

Pakistan seeks peace & good neighbourly ties, but not at cost of dignity: Gilani

Turkish ambassador calls on CJP ahead of Constitutional Court president's visit

Punjab health reforms to ensure transparent, timely care: Abbasi

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Pakistan working with European partners to 'jointly ban' illegal immigration: PM Shehbaz

PEAK POINT

VIENNA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Monday that Pakistan was working with European partners to "jointly ban" illegal immigration.

The premier made the remarks while addressing the Pakistan-Austria Business Forum in Vienna, where he arrived a day earlier for a two-day official visit.

Addressing the forum, PM Shehbaz said Pakistan was "absolutely" against illegal immigration, and gave assurance that the government of Pakistan was "working with our European friends — Austria, France, and Germany — to jointly ban this illegal immigration [and bring it] to a grinding halt".

He affirmed that Pakistan would fulfil

Austria's "demand for skilled labour" as per the international certification required by it.

Every year, many young Pakistanis leave the country via illegal routes in hopes of better employment opportunities.

A 2023 study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Union (EU) found that 24,000 Pakistanis entered EU countries illegally over the past three years.

At the outset of his address, the premier stressed that Pakistan and Austria shared "long-standing friendly relations".

The premier outlined the areas in which the two countries remained "proactively engaged", including mining and minerals and renewable energy.



VIENNA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in delegation level talks with Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker.

Pakistan, Sri Lanka agree to expand security and anti-narcotics cooperation

PEAK POINT



COLOMBO: Pakistan and Sri Lanka have agreed to enhance cooperation between their interior ministries, focusing on internal security, counter-terrorism, and anti-narcotics

efforts. Federal Interior and Narcotics Control Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited Sri Lanka's Ministry of Home Affairs, where he was warmly received by Sri Lankan Minister for Home Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs Ananda Wijepala. During the meeting, both sides discussed strengthening mutual assistance in internal security, counter-terrorism, and drug control operations. They also deliberated on forming a joint strategy against cyber-crime and financial fraud networks. The two countries agreed to enhance coordination to curb illegal immigration and narcotics trafficking. Discussions were also held on launching joint training programs for police and paramilitary forces. Mohsin Naqvi offered training opportunities to Sri Lankan police officers at Pakistan's National Police Academy stating that exchange programs would improve the professional capacity of law enforcement agencies in both nations.

Field Marshal Munir reaffirms commitment to UAE's security, stability

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Commander of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Asim Munir on Monday further affirmed that the security and stability of the United Arab Emirates are an integral part of Pakistan's own security, given the enduring historical relations and strong strategic partnership between the two countries.

The Field Marshal on held a meeting in Abu Dhabi with Sheikh Tahnoon bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Ruler of Abu Dhabi and National Security Advisor of the United Arab Emirates, ISPR said in a press release. The two sides discussed



ways to further strengthen bilateral cooperation across various sectors, particularly in the fields of economic collaboration, investment and security. They also exchanged views on regional developments and emphasized the importance of continued coordination to promote peace and stability in the

region. Field Marshal Asim Munir expressed his sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for its longstanding investments and continued support to Pakistan's economy and security over the decades.

He noted that such

support reflects the deep-rooted historical relations between the two brotherly countries and commended the constructive role of the UAE leadership in advancing economic and social development in Pakistan. He reiterated Pakistan's firm commitment to continuing joint efforts.

Pakistan rejects Israel's illegal measures in the occupied West Bank

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday strongly condemned the latest attempt by Israel to convert areas of the Occupied West Bank into so-called state property, and to expand illegal settlement activities. "Such steps are in clear violation of international law as well as relevant United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and must be rejected by the international community," a press statement issued by the Foreign Office spokesperson said. It added that the occupying power's continued

PTI founder has 70pc vision in one eye with glasses, other eye fully normal: Law Minister

PEAK POINT

SHEIKHUPURA: Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar stated that the PTI founder has 70 per cent vision in one eye with the help of glasses, while his other eye has normal 6/6 vision. Addressing a ceremony at the Sheikhupura Bar Council, he said a medical team has expressed complete satisfaction over the ongoing treatment of the PTI founder.

Opposition leaders and the former prime minister's

Opposition alliance's sit-in over PTI founder Imran Khan's health enters fourth day

dates, biscuits, and tap water. He also announced the protest at KP House. Yousafzai said the gov-



rejected the examination, claiming it was conducted without the presence of his family or personal doctors and describing it as "malicious."

Earlier on Sunday, PTI MNA Asad Qaiser stated that the party, along with the opposition alliance, would maintain pressure on the government through continued protests to ensure Imran Khan's transfer to a hospital. "We will not compromise on Imran's health," he said, adding that the government was testing the party's resolve.

He further said the sit-ins would continue until their demands were accepted and Imran Khan was shifted to Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad. He also confirmed that the party planned to approach the Supreme Court on Monday to seek justice.

At least 2 killed, 17 injured in explosion near police station in KP's Bannu



PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: At least two people were killed and 17 others injured in a powerful explosion near Miryan Police Station in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bannu district on Monday. According to a statement by the police, the blast occurred when a time bomb planted in a motorcycle detonated. A child was among those killed in the explosion. Police sources said the blast took place near shops located in front of the station. Although police personnel remained unharmed, civilians in the vicinity were caught in the blast. Several of the injured are reported to be in critical condition. Medical Teaching Institution (MTI) spokesperson, Muhammad Noman Khattab, stated that the victims were brought.

SPORTS



England survive Italy scare to reach T20 World Cup Super Eights

Defeat against India; Babar and Shaheen likely to face axe against Namibia



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: After a humiliating defeat at the hands of India in the T20 World Cup on Sunday, the Pakistan team management is considering to oust Babar Azam and Shaheen Afridi in the last group match against Namibia, sources said on Monday.

They added that the team management was contemplating two to three changes for the match against Namibia after an overall poor performance against India.

There is serious consideration of giving bench strength players a chance in place of senior players, confided the sources.

Pakistan will play do-or-die match against Namibia on February 18 to qualify for the Super Eights stage.

The team can also qualify if the match is washed out due to rain as it will get a point and move up the points table with five points to United States' 4.

At present, the United States is at second place with a higher net run rate than Pakistan.

Italy captain Harry Manenti ramped Jamie Overton only for keeper Buttler to leap and take a stunning one-handed grab at full stretch. Italy rebuilt brilliantly from 22-3 with Ben Manenti racing to 60 off 25 balls before he was caught by Tom Banton at long-on off Jacks. Manenti smashed six sixes and four fours in a stand of 92 with Justin Mosca for the fourth wicket. When Mosca was caught in the deep by Banton off Rashid to make it 135-5 in the 15th over, it seemed Italy's hopes of pulling off only the third successful 200-plus chase in the history of the T20 World Cup might be over.

England's passage to the Super Eights along with the already-qualified West Indies from Group C, South Africa and India.

Sensational catch Italy got off to a terrible start in reply as Jofra Archer took wickets in the first over.

Jos Buttler then pulled off one of the catches of the tournament.

PEAK POINT

KOLKATA: England survived a scare to qualify for the Super Eights at the T20 World Cup on Monday as Italy's swashbuckling chase of 203 fell agonisingly short in a pulsating match in Kolkata.

Will Jacks scored the fastest T20 World Cup fifty for England as they made 202-7, their highest total of the tournament so far, and eventually won by 24 runs.

Italy, the lowest-ranked team in the tournament, were on track to pull off a sensational upset when Grant Stewart and Jaspreet Singh blasted 21 off Adil Rashid's final over, the 17th of the chase, includ-

ing three sixes. That left 30 needed off 21 balls, but it proved too much and Italy were all out off the last ball of the match for 178. Most of England's batsmen got good starts earlier after Harry Brook won the toss and chose to bat. But only Jack's capitalised as Italy kept chipping away with regular wickets. He reached his fifty off 21 balls to beat Eoin Morgan's 25-ball effort against the West Indies in Kandy in 2012.

Jacks took the game by the scruff of the neck after England stuttered to 105-5 in the 13th over.

He put on 54 in 25 balls with Sam Curran (25) for the sixth

wicket and 35 in 16 balls with Jamie Overton (15) for the seventh. His fourth six, which took him to his fifty, also saw England pass 200 for the first time in the tournament, with Jacks finishing 53 not out off 22 balls.

The win guaranteed England's passage to the Super Eights along with the already-qualified West Indies from Group C, South Africa and India.

Sensational catch

Italy got off to a terrible start in reply as Jofra Archer took wickets in the first over.

Jos Buttler then pulled off one of the catches of the tournament.

Shahid Afridi calls for dropping senior players after India defeat



PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi launched a scathing criticism of the national team's senior players following Pakistan's crushing loss to India in their ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 clash in Colombo on Sunday.

Playing at the R. Premadasa Stadium, India posted 175 for 7, seal a comprehensive

powerful victory. The loss further extended Pakistan's poor record against India in World Cups, with India now having won eight of their nine meetings in T20 World Cups and all eight encounters in ODI World Cups.

Reacting to the defeat, Afridi said he would drop senior players Shaheen Afridi, Babar Azam and Shadab Khan if

the decision were up to him, calling the loss "humiliating".

Afridi said the trio have served Pakistan for a long time and, as senior players, are expected to perform in high-pressure matches. He argued that when experienced players fail to deliver, opportunities should be created for younger and emerging cricketers.

The former skipper added that he would have preferred Pakistan to field new faces in their match against Namibia, stressing that international exposure is vital for grooming future talent and building depth within the national squad.

Mohsin Naqvi meets Sri Lankan Sports Minister



South Africa into Super Eights without playing as Afghanistan beat UAE

PEAK POINT

NEW DELHI: South Africa qualified for the T20 World Cup Super Eights on Monday without playing as Afghanistan's win over the United Arab Emirates was enough to send them through from Group D.

Azmatullah Omarzai was the hero for Afghanistan, taking 4-15 in the UAE's 160-9 and scoring an unbeaten 40 to steer his side to a five-wicket win after a tense chase in New Delhi.

Afghanistan finished on 162-5 with four balls to spare to keep alive their slim chances of moving into the next stage.

South Africa, semi-finalists in 2024, became the third team after the West Indies and co-hosts India to secure a Super Eights berth.

Afghanistan will need a big win in their last group match against Canada on Thursday and other results to

go their way if they are to edge out New Zealand from second place in Group C.

"Next game, you never know, it's a T20 game, we'll have to come up with a good brand of cricket, irrespective of the chances of making it to

Sohaib Khan top-scored for UAE with 68 and put on a stand of 84 for the third wicket with Alishan Sharafu, who made 40.

Medium-pace bowler Muhammad Arfan dismissed Ibrahim Zadran in the 14th



the Super Eights," said Afghanistan captain Rashid Khan.

"We want to make the country and our people proud and happy."

New Zealand can seal their spot and eliminate Afghanistan with a win against Canada on Tuesday in Chennai.

Rasooli departed for 33 in the 18th over but Omarzai kept calm and hit the winning four to give Afghanistan their first win of the tournament.

Pakistani pair clinches doubles title at ITF J60 Nairobi



Senate Panel warns of salary confiscation as PWD crisis and journalists' housing row escalate

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Housing and Works saw strong warnings, emotional exchanges and blunt criticism of the federal government, as lawmakers demanded immediate salary payments to former Pak PWD employees and ordered reforms in the long pending journalists' housing quota. The sharpest moment of the session came when Chairman Senator Nasir Mehmood Butt warned that if salaries of affected employees were not dispatched before Eid, the salaries of the concerned officers would also be confiscated. He remarked that officers were "sitting here while employees are crying," and revealed that two employees had already died of heart attacks during the prolonged uncertainty. He termed the withholding of salaries an abuse and directed that payments must be ensured without further delay. The meeting, attended by Senators Bilal Ahmed Khan, Jan Mohammad, Hidayat Ullah Khan, Abdul

Shakoor Khan, Khalida Ateeb, Husna Bano, Muhammad Aslam Abro and Senator Saifullah Abro, began with strong protest over the continued absence of Federal Minister for Housing Riaz Pirzada. Members observed that the minister had not attended any meeting of the committee so far and proposed that the matter be brought to the notice of the Prime Minister, stating that the Senate committee was not being taken seriously. On the issue of Pak PWD employees, the committee was informed that under the Federal Cabinet decision notified on 06.09.2024, maintenance staff were transferred to the Capital Development Authority, Estate Office and various ministries and departments. According to official figures, 91 percent of employees, amounting to 2,940 staff members, have been transferred and are receiving salaries regularly. Transfer of 6 percent, comprising 173 employees, has also been completed, and the concerned departments are approaching the Finance Division for budget allocation. The remaining 3 percent, or 112 employ-

ees, are in the final stages of transfer. All such employees have been paid salaries up to 30.06.2025, while for fiscal year 2025-2026, receiving ministries will request allocation of funds from 01.07.2025 onward. In a separate breakdown, it was stated that 2,860 maintenance staff transferred to CDA, Estate Office, Ministry of Defence, Federal Shariat Court, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FBR, NAB and CGA are receiving salaries without interruption. The remaining 365 staff are in the process of transfer and have been paid by Pak PWD up to 30.06.2025. Senator Bilal Ahmed Khan observed that two and a half years had passed without proper attention to employees' grievances. Senator Saifullah Abro proposed formation of a dedicated sub-committee to exclusively address the matter. On absorption cases, the committee was informed that 20 employees in FIA are to be absorbed and a report will be presented within two days, failing which the Director General FIA will be summoned. In the Intelligence Bureau, out

of 80 cases, 70 have been resolved, while 10 remain pending, including cases from Quetta. One employee has passed away and the remaining nine cases are expected to be resolved shortly. The Ministry of Interior held meetings on 16.12.2025 and 22.12.2025 to discuss pension and GP Fund matters of staff transferred to CDA, followed by another meeting on 10.02.2026 attended by representatives of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Finance, Establishment Division, AGPR, CDA and DBA. Recommendations of the sub-committee will now be submitted to the main committee for decision. The committee also reviewed the long-standing issue of Chamba House Lahore. It was informed that the Provincial Government has sought ownership record from the Federal Government, while a copy of a cheque from Pak PWD record has been obtained as proof of payment. The matter is under reconciliation between federal and provincial authorities. The discussion then shifted to the journalists'

housing quota, where officials from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting provided a detailed briefing. Under Membership Drive I, a 4 percent quota was reserved, comprising 2 percent each for journalists and media workers on a first come, first served basis. Under Membership Drive II, a 1 percent quota was reserved for journalists and media workers on the basis of age wise seniority. Schemes under Membership Drive I include Bara Kahu Green Enclave I and Sky Garden Housing Scheme. Under Membership Drive II, the schemes include F-14/15 Housing Scheme and Park Road Housing Scheme. The total available plots under the journalists and media workers quota are 67 each in Bara Kahu, 85 each in Sky Garden, 64 each in F-14/15 and 16 each in Park Road. It was informed that all plots reserved for media workers in Bara Kahu and F-14/15 housing schemes have been allotted. FGEHA forwarded membership forms under the journalists' quota in June and August 2016, and after scrutiny, recom-

mendations were forwarded on 10.01.2024. However, on 19.02.2024, further action was suspended pending review by a Grievance Redressal Committee, resulting in allotments not being issued to journalists to date, except for two cases in Bara Kahu under directives of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, namely Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed and Mr. Muhammad Faisal Rafique Awan. The committee directed that a scrutiny committee be formed including representatives of all PFUJ and RIUJ bodies to ensure across the board representation and transparency. RIUJ President Tariq Usmani urged restoration of the two percent quota for journalists, and the committee formally recommended its restoration. Officials informed that a summary to replace the existing first come, first served policy with a seniority based mechanism will be sent this week, after which the process will be completed.

Opinion & Editorial

Frozen relationship

Maleeha Lodhi
THE terrorist attack on an imamabargah earlier this month — the worst in the federal capital for over a decade — prompted Pakistani leaders to again accuse Afghanistan of providing sanctuary to violent groups that threaten Pakistan's security. The militant IS-K (Islamic State-Khorasan) group that claimed responsibility is based in Afghanistan and estimated to have 2,000 fighters. Initial investigation by Pakistan's security agencies found that the mastermind of the Feb 6 bombing belonged to Da'esh and trained in Afghanistan.

In a statement, President Asif Ali Zardari called out the Taliban regime for harbouring terrorist organisations. In similar vein, several ministers pointed the finger at Kabul and alleged that its 'collusion' with India was behind the attack. For its part, Kabul condemned the mosque bombing, saying it "contradicted Islamic and humanitarian values". This was unsurprising as IS-K is the Taliban's bitter foe. But the denunciation did nothing to lower tensions between the two neighbours.

Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have continued to deteriorate in the past several months and remain in a frozen state. Diplomatic engagement has ground to a virtual halt, though embassies are open in both countries. Trade is suspended and the border has been closed since last

October, when deadly clashes erupted and led to open hostilities.

That followed a major TTP attack in Kurram in which several Pakistani soldiers were killed. After this, Pakistan launched air strikes against militant targets in Afghanistan, including in Kabul. Afghan military forces then attacked multiple border posts in response. The situation escalated further with fierce cross-border retaliatory strikes by Pakistan.

A ceasefire was reached through mediation by Qatar and Turkey. But subsequent talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan ended in deadlock over the issue of the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan that has been stepping up attacks on Pakistan's security forces from Afghan soil.

To Islamabad's demand that TTP should be disarmed and its violent activities stopped, the Taliban apparently gave unverifiable verbal assurances but declined to give a written commitment. Cross-border attacks by TTP fighters, that number around 6,000 in Afghanistan, have surged since the Taliban reclaimed power. Last year saw around 600 TTP attacks, making 2025 the deadliest year in a decade for Pakistani casualties. Over 3,500 have been killed in Pakistan in TTP attacks since 2021.

By closing the border and halting trade, Islamabad is raising the costs for Kabul's inaction on TTP.

The February 2026 report of the UN Security Council's

analytical support and sanctions monitoring team notes the increase in TTP attacks and says Afghan authorities continue to provide a permissive environment for the militant organisation and other terrorist groups. An earlier UN report of November 2025 said TTP attacks have led to military confrontation between the two countries, closure of border-crossings and economic consequences, which it casts as "the greatest short-term threat to the de facto [Taliban] authorities' stability".

Before the October 2025 breakdown in relations, Pakistan tried a carrot-and-stick policy to persuade Taliban leaders to address its security concerns about TTP. The stick was evident in the coercive policy pursued in the past two years. This had three elements: kinetic air strikes at TTP hideouts in Afghanistan, tightening of transit trade restrictions and expulsion of illegally resident Afghan refugees from Pakistan.

The carrot was reflected in revived diplomatic engagement with Taliban authorities, which reached a high point in April 2025 when deputy prime minister and foreign minister Ishaq Dar visited Kabul. Pakistan acceded to several Taliban requests on bilateral and transit trade issues and offered to upgrade relations. Dar visited Kabul three times last year as part of high-level dialogue.

Courtesy Dawn

Being Churchill and fighting forever wars

Dr Muhammad Ali Ehsan

THE meeting between President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu at White House on 12 Feb 2026 was important in the context of a US-Iran deal. The outcome of the meeting was eagerly awaited. At the end of the meeting, both leaders avoided a joint press conference, but President Trump, through social media, informed the world that "negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program [me] will continue and finding a deal remains his preference."

The current leader-to-leader Trump-Netanyahu contact was projected in American media as similar to the one that existed between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill of Britain during World War II. Like Churchill, who demised Nazi Germany, Netanyahu also frames Iran as an existential threat and directly appeals to the American president to join in a civilisational struggle to counter this threat. However, the key difference in this analogy is structural. Churchill's Britain was a victim, fighting an invasion, and it stood up alone against a continental superpower. Netanyahu's Israel is the dominant power and the aggressor. Netanyahu uses Churchillian rhetoric, but the geopolitical structure doesn't put the leader-to-leader contact between Trump and Netanyahu in the same Roosevelt-Churchill league.

Netanyahu is not the only leader in a 'Churchillian mode' in the world today. President Zelensky of Ukraine is also someone who has already copied Churchill's famous 4 June 1940 speech in which he explained to the British people how he would expel the Nazi invader. Back in March 2022, President Zelensky addressed the British Parliament via video link and used Churchillian language to explain his deep resolve to fight the Russian invader. He said, "Ukrainians will fight in the forests, in the fields, on the shores, in the streets... We will fight till the end. At Sea.

Courtesy Tribune

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Health in shambles

PAKISTAN'S health sector is no longer merely under strain, it is in complete disarray. The Pakistan Medical Association's Health of the Nation 2026 report reveals a crisis that has long festered, is preventable and most worryingly, normalised. The numbers should jolt policymakers: 675 newborns and 27 mothers die every single day from avoidable causes. Such losses cannot be viewed as acts of fate. They are failures of governance. Contaminated water remains the silent killer. Nearly 40pc of annual deaths are linked to poor-quality water, which is also responsible for 30pc of reported diseases nationwide. Diarrhoea continues to claim the lives of infants and young children, while every fifth Pakistani suffers from a water-related illness. The burden is crushing an already fragile healthcare system. Meanwhile, Pakistan carries the heaviest global burden of hepatitis C, among the highest rates of heart disease in South Asia and the highest incidence of breast cancer in Asia, reflecting serious neglect in both prevention and primary care. The rise of extensively drug-resistant typhoid in Karachi and other parts of Sindh shows how multiple failures converge. Unsafe water, unregulated antibiotic use and weak public health oversight have combined to produce infections that are harder and costlier to treat. Similarly alarming is the rapid growth of HIV.

Ahsan Iqbal to attend Bangladesh PM-elect Tarique Rahman's oath-taking ceremony in Dhaka



PEAK POINT

Bangladesh's most powerful political dynasties.

In a statement issued today, the FO said that Iqbal will represent Pakistan at the oath-taking ceremony, which is scheduled to be held on February 17 in Dhaka.

FO added that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was unable to attend "due to a prior overseas engagement."

"Pakistan's participation in the ceremony reflects its support for Bangladesh's democratic process and underscores its commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations and deepening mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries," the statement added.

Rahman is the son of former Bangladeshi president Ziaur Rahman and the country's former prime minister Khaleda Zia. He returned to Bangladesh in December after 17 years in exile in Britain, far from Dhaka's political

storms.

On Feb 13, BNP won an overwhelming two-thirds majority in the country's general elections. The BNP alliance won 212 seats, compared with 77 for the Jamaat-Islami-led alliance, according to the Election Commission.

Following the election results last week, President Asif Ali Zardari and PM Shehbaz extended their felicitations to the BNP and its leader, Rahman, on securing a landslide majority.

President Zardari reaffirmed Pakistan's support for the sovereignty and democratic aspirations of Bangladesh.

While PM Shehbaz said he looked forward to working closely with the new Bangladesh leadership and strengthening the two countries' "historic, brotherly, multi-faceted bilateral relations."

Pakistan seeks peace & good neighbourly ties, but not at cost of dignity: Gilani

PEAK POINT

NEW YORK: The visiting Senate Chairman, Yusuf Raza Gilani, told a gathering of the Pakistani-American community in New York that

Pakistan is fast emerging as a dynamic country on the global stage.

The event brought together a diverse cross-section of the diaspora, including professionals, business leaders, and journalists.

Chairman Gilani led Pakistan's six-member delegation to the just-concluded Annual Hearing of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) at the United Nations.

Speaking to the participants, the Chairman Senate said that sustained and intensive efforts are underway to transform Pakistan into a developed welfare state.

He further highlighted that the



Government is introducing multiple initiatives aimed at the welfare and facilitation of overseas Pakistanis.

Emphasizing Pakistan's foreign policy outlook, Chairman Gilani stated that the country seeks peace and good-neighbourly relations, but not at the cost of its dignity or national interests.

He observed that while Pakistan is endowed with a prime geostrategic location, it faces a challenging neighbourhood, adding that durable regional peace requires the resolution of all core issues.

BLANDESH: Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal is set to attend the oath-taking ceremony of Bangladesh's Prime Minister-elect Tarique Rahman of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), who won a landslide victory in last week's elections, the Foreign Office (FO) said on Monday.

The election was the first since a deadly 2024 uprising ousted the iron-fisted rule of Sheikh Hasina. Rahman is a scion of one of

Turkish ambassador calls on CJP ahead of Constitutional Court president's visit

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan, Dr Irfan Neziroglu, called on Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi at the Supreme Court on Monday to discuss preparations for an upcoming high-level judicial exchange between the two countries.

The meeting was held in the context of the scheduled visit of the President of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan in March 2026.

During the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is expected to be signed between the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Constitutional Court of Türkiye to formalise institutional cooperation between the two apex judicial bodies.

To ensure coordination at the governmental level, the meeting was also attended by the Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice, and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Justice Yahya Afridi welcomed the

proposed visit and reaffirmed the Supreme Court's commitment to extending full judicial courtesy and hospitality to the visiting dignitary, reflecting the longstanding brotherly relations between Pakistan and Türkiye.

The chief justice highlighted the historic and cordial ties between the two countries, rooted in shared legal traditions, mutual respect and enduring cultural bonds. He noted the expanding cooperation in areas such as technology integration within the judiciary, capacity building, and the exchange of best practices at various levels of the judicial system.

Both sides expressed confidence that the forthcoming visit and the signing of the MoU would provide a structured framework for enhanced collaboration, including judicial dialogue, research cooperation, training initiatives and the mutual exchange of jurisprudential developments. The visit is being viewed as a significant step towards strengthening institutional linkages and deepening judicial cooperation.

Closures of motorways by PTI protestors no service to people: Muqam

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Engineer Amir Muqam, here Monday said that the closure of the motorway is causing severe difficulties for the public and that the government should immediately take action against those responsible from PTI.

In his statement, Amir Muqam said that during his journey from Swat to Islamabad, he saw children, women, and sick people stranded on the way.

He stated that due to the motorway's closure, not only are people suffering greatly, but many are also missing their flights, and patients heading to hospitals are unable to reach their destinations on time. The Federal Minister demanded that the government direct the IG of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to immediately register FIRs against those causing hardship to the public and take strict action against the responsible members of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). He said that cases of prisoners should be fought in the courts.

Wajiha Qamar meets Turkish envoy, discusses strengthening cooperation in education sector

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan, Irfan Neziroglu called on by Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Wajiha Qamar at her office here on Monday.

During the meeting, both sides held detailed discussions on the proposed Agreement on Educational Institutions between Pakistan and Türkiye.

The deliberations focused on enhancing institutional linkages and facilitating cooperation in the education sector in line with the longstanding fraternal relations between the two countries.

The two sides also explored possible areas of collaboration in Technical and Vocational



Education and Training (TVET) and Religious Education. Emphasis was laid on promoting skill development initiatives, sharing best practices, and strengthening partnerships between relevant institutions of the two countries.

Matters relating to student exchange programmes and broader educational collaboration were also discussed. Both sides agreed to further promote academic exchanges, joint research initiatives.

Punjab health reforms to ensure transparent, timely care: Abbasi

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi on Monday said that ongoing reforms and modernization in Punjab's health sector would prove a milestone in ensuring quality medical treatment for the public.

Addressing the foundation stone-laying ceremony of a new facilitation centre at Benazir Bhutto Hospital, he said the provincial government's efforts under visionary leadership of CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif would ensure equal, timely and transparent healthcare services for both urban and rural populations.

He said around 4,000 citizens



would benefit from the facilitation centre, which would play a key role in streamlining patient guidance, registration and other administrative processes within the hospital system.

The minister highlighted that an automated system was being introduced in hospitals across Punjab under which patient registration, medical reports and emergency services.



ISLAMABAD: Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi, in a meeting with His Excellency Mr Irfan Neziroglu, Ambassador of Türkiye to Pakistan who paid courtesy call on the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan at Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Project Director Ayesha Rasool briefs Governor Kundi at mediation training in Peshawar

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has said that promoting a mediation system in the southern districts and newly merged districts will not only reduce the burden on courts but will also strengthen sustainable peace, social harmony, and the investment environment in the province. He expressed these views while addressing a two-day mediation training programme as chief guest at the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) Peshawar. The programme was organised by the International Mediation &



Arbitration Centre and was held under the Ministry of Law & Justice. Civil servants, lawyers, businesspersons, and education experts from southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in the training programme. On the occasion, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi distrib-



ed certificates among the course participants. The event was attended by Director General Captain (R) Usman Gul, while Project Director Ayesha Rasool briefed the Governor about the training course. The Governor also planted a sapling in the institute's



lawn. In his address, the Governor said that in the region, the jirga system has for centuries served as a means of resolving disputes based on mutual respect and collective wisdom. He added that mediation on modern foundations strengthens this tradition further through con-

situtional safeguards and the principles of neutrality and confidentiality. He stated that arbitration and mediation are not alternatives to traditions but are their alignment with modern legal standards. The Governor noted that globally, disputes are being resolved through mediation in com-

paratively less time, and Pakistan also needs to promote the same model. He further said that under proposed amendments to the ADR Act, the suggestion to make pre-trial mediation mandatory in certain cases is a far-sighted step, as it would allow parties to resolve disputes through mutual consent before lengthy court proceedings. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said the newly merged districts are passing through a historic transition phase, and during this period, mediation can serve as a strong bridge to stabilise the constitutional system while maintaining social harmony.