



Pakistan committed to promoting interfaith harmony: President



Naqvi, Bugti, and Balochistan Corps Commander visit injured at CMH



Nawaz Sharif reviews Data Darbar expansion project

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India, BLA behind coordinated terror attacks in Balochistan: Khawaja Asif

PEAK POINT

SIALKOT: Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that coordinated terrorist attacks were carried out on Saturday at twelve different locations across Balochistan, with a deliberate attempt to cause widespread bloodshed. He stated that these attacks were aimed at compensating for the losses suffered over the past year by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and its affiliated organizations.

Addressing a press conference at his residence in Sialkot today, the Defence Minister said that multiple locations across Balochistan were targeted simultaneously, highlighting the organized nature of the attacks. He described these incidents as

reflecting a clear nexus, two sides of the same coin, between India and the BLA, stating that the BLA was operating as a proxy of India.

Khawaja Muhammad Asif said that following the major setback faced by India in May last year, such attacks are now being used to deliberately target civilian populations. He said these actions are intended to destabilize Pakistan at a time when the country, after enduring two years of economic hardship, has begun progressing again by the grace of God.

He added that India and the BLA want to push Pakistan back into economic darkness and undermine its national integrity. According to the Defence Minister, intelligence reports and confessional statements from arrested militants clearly indicate.



SIALKOT: Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif Addressing a press conference.

DG ISPR visits Gwadar University, interacts with students, faculty

PEAK POINT



RAWALPINDI: Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudry held a special interactive session with students and faculty members at the University of Gwadar.

Upon his arrival at the university, the DG ISPR was accorded a warm welcome by faculty members and students. The DG ISPR engaged in an in-depth discussion with students and faculty members on national and regional security matters.

He briefed the participants on anti-state propaganda on social media, raising awareness about misinformation campaigns and emphasizing the importance of verifying information. On the occasion, students said that the Pakistan Army has always defended the state, the Constitution, and national dignity, adding that the DG ISPR's discussion helped clear many misconceptions. The students paid tribute to the Pakistan Army's unwavering commitment to standing by the nation in every challenging time.

They further said that the DG ISPR effectively countered misinformation with evidence.

At least 145 terrorists killed in 40-hour security operations, says CM Bugti

PEAK POINT

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said on Sunday that at least 145 terrorists had been killed in nearly 40 hours of security operations after the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) carried out coordinated attacks in 12 towns across the province. Speaking at a press conference here, Bugti said the attacks claimed the lives of 17 security personnel and 31 civilians. He added that the provincial government would take responsibility for the families of those martyred and disclosed that intelligence agencies had already received reports about the planned attacks, prompting authorities to begin operations a day earlier.

The chief minister stated that



like the BLA. He questioned the legitimacy of the group, asking whether it was a registered political party with which talks could be held, and said its objective was to impose its ideology through violence.

Reiterating the government's stance, Bugti said there would be no surrender under any circumstances. "They can create instability, but they cannot take even an

inch of our land," he said, adding that those responsible would not be allowed to escape and warning that the ground would be made unbearable for terrorists.

He rejected claims that large-scale force was being used in Balochistan, explaining that only limited, intelligence-driven operations were conducted. Bugti said militants often hide among civilians, making operations highly sensitive, and stressed that the state deliberately avoids excessive force to prevent civilian casualties.

Providing a security update, he said terrorists had failed in their attempt to breach the Red Zone and confirmed that Nushki had been fully cleared. He added that operations.

Trump says India will buy oil from Venezuela, not Iran

PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Saturday said India will buy Venezuelan oil, as opposed to purchasing it from Iran. "We've already made that deal, the concept of the deal," Trump told reporters while on Air Force One, en route to Florida from Washington, D.C. Trump's comment came a day after the United States told Delhi it could soon resume purchases of Venezuelan oil to help replace imports of Russian oil, three people familiar with the matter.

France condemns Balochistan attacks, expresses solidarity with Pakistan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The French Embassy has issued a message condemning the recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan, expressing support for Pakistan and sympathy for the victims. The statement was shared on the embassy's official social media platforms, reflecting France's stance against violence and its support for those affected by the incidents. In its message, the French Embassy said it strongly condemns the terrorist attacks that took place in different parts of Balochistan. It extended condolences.

Arab, Islamic countries strongly condemn Israel's repeated violations of Gaza ceasefire

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The foreign ministers of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, the Republic of Indonesia, the Republic of Turkey, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the State of Qatar strongly condemned Israel's repeated violations of the ceasefire in Gaza which has resulted in the killing and injuring of more than a thousand Palestinians.

"These actions risk escalating tensions and undermining efforts aimed at consolidating calm and restoring stability, at a time when regional and international parties are working collectively to advance the second phase of President Donald Trump's peace



plan and to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803," the foreign ministers said in a joint statement shared by the foreign office spokesperson on Sunday. The ministers considered that these repeated violations constituted a direct threat to the political process and hinder ongoing efforts to create appropriate conditions for transitioning to a more stable

phase in the Gaza Strip, both in terms of security and humanitarian conditions, and stress the necessity of full commitment to ensuring the success of the second phase of President Trump's peace plan. "They also call on all parties to fully uphold their responsibilities during this critical period and to exercise the utmost restraint, in order to preserve and sustain the ceasefire, refrain from any

actions that may undermine the current process, and create favorable conditions to move forward toward early recovery and reconstruction, as well as advancing a just and lasting peace grounded in the Palestinian right to self-determination and statehood, in accordance with international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and the Arab peace initiative.

KP CM Sohail Afridi to discuss provincial matters with PM Shehbaz

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi said on Sunday that he had received an invitation from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and would present the province's concerns during the meeting. Addressing the Khyber Aman Jirga, Afridi condