



President, PM review political, economic & security situation



"Connectivity is no longer an option; it is an imperative": Aleem Khan



Minister reaffirms govt's resolve to safeguard education of deserving students

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Pakistan, Türkiye can play key role in global food value chain: PM

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that Pakistan desired to further strengthen its exemplary brotherly relations with Türkiye and enhance bilateral economic partnership, particularly in the fields of agriculture and livestock. The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a four-member delegation of Türkiye's Agricultural Technologies Cluster (TUME), led by its Board Chairman Abdulkadir Karagöz, here, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. Welcoming the delegation, the prime minister highlighted that there were vast opportunities to expand cooperation with the brotherly country

Türkiye in agriculture and livestock sectors. He said Pakistan was committed to modernising its agriculture sector in line with global advancements, particularly by adopting innovative technologies as successfully practiced in Türkiye's agricultural commodities and livestock sectors. "Allah Almighty has blessed Pakistan with abundant resources in the agriculture sector. We are striving to fully harness this potential through the use of modern technology and comprehensive planning," the prime minister said. He underscored the importance of enhanced bilateral cooperation to benefit from modern agricultural technologies and expertise, adding that Pakistan and Türkiye could jointly play an important role in the global food value chain.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with delegation of Turkish Agricultural Technologies Cluster Tume.

DPM/FM Dar reviews progress on privatization of SOEs

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday chaired a meeting to review progress on the privatization of state-owned entities. During the meeting, the committee took stock of ongoing efforts and discussed the way forward to ensure a transparent, competitive, and efficient process. The deputy prime minister emphasized the importance of fair market valuation, reflecting both assets and future business potential, and reiterated that privatization is aimed at encouraging private-sector investment and enabling entities to respond more effectively to market dynamics.

The meeting was attended by the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Economic Affairs, Minister for Commerce, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Privatization, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, Advisor to the Prime Minister, Attorney General for Pakistan, Secretary Privatization, and Secretary Defence.

PM Shehbaz to attend Board of Peace meeting in US: FO

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Foreign Office said on Thursday that it had formally sought details from India regarding the Sawalkot Dam project, reaffirming that there will be no compromise on the country's water rights.

Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Hussain Andrabi stated that Pakistan's Indus Water Commissioner has written to his Indian counterpart, seeking complete information about the new dam project. He emphasized that under the Indus Waters Treaty, Pakistan has the right to obtain all relevant details.



Andrabi further stated that the prime minister will attend an upcoming Board of Peace meeting, accompanied by the foreign minister and a high-level delegation. Pakistan has joined the board with positive expectations, he said. "We urge India to adhere to the Indus Waters Treaty," Andrabi said, adding that

(ISIS) attacks is present in Afghanistan and that evidence of the group's presence there has been shared with global partners.

He added that Pakistan reserves the right to self-defense.

The spokesperson highlighted recent diplomatic engagements, including the visit of Uzbekistan's president to Pakistan, during which both sides agreed to enhance bilateral trade to \$2 billion and expand the preferential trade agreement. He also noted the visit of Kazakhstan's president, where discussions covered security, defense cooperation, and joint military exercises.

Non-bailable arrest warrants reissued for Aleema Khan in Nov 26 protest case

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: A special anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Rawalpindi has reissued non-bailable arrest warrants for Aleema Khan during the hearing of the November 26 protest case.

The case was heard by ATC Judge Amjad Ali Shah, who directed authorities to arrest Aleema Khan and present her before the court on Friday. The hearing of the case against Aleema Khan has been adjourned until Friday, February 13.

2 Pakistani nationals indicted in US for alleged role in \$10m healthcare fraud

PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: Two Pakistani nationals were indicted in the United States for their alleged role in a \$10 million healthcare fraud scheme that targeted Medicare and private insurance programmes, the Department of Justice (DOJ) said on Thursday. According to a statement by the DOJ, Burhan Mirza, 31, and Kashif Iqbal, 48, along with several co-schemers, were accused of submitting fraudulent claims for medical services and equipment that were never provided.

