founded the Ptolemaic dynasty which lasted 300 years.

The last Egyptian monarchy owes its propulsion to the British when, after relinquishing their mandate in 1922, they saw Fuad I installed as king of Egypt even though he was more Albanian, Circassian, and Turkish than Egyptian. Similarly, modern Greece imported its monarchs, first in 1830 from Bavaria when the Great Powers (Great Britain, France and Russia) installed King Otto. After his deposition in 1862, Prince George of Denmark was invited, elected, and enthroned with Allied support.

In time, King George I's grandson Philip married Princess Elizabeth. The night before their marriage in November 1947, Philip was granted British nationality and a dukedom. (The satirical magazine Private Eye always referred to him irreverently as

'Phil the Greek'). King Charles III, therefore, has Greek and Danish lineage from his father's side and German, Danish and French blood from his mother's side. The British royal family has more foreign blood than migrant dinghy dodgers. Perhaps the most blatant transplants of monarchs occurred in the Levant when the British and later the Americans sought to retain their control over the viscous sands of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, and Iran. King Faisal bin Saud refused to loosen the kingdom's purse strings. He was disposed of when his US-educated nephew Prince Faisal bin Musaid assassinated him in March 1975.

The latest pawn in Western hands is Reza Pahlavi.

Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan, ruler of Abu Dhabi, thought he could ration his unstoppageable wealth. The British thought otherwise. They engineered his removal in 1966 and replaced him with his younger brother Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan. A diplomat once asked the British Foreign Office why it did not just take over the Gulf states. The reply given was: "Why should we, when we can rule the rulers?"

In Iraq, the British midwifed a kingdom in the 1920s and supported the short-lived Hashemite dynasty that lasted three generations — Faisal I, Ghazi I and Faisal II. They could not prevent the uprising that overthrew and then murdered the young 23-year-old

King Faisal II in July 1958. Unusually for an Arab ruler, Faisal had a talent for drawing and painting, honed perhaps during his education in Harrow Public School, England.

His cousin King Hussein of Jordan (also educated at Harrow) suffered the twin trauma of seeing his grandfather King Abdullah murdered and having to succeed prematurely his mentally ill father King Talal. Again unusually for an Arab ruler, Hussein ruled continuously, for 47 years. Perhaps his British education inclined him towards taking an English girl Toni Gardiner as his first wife. His mother Queen Zeyn objected. She relented only when Hussein agreed that no child of that marriage could succeed to the Jordanian throne. His younger brother Hassan bin Talal was declared crown prince. He remained so for 34 years and would have been king. However, Hussein, on his deathbed, under pressure from the US, declared his son Abdullah from Ms Gardiner to be his successor. As short as his father, Abdullah now struts on the international stage by the grace and favour of the White House.

The latest pawn in the hands of Western powers is the self-styled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi. The dynasty to which he lays claim came into existence in 1925 when his grandfather Reza Khan (with British support) replaced the tottering Qajars. Courtesy Dawn

A crisis of governance, not foreign conspiracy

DURDANA NAJAM
The blast at Kabul's 'Chinese Noodle' restaurant on 19 January 2026 did more than just claim lives; it exposed the fragile reality of Afghanistan's governance. Seven people, including a Chinese national, were killed, and many others were injured. Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), the Afghan affiliate of ISIS, claimed responsibility, presenting the attack as a strike against Chinese interests — a narrative consistent with its broader ideological motivations.

While the tragedy drew international attention, including a firm call from Beijing for the Taliban to ensure the safety of foreign nationals, the underlying story is not merely one of terrorism or foreign involvement. It is a story of a state divided against itself, where factional politics, weak institutions and competing power centres create the very insecurity that groups like ISKP exploit. Almost immediately, former Afghan intelligence chief Rahmatullah Nabil alleged that the attack was orchestrated from Pakistan, pointing to alleged ISIS operational centres and accusing Pakistani institutions of facilitating the assault. Such claims have made headlines, but they must be treated with caution. Nabil has a history of issuing unverified allegations and shifting blame to external actors when internal failures surface. While the regional context cannot be ignored, the most compelling explanation for the Kabul blast lies within Afghanistan itself: its fractured governance, weak command structures and internal rivalry between Taliban factions. The real forces shaping Afghanistan's insecurity are internal — rooted in the country's fractured governance and the rivalries that have come to define Taliban rule. Since the group returned to power in 2021, it has struggled to consolidate authority through functioning institutions. Instead, power has remained divided between competing factions with divergent visions for security and governance. Courtesy Tribune

President approves confirmation, extension of additional judges of Sindh, Lahore, Peshawar high courts



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has approved the confirmation and extension of tenure of additional judges of the high courts of Sindh, Lahore and Peshawar, in accordance with the recommendations of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP), the President's Secretariat said in a statement on Thursday.