SC orders medical board to assess Imran Khan's eye after 15pc vision report

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has directed the formation of a medical board to examine former Prime Minister Imran Khan's eyes, following a report submitted to the court in which the PTI founder said he has only "15 per cent" vision remaining in his right eye. The court also ordered authorities to ensure his eye examination is done before February 16. A division bench of the apex court, comprising Chief Justice Yahya Afridi and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan, resumed hearing the case on Imran Khan's living conditions in Adiala jail on Thursday.

The court also directed that the former premier be allowed to speak to his children. PTI counsel Barrister Salman Safdar, the "Friend of Court", read out a report stating that the PTI founder had expressed satisfaction over security arrangements and food facilities provided in jail. The barrister met Imran at Adiala Jail on Tuesday and submitted a seven-page report to the court regard-

ing Imran's living condition in the prison. In his report, the counsel quoted Imran as telling him that "despite the treatment administered (including an injection), he has been left with only 15 percent vision in his right eye". Barrister Safdar said that Imran Khan told him that about "three to four months earlier, until October 2025, he had normal vision in both eyes".

He then began experiencing persistent blurred and hazy vision, which he repeatedly reported to the then-jail superintendent but "no action was taken by the jail authorities".

Chief Justice Yahya Afridi remarked that the court would pass an appropriate order after reviewing the recommendations presented in the report. He stated that the matter would remain pending until a decision by the Islamabad High Court and that the court had also reserved its decision regarding the PTI founder's health. The chief justice emphasized that health was the most important issue and that the government's position on the matter would be sought.

US House passes bill to require proof of US citizenship for midterm voters



PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: The Republican-controlled House of Representatives voted on Wednesday to require proof of US citizenship in the November midterm elections, which Democrats said would impose unnecessary burdens on American voters and concentrate electoral power in the hands of President Donald Trump.

Lawmakers voted 218-213 to approve the SAVE America Act, with only one Democrat joining Republicans to back the measure. The action sends the legislation on to the Republican-led Senate, where it is expected to receive a vote but unlikely to garner the 60-vote, filibuster-proof majority needed for passage.



SPORTS



T20 World Cup: India tune-up for Pakistan showdown with 93-run rout of Namibia



PEAK POINT

NEW DELHI: India tuned up for their blockbuster showdown with Pakistan at the Men's T20 World Cup with a 93-run hammering of Namibia at New Delhi's Arun Jaitley Stadium on Thursday.

With the high-octane game against their arch-rivals looming in Colombo on Sunday, Ishan Kishan got in the mood with 61 off just 24 balls to push India to 209-9. Namibia, who won the toss and chose to field, were bowled out for 116 as India matched Pakistan in making it two wins out of two in Group A. Spinner Varun Chakravarthy put the squeeze on

Namibia, who started their innings brightly, with 3-7 from two overs as defending champions India made it 10 wins in a row in T20 World Cups. Chakravarthy struck with his first ball to remove Louren Steenkamp for 29 and took two more wickets in his second over. Fellow spinner Axar Patel took two wickets with his left-arm spin, including Malan Kruger, for five, when Jasprit Bumrah took a high, diving catch at short fine-leg. Hardik Pandya took two wickets in two balls near the end, but the hat-trick was averted before the innings folded in 18.2 overs. For India, Sanju Samson

struck 22 in eight balls and Kishan smacked left-arm pace bowler JJ Smit for four sixes and a four to raise his fifty off 20 balls. India raced to 100 in the seventh over before off-spinner Gerhard Erasmus dismissed Kishan with the first ball of his spell before finishing with 4-20 from his four overs. India had a mini-collapse from 104-1 to 124-4, before Pandya, who hit 52, and Shivam Dube, who made 23, rebuilt the innings with a stand of 81 for the fifth wicket. Pandya fell to Erasmus with substitute fielder Dylan Leicher taking a stunning grab in

the deep. He caught the ball on the run but flipped the ball up inside the playing area as he stepped over the ropes, before crossing back to complete the catch. The Pakistan government late on Tuesday reversed its order for the cricket team to boycott Sunday's match as a protest at Bangladesh being kicked out of the tournament. India top the group from Pakistan on net run rate, and the winner of Sunday's clash will be assured of advancing to the Super Eight stage as one of the top two in the five-team group.

ICC fines Mohammad Nabi for code of conduct breach



PEAK POINT

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has imposed a fine on Afghan cricketer Mohammad Nabi for breaching the ICC Code of Conduct during a T20 World Cup match.

According to an ICC statement, Nabi was fined 15 percent of his match fee for violating the code of conduct in Afghanistan's Group D match against South Africa on Wednesday.

The incident occurred at the start of the 14th over of Afghanistan's innings, when Nabi engaged in a prolonged argument with the umpires over South African bowler Lungi Ngidi's wrist band.

Nabi was found guilty of violating Article 2.4 of the ICC Code of Conduct, which relates to disobeying an umpire's instructions during an international match. One demerit point was also added to his disciplinary record.

The ICC said Nabi admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by the match referee, making a formal hearing unnecessary. Afghanistan suffered a heart-breaking defeat against South Africa in a double Super Over at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad during the Men's T20 World Cup.

Pakistan Women's 'A' begin Asia Cup Rising Stars campaign against Nepal



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Pakistan Women's 'A' team will begin their campaign in the Asia Cup Rising Stars 2026 by facing Nepal in their opening Group A match in Bangkok, Thailand, today (Friday) at 7:30am PST. They will next face India 'A' on

Feb 15, followed by a clash against UAE on Feb 17. Group B features Bangladesh 'A', Sri Lanka 'A', Malaysia, and hosts Thailand. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semifinals on Feb 20, while the final is scheduled for Feb 22. Right-handed batter Hafsa Khalid will lead

Pakistan Women's 'A' after Umm-e-Hani's promotion to the national T20I squad, with coach Mohammad Masroor. Captain Hafsa Khalid expressed confidence in her squad, saying the tournament offers a valuable opportunity to learn and exhibit their prowess at the international level.

FG Polo beat Balochistan 8-5 in Diamond Paints Polo Cup

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: FG Polo delivered an impressive performance to defeat Team Balochistan 8-5 on the second day of the Diamond Paints Polo Cup 2026, being held under the auspices of Jinnah Polo Fields. The 10-goal tournament, sponsored by Diamond Paints,



is featuring highly competitive and entertaining matches, attracting significant attention from polo enthusiasts and families alike. The match witnessed the presence of prominent personalities, including Diamond Paints CEO Mir Shoaib Ahmed, Director Mir

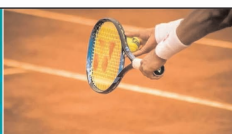
Huzaifa Ahmed, and skill to secure a Muhammad Farhad Jinnah Polo Fields over Team each. Team Balochistan showed resilience and determination, with Raja Sami and Marcos Rivarola delivered outstanding performances, scoring all five goals each. Despite exceptional teamwork Monnoo and Sheikh his strong effort.

Rs. 1.033 Billion released to Sports Federations in three years as Tennis federation alone receives Rs. 50.432 Million

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: Fresh figures presented during a National Assembly question answer session have revealed that over Rs. 1.033 billion in public funds were disbursed by the Pakistan Sports Board to federal sports federations over the last three fiscal years, raising renewed scrutiny over spending patterns, performance outcomes, and oversight mechanisms in Pakistan's sports sector. According to official data shared in response to Question No. 47 and corresponding, the Pakistan Sports Board released Rs. 422.293 million during fiscal year 2022-23, followed by Rs. 509.133 million in 2023-24. However, allocations sharply dropped in 2024-25 to Rs. 101.996 million. The combined total for

the three fiscal years stands at Rs. 1,033,422 million, crossing the one billion rupee mark in public funding directed toward sports organizations. Included within the 2022-23 disbursement was a specific district level grant of Rs. 0.80 million paid to the District Football Association, Lakki Marwat, indicating that funds were not confined to national federations but also extended to local level bodies. Separate disclosures under Question No. 43 provided a detailed breakdown of grants awarded specifically to the Pakistan Tennis Federation since fiscal year 2020-21. The federation received Rs. 3,000 million in 2020-21, Rs. 6,180 million in 2021-22, Rs. 5,097 million in 2022-23, a major spike to Rs. 32,905 million in 2023-24, and Rs. 3,250 million in 2024-25. The cumulative total dis-



bursed to the Pakistan Tennis Federation during this five year period stands at Rs. 50.432 million. The dramatic increase in 2023-24, from Rs. 32,905 million compared to Rs. 5,097 million the previous year, is likely to trigger questions regarding justification, performance benchmarks, and alignment with national sports priorities. In response to concerns over transparency and financial discipline, the Ministry confirmed that new regulatory safeguards have been introduced. The "Sports Funding and Utilization Regulations Pakistan 2025" were approved in the 34th meeting of the Pakistan Sports Board on 25 July 2025. Under the new framework, federations must submit detailed activity plans, budget estimates, and measurable performance targets before funds are released. They are also required to maintain proper vouchers and submit periodic financial and performance reports. The regulations empower the Pakistan Sports Board to conduct audits and inspections and provide for the suspension of future grants in

cases of misuse, irregularities, or non-compliance. The stated objective of the reforms is to enforce financial discipline and ensure result based utilization of public funds rather than unchecked administrative spending. Strategically, the funds are being channeled toward major national sports goals. A High Performance Sports Academy is being established under the direction of the Prime Minister to provide scientific training and structured athlete development. Additionally, a Long Term Athlete Development Programme has been launched targeting the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. This programme covers ten disciplines: Athletics, Boxing, Judo, Squash, Taekwondo, Wrestling, Table Tennis, and Shooting. Funding is also being aligned with Pakistan's preparation for upcoming international events, including the 2026 Winter Olympics in Italy, the 6th Asian Beach Games in China, and the 14th South Asian Games scheduled to be hosted by Pakistan in March 2027. While the government has emphasized regulatory tightening and performance linked disbursement, the scale of allocations of Rs. 1,033 billion over three years places pressure on sports authorities to demonstrate measurable outcomes in international performance, athlete development, and governance standards. With new oversight rules now in place and audit provisions activated, the focus is expected to shift from mere disbursement figures to tangible sporting results on the global stage.



Excess fees beyond approved cap to Be refunded or adjusted next year: PM&DC

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) has reaffirmed its commitment to the strict enforcement of the approved fee cap for medical and dental colleges across the country, warning that any excess amount charged from students will either be refunded or adjusted in the following academic year. The assurance was given during an interactive session with media representatives chaired by PM&DC President Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj, alongside

Registrar Dr. Rehan Asghar Naqvi. The meeting focused on key achievements, ongoing initiatives, and matters of public concern, including fee regulation, student welfare, and institutional compliance. Media representatives acknowledged the Council's fee capping initiative but raised concerns that some institutions continue to charge tuition beyond the officially approved limit. Responding to these concerns, Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj stated that PM&DC is closely monitoring all medical and dental colleges to



ensure full compliance with the policy. He emphasized that access to quality medical and dental education is a fundamental right of every student, regardless of financial background or social standing. The President noted that the Council has repeatedly issued public notices advising students and parents not to pay any amount exceeding the approved fee cap. He further revealed that show-cause notices have been issued to 12 institutions found in violation of the policy. However, he added that some of these

colleges have sought legal recourse, making the matter sub judice. Despite the ongoing litigation, Prof. Dr. Rizwan said an understanding has been reached with the Pakistan Association of Medical Institutions (PAMI), under which institutions are expected to withdraw court cases and provide relief to students. A follow-up meeting with PAMI is scheduled for later this month. During the meeting, it will be determined that any institution seeking an enhanced fee cap—up to a maximum of Rs 2.5 million—must submit detailed financial justifications. Any proposed increase will undergo a formal evaluation process and will only be approved after thorough assessment by PM&DC. The Council reiterated that, except for institutions formally granted approval, any college found charging beyond the authorized cap will be required to provide relief to students. "Any excessive fee collected will either be refunded or adjusted in the next academic year," the PM&DC President stated.

Intercollegiate Singing and Fresh Flower Arrangement Contest 2026 begins at IMCG (PG) G-10/4

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: The Intercollegiate Singing and Fresh Flower Arrangement Contest 2026 commenced on Thursday at Islamabad Model College for Girls (Postgraduate) G-10/4, drawing enthusiastic participation from colleges across the federal capital and celebrating Pakistan's rich artistic and cultural heritage.