For the Sindh High Court, the president has approved the confirmation of the following ten additional judges: Justice Miran Muhammad Shah, Justice Ms Tasneem Sultana, Justice Riazat Ali

Sahar, Justice Muhammad Hasan, Justice Abdul Hamid Bhurgi, Justice Jan Ali Junejo, Justice Nisar Ahmed Bhanbhro, Justice Ali Haider 'Ada', Justice Muhammad Osman Ali Hadi and Justice Muhammad Jaffer Raza.

The president has also approved a six-month extension in the tenure of the two additional judges of the Sindh High Court — Justice Khalid Hussain Shahani and Justice Syed Faiz ul Hassan Shah.

For the Lahore High Court, the president has approved the confirmation of the following eleven additional judges: Justice Hassan Nawaz Makhdoom, Justice Malik Waqar Haider Awan, Justice Sardar Akbar Ali, Justice Syed Ahsan Raza Kazmi, Justice Malik Javed Iqbal Wains, Justice Muhammad Jawad Zafar, Justice Khalid Ishaq, Justice Malik Muhammad Awais Khalid, Justice Ch. Sultan Mahmood, Justice Tanveer Ahmad Sheikh and Ms. Justice Abher Gul Khan.

The president has further approved a six-month extension in the tenure of Justice Tariq Mahmood Bajwa as an additional judge of the Lahore High Court.

For the Peshawar High Court, the president has approved the confirmation of the following six additional judges: Justice Muhammad Tariq Afridi, Justice Abdul Fayaz, Justice Salah ud Din, Justice Sadiq Ali, Justice Syed Mudasser Ameer and Justice Qazi Jawad Ehsanullah.

READ MORE: JCP recommends confirmation of SHC additional judges

For the Peshawar High Court, the president has also approved a six-month extension in the tenure of the following additional judges: Ms. Justice Farah Jamshed, Justice Inam Ullah Khan, Justice Sabit Ullah Khan and Justice Aurangzeb. The approvals have been made on the advice of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. President Zardari on January 17 appointed three additional judges of the Islamabad.

Loss and Damage Fund far below Pakistan's needs despite global pledges: Sehza

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Minister for State for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr. Shezra Mansab Ali Khan Kharal told the National Assembly on Thursday that despite repeated international commitments, Pakistan had received only a small fraction of the funds promised under the global Loss and Damage mechanism, even though it remained among the countries most severely affected by climate-induced disasters.

Responding to a question raised by Nafisa Shah during Question Hour, the minister said Pakistan continued to raise the issue of fair and timely climate financing at international forums, particularly under the Loss and Damage Fund, but progress had remained slow.

She said that during recent climate conference processes, including COP meetings, major pledges had been announced but largely remained unfulfilled. She informed the House that under recent COP-related developments, a total of \$250 million had so far been mobilised for the Loss and Damage Fund, of which \$125m was earmarked for least developed and developing countries, including Pakistan.

The minister said Pakistan had suffered massive economic and human losses.

Pakistan seeks Australian expertise to enhance output of agriculture, livestock sectors

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting with the Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Timothy Kane, to discuss ways to enhance cooperation in agriculture and livestock. The meeting held on the instructions of the Prime Minister, which was also attended by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Haroon Akhtar, the Livestock Commissioner, and senior officials from relevant departments, said a press release. During the meeting, both sides held detailed discussions on improving agricultural and livestock yields, market access issues, biosecurity concerns, and expanding technical collaboration. The Minister highlighted that Pakistan and Australia share long-standing friendly relations since 1948 and, as members of the Commonwealth, have many common values and interests. He noted that the presence of the Australian High Commissioner in Pakistan would further strengthen bilateral

cooperation. He emphasized the central role of agriculture in Pakistan's economy, stating that around 65 percent of the population is directly or indirectly linked to agriculture, while 36 percent of employment depends on this sector. He added that nearly 60 percent of Pakistan's agricultural economy is based on livestock, yet productivity remains low.

Two major challenges identified were the need to establish Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)-free zones and to improve animal weight and yield to ensure profitability for farmers. He informed the meeting that the Government of Pakistan has allocated Rs 7.35 billion for two years to control FMD, has initiated the establishment of free compartments, and is importing vaccines from Russia and China. The Minister also pointed out that Pakistan's average crop yield is around 30 maunds per acre, compared to 45 maunds per acre in India, and expressed Pakistan's desire to benefit from Australia's expertise to enhance productivity, particularly in the context of growing global food security challenges.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain in a meeting with Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan H.E. Mr Timothy Kane to discuss Pakistan-Australia cooperation in agriculture and livestock.