Renowned singer, Babar Niazi was the chief guest, while Awais Niazi attended as guest of honour, adding prestige and inspiration to the vibrant opening ceremony. The competitions were

judged by distinguished panels. The Fresh Flower Arrangement category was evaluated by Ms. Nosheen, Ms. Ayesha Khaliq and Mr. Ayub Wali, while the singing competition was adjudicated by Dr. Abid Hussain, Mr. Aqdas Hashmi and Ms. Hadsah Yaad.

The floral contest revolved around the evocative theme, "When Winter Whispers, Spring Blossoms," with participants creatively expressing seasonal transition through artistic arrangements.

The first musical round featured soulful ghazals by classical poets including



Mirza Ghalib, Momin Khan Momin, Allama Iqbal, Hasrat Mohani and Munir Niazi, alongside melodies made immortal by legendary singers such as Ustad Amanat Ali Khan, Mehdi Hasan, Noor Jehan, Farida Khanum, Ghulam Ali, Munni Begum and Malka Pukhraj, as well as selected Pakistani film songs. During the interlude, the host college also highlighted

the social issue of the harmful Swara practice to raise awareness.

The second segment showcased lively folk singing and cultural dances representing all provinces, echoing the powerful voices of Arif Lohar, Atta Ullah Khan Esakhelvi, Allan Faqir, Reshma, Saen Zahoore, Dhol Faqir and others, reflecting the vibrant cultural soul of the nation.

In the Fresh Flower Arrangement category, the consolation prize went to IMCG Korang, third prize to ICG F-6/2, second prize to IMCG F-6/2, while first prize was initially secured by

IMCG (PG) G-10/4, which graciously withdrew in favour of IMCG (PG) F-7/2.

For the Ghazal category, consolation prize was awarded to IMCG (PG) Margalla F-7/4, third prize to IMCG (PG) G-10/4, second prize to IMCG (PG) F-7/2 and first prize to ICG F-6/2, while the host college humbly withdrew in favour of IMCG Humak.

In the Folk category, consolation prize went to IMCG I-14/3, third prize to IMCG (PG) F-7/2, second prize jointly to IMCG (PG) G-10/4 and IHAD F-11/1, while first prize was clinched by IMCG F-6/2.

Opinion & Editorial

Of heroes & humps

F.S. Aijazuddin
THE Lahore LitFest 2026 featured heroes, hieroglyphics, and camel humps. It opened on Feb 6 with a tribute to Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE). By the age of 25, Alexander was the acknowledged ruler over a million miles of territory — from Greece across Egypt to the banks of the Indus. He became richer than all his contemporaries. He conquered without threats or tariffs or trumpeting. He made his nation great again — preempting Donald Trump and Elon Musk.

At LLF 2026, however, Alexander had to fight for attention against the Ptolemies, the emperor Aurangzeb, Vasco de Gama, Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Irish freedom fighters, and our own hero — the late Prof Dr Bashir Ahmad, the pioneer of neurosurgery in Pakistan. Back-to-back LitFests across Pakistan draw upon a table d'hôte of panellists. Some are tempted to recycle their speeches or presentations on the assumption that audiences in different cities do not watch YouTube or read press coverage.

This year's LLF featured popular writers like Mohsin Hamid and Kamila Shamsie and newcomers like Maha Phillips and Sam Dalrymple (son of William Dalrymple). The Dalrymples are to us in the subcontinent what the Trevelyan family was to British literary history. Sam

Dalrymple's recent book on Five Partitions reminded us of Punjab's partition in 1947. There were no invitees from India — our 'distant neighbour' which lies less than 25 kilometres to our east. True, the film director/screenwriter Deepa Mehta came. Her films — Fire (1996), Earth (1998) and Water (2005) — have a ready audience on both sides of the Wagah border. But Deepa is now a Canadian national; her India is at one remove.

Lyse Doucet, also a Canadian, is the BBC's Chief International Correspondent. She spoke about our other neighbour — Afghanistan. An accomplished presenter, she discussed her book The Finest Hotel in Kabul: A People's History of Afghanistan (2025). It is an affectionate foreshortened history of Afghanistan, using the International Hotel in Kabul as a setting. The once opulent hotel opened in 1969. Over the years, it managed to survive the USSR occupation, the retaliatory US invasion, bloody interethnic coups, and finally the deadening impact of the Taliban.

Lahore has been truly reborn. Lyse draws upon the recollections and experiences of its long-suffering staff — among them the septuagenarian housekeeper Hazrat and Abida (the hotel's first female chef). Her book reminded me of the 1951 film Hotel Sahara, a farce set

in World War II, when a hotel finds itself trapped between the warring Italian, British, French, German and finally the US armies. The hotel owner juggles his political allegiance according to whoever is in occupation.

Sessions on sports, theatre, women's rights, muslim, nostalgia and Cordoba leavened the three-day menu. It would be unfair to identify those that held more appeal. Lahore has as many tombs as Egypt. Those with a classical bent of mind saw Dr Salima Ikram resurrect ancient Egyptology. Attracted to the subject from the age of eight (which of us wasn't?), she is now a professor of Egyptology at the American University in Cairo and an active archaeologist. She dazzled the audience with an oral reading of arcane hieroglyphics. Her book Choice Cuts: Meat Production in Ancient Egypt (1995) might have been difficult for Lahoris to digest.

A lively session on spices compensated. It dealt with the international trade in spices throughout history — as a condiment, a preservative, and all too often as a weapon between empires (especially the Portuguese and Spanish). Who knew, for instance, that the emperor of spices is black pepper or that the queen of spices is the modest cardamom? Anissa Helou, an authority on Middle Eastern cuisine, regards Lahore as her second kitchen.

Courtesy Dawn

How do we treat our heroes?

Akbar N Shad

On the one hand, we have erased from our collective memory the contributions of a vast gallery of towering figures from this region. On the other, even those whom we do hail as national heroes are rarely accepted in their totality; instead, we attempt to manage and control their posthumous public images.

Perhaps we do not celebrate Sir Ganga Ram and Bhagat Singh because they were not Muslims. We display a peculiar behaviour when it comes to acknowledging the contributions of people belonging to faiths other than Islam, even when these individuals are our countrymen or hail from areas that now constitute Pakistan.

Dilip Kumar — Yousuf Khan — holds a special place in our hearts despite the fact that whatever he achieved was the result of his work in Bollywood. Raj Kapoor — who was also a neighbour of Dilip Kumar in Peshawar — is, however, shown no such special affinity.

Maharaja Ranjeet Singh established perhaps the largest empire ever to have its capital in Lahore, yet our textbooks make little or no mention of him. While Sir Ganga Ram and Bhagat Singh were forgotten for being non-Muslims, Allama Mashriqi and Allah Bux Soomro were ignored perhaps because they opposed the All-India Muslim League and the idea of Pakistan.

What must be understood is that before 1947, Pakistan was merely an idea. Those who opposed it were not opposing their homeland; they were contesting a political concept. Once Pakistan came into being, they did not oppose the state itself.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan is widely regarded as a founding father of Pakistan. While his educational and social contributions are duly acknowledged, his religious thought is rarely discussed — either in our textbooks or in the media.

Courtesy Tribune

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Curtailing solar

THE rushed Nepra decision to change the contract terms for both existing and future net-metered prosumers is clearly aimed at protecting the state's costly but inefficient grid by limiting solar adoption. The move risks exacerbating the power sector's deep-seated structural flaws. The shift from a net-metering framework to a net-billing regime without weighing in the concerns raised by most independent stakeholders at a recent public hearing indicates the government's view that rapid private solar adoption is eroding distribution companies' revenues and transferring its financial costs to consumers who are totally grid-dependent. Essentially, the regulator has altered how rooftop solar users are paid for the electricity they send to the grid. Even if they export to the grid the same number of units they later import, they will still pay a bill because the grid buys their electricity cheaply but sells it back at a much higher price. This reduces the financial savings for prosumers from rooftop solar, which will likely push them towards greater self-consumption and behind-the-meter installations. This will accelerate grid defections, exacerbating grid underutilisation and making fixed-cost recovery harder. While the prime minister has taken note of Nepra's decision following an outcry,

TTAP to stage sit-in outside Parliament House after Friday prayers following revelations about Imran's vision loss



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The opposition alliance Tehreek-i-Tahafuz-i-Ayin-i-Pakistan (TTAP) on Thursday said that it would stage a sit-in outside Parliament on Friday.

The development came hours after the Supreme Court (SC) was informed that only 15 per cent vision was left in the PTI founder's right eye, prompting a strong response from the PTI.

The information was shared in a report submitted to the SC by PTI counsel Advocate Salman Safdar, who quoted the PTI founder as telling him that "he has been left with only 15pc vision in his right eye".

Videos shared by the TTAP on the social media platform X on Thursday night showed Senate opposition leader Allama Raja Nasir Abbas speaking to the media alongside the PTI leadership.

"After Friday prayers, we will stage a sit-in outside Parliament," he said.

"We demand that Khan sahib be given full access to doctors whom he trusts," he said.

"I am told that Imran's personal physician, Dr Asim Yusuf, is at Shifa Hospital, as are Dr Amir Awan and Dr Mazhar Ishaq; these are the two top specialists in Rawalpindi," Abbas said. "We can trust them, so we demand that he (Imran) be shifted immediately and provided the right treatment," he added. "He (Imran) was in the custody of the government, and his medical care and access to doctors were their responsibility," he asserted.

TTAP chief Mehmood Khan Achakzai said that the opposition would present their demands at tomorrow's sit-in. "Our demand is just, and nobody will use abusive language or say hurtful things," he vowed.

Awais Leghari says power reforms cut tariffs by 35%, save consumers thousands monthly

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Thursday said that reforms in Pakistan's power sector are producing results, with consumers saving thousands of rupees every month and industry receiving tariff relief of more than 35 percent. He said the country's total electricity demand currently stands at 8,000 megawatts, while 55 percent of energy this year has come from clean sources, with a target of 60 percent by 2030 and 90 percent by 2034. Addressing the inauguration ceremony of the Prime Minister's Fan Replacement Program, the minister said improvements in the energy sector are the outcome of joint efforts by the government. He said negotiations with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) have been completed suc-

cessfully and reforms are being implemented to ensure that their benefits reach ordinary consumers. The minister said priority will be given to people in underdeveloped areas and to low electricity users. Under the program, consumers will see monthly savings of thousands of rupees on their electricity bills. He added that the government aims to bring Pakistan's energy sector in line with global energy markets.

He said the fan replacement program is part of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's power sector reforms.

"Connectivity is no longer an option; it is an imperative": Aleem Khan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Thursday called for enhanced cooperation among OIC member states, saying connectivity was no longer an option but an imperative for achieving shared prosperity, stability and sustainable growth. Addressing the 2nd OIC Conference of Transport Ministers (OIC-CTM) in Istanbul, the minister said physical, economic and digital connectivity had emerged as the primary drivers of prosperity, stability, and collective growth, said a press release. "Connectivity is no longer an option; it is an imperative," Aleem Khan

Speaking in the historic city of Istanbul, the Minister underscored that in an increasingly interconnected world, no nation can achieve sustainable progress in isolation.

He praised Türkiye's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's vision that has transformed Türkiye over the past two decades. He further positioned Pakistan as a natural gateway for regional and inter-regional trade, citing its strategic location at the crossroads of South

Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Far East. The minister detailed Pakistan's substantial investments in modernizing its transport and logistics infrastructure, which includes high-speed motorways, railways, and ports designed to link urban centers with international gateways.

A central focus of this transformation is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC); the Minister noted that the project is now entering "CPEC 2.0," a phase dedicated to industrial development and inclusive investment opportunities for OIC Member States. At the heart of this network is Gwadar Port, which the Minister highlighted as a vital deep-sea hub offering the shortest maritime access to landlocked Central Asian states.

The minister also highlighted Pakistan's rapid digital transformation in the transport sector, stating that the country was implementing e-port integration and paperless transit systems in line with international standards.

He noted that Pakistan had expanded its e-visa facility to 126 countries to promote business and tourism.

President, PM review political, economic & security situation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Thursday called on President Asif Ali Zardari here at Aiwan-e-Sadr, where they reviewed the country's political, economic and security situation as well as the prevailing regional and global environment.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar; Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control, Senator Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi; Minister for Law & Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar; Minister for Economic Affairs Division, Senator Ahad Khan Cheema; Advisor to the Prime Minister, Dr. Syed Touqeer Hussain Shah; Advisor to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Senator Rana Sanaulah, Senator Sherry Rehman and MNA, Raja Pervez Ashraf, a Presidency's news release said.

Governor Kundi calls for stronger parliamentary role to curb terror financing

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday underscored the need for a robust parliamentary role, effective legislation and enhanced institutional capacity to eliminate terrorism and counter its financial networks.

Addressing a dialogue-based workshop on countering extremism and terrorism organized by the Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) in Islamabad as chief guest, the Governor said that alongside eliminating terrorist elements, devising an effective strategy against terror financing was indispensable.

He stressed that evolving security challenges required a

collective, coordinated and comprehensive national response.

"Parliament holds a central role in formulating a strong framework against terrorism and its financial support mechanisms," he said.

The Governor appreciated SSDO for organizing a timely and purposeful workshop, terming such platforms essential for meaningful deliberation, coordination and effective policymaking rather than mere formal gatherings.

Minister reaffirms govt's resolve to safeguard education of deserving students

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Syed Imran Ahmad Shah Thursday underscored the government's unwavering commitment to protecting the educational future of underprivileged students, stating that no talented youth would be allowed to abandon studies due to financial hardship. During his visit to the National University of Modern Languages (NUML), the minister briefed the media on the scope, transparency and impact of educational scholarships being provided through Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, describing the initiative as a cornerstone of the government's social protection framework. He informed

that under Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal's Individual Financial Assistance (Education) Programme, more than 75,000 students across the country have received educational support since 2004, with total expenditures exceeding PKR 2 billion. The programme, he said, has ensured continuity of education for thousands of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.



Federal Minister for Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan, addressing 2nd OIC Transport Ministers' Conference in Istanbul.

President Mirziyoyev's visit to Pakistan to catalyze economic ties, regional integration: Uzbek deputy FM

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: First Deputy Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Bakhromjon Aloyev on Thursday said that the recent state visit of Uzbek President, Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Pakistan would serve as a catalyst for strengthening bilateral economic and trade relations as well as advancing regional economic integration between the two countries.

Addressing a roundtable discussion titled "Uzbekistan and Pakistan on the Path to Strategic Partnership: Outcomes of President

Shavkat Mirziyoyev's state visit to Islamabad," Aloyev said the visit marked the beginning of a new chapter in bilateral history and would lead to enhanced strategic cooperation and expanded economic prospects.

The event was organized by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Islamabad and attended by representatives from academia, think tanks and policy circles.

Aloyev said a joint declaration was signed during the visit along with around 20 agreements and memorandums of understanding cov-



ering diverse areas of cooperation.

He noted that both sides also held extensive discussions to enhance bilateral trade and investment collaboration. He expressed optimism that trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan

would increase manifold, adding that both countries had set a target of reaching \$2 billion in bilateral trade in the coming years.

The deputy foreign minister also highlighted that the Government of Pakistan conferred its highest civilian

award, Nishan-e-Pakistan, on President Mirziyoyev in recognition of his contributions toward strengthening bilateral relations.

He emphasized that Pakistan and Uzbekistan could play a pivotal role in fostering economic integration between South and Central Asia, adding that President Mirziyoyev's visit was part of a broader vision to enhance regional connectivity and cooperation. In his concluding remarks, Aloyev expressed hope for the continued prosperity and development of both nations,

underscoring their significant role in strengthening bilateral ties and promoting regional progress.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Alisher Tukhtaev described President Mirziyoyev's visit as a historic milestone that elevated bilateral relations to a qualitatively new strategic level.

He said the visit was held in an atmosphere of traditional friendship, mutual respect and trust that had linked the peoples of both countries for centuries.