Attaullah Tarar congratulates newly elected office bearers of Supreme Court Press Association

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has congratulated the newly elected office bearers of the Press Association of the Supreme Court and expressed best wishes for their tenure.

In his statement, the Minister congratulated President Inam Ullah Khan, Vice President Abrar Astori, General Secretary Amanat Raza Gishkori, Finance Secretary Nisar, Information Secretary Shrish Khan, and members of the executive body Zahid Sharif, Rauf Bazmi, and Sabeen Shahbaz. The Minister termed Press Association of the Supreme Court as vital and prestigious journalistic forum. He said the Press Association of the Supreme Court is playing a vital role in promoting professional values, responsible journalism, and the supremacy of the constitution and law in judicial reporting. Attaullah Tarar expressed.

BISP budget raised to Rs 716bn, covers over 10m beneficiaries: Imran

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Syed Imran Ahmad Shah informed the National Assembly on Thursday that the total allocation for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) stood at Rs 716 billion, describing it as one of the world's leading finance-based social protection initiatives. Responding to a question by Sharmila Faruqi during the question hour, the minister said BISP operated through three core components — the Kafalat cash assistance programme, the Nashonuma nutrition initiative and educational stipends under Taleemi Wazaif — and was widely recognised internationally for its transparency and scale.

He clarified that BISP was strictly an income-support programme and not a disaster-response mechanism.

The minister said the organisation did not independently conduct relief operations during floods, earthquakes or other calamities, adding that it only acted on formal policy directions issued by the government or relevant authorities, including coordination with institutions such as the National Disaster Management Authority.

Rubina Khalid holds Live E-Katcheri; vows zero tolerance for rights violations

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid on Thursday held a live E-Katcheri at BISP Headquarters to directly engage with beneficiaries, hear public grievances, and ensure their swift and transparent resolution. Addressing the session, Senator Rubina Khalid said the Benazir Income Support Programme carries the legacy of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who devoted her life to the struggle for the rights of the poor and marginalized. She urged women across the country to draw inspiration from Mohtarma Benazir

Bhutto's courage and to raise their voices against any form of injustice, exploitation, or corruption. The Chairperson directed beneficiaries to immediately report any illegal deductions, demands for extra money, or fraudulent practices in the name of BISP or any of its initiatives. She made it clear that no compromise would be made on the rights of beneficiaries and that strict.

CASS stresses youth engagement as a key to realising Pakistan's space potential

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (titled 'Space and Pakistan's Future: Mobilising the Youth and Fostering Innovation' as part of its Tech Talk series on 21 January 2026). The session brought together experts and researchers to examine the evolving significance of space and the role of youth in Pakistan's national space ecosystem. In his opening remarks, Air Marshal (Retd) Javid Ahmed, President CASS, stated that space was

one of CASS' niche areas of research with significant strategic and developmental potential. He noted that CASS had played a consultative role during the formulation of Pakistan's Space Policy by providing policy-oriented inputs, and highlighted the lack of sufficient awareness within academia, where space studies remained largely confined to disciplines such as physics, while remaining underexplored in other academic fields. The talk was delivered by Mr Muhammad Iftikhar Yezdani, Chief Executive Officer (CEO),



Raheqamar. He argued that with nearly 64 per cent of Pakistan's population under the age of 30, the country possessed immense demographic potential to build a vibrant space ecosystem. He highlighted how the digital age

had transformed attention into a commodity and called for a shift from an 'attention economy' to an 'aspiration economy' by making space science engaging, accessible, and culturally relevant. Mr Yezdani further proposed a four-pillar

framework, i.e., Cultivate, Educate, Activate, and Amplify, to promote space awareness and innovation. His recommendations included supporting local science content creators, integrating real-time satellite data into education, launching national space challenges and CubeSat programmes, strengthening incubators, and using digital platforms to build communities around space learning. He emphasised the importance of modern science communication tools such as short-form video, immersive platforms, storytelling, and gamification

to cultivate interest in space among youth. He also stressed that Pakistan's next major leap in space would be driven not by a single technological breakthrough, but by the collective imagination, skills, and creativity of its youth. In his concluding remarks, President CASS appreciated the speaker for an insightful presentation, particularly for highlighting the importance of a bottom-up approach to space sector innovation, and reiterated the need for sustained policy focus and institutional support for Pakistan's space development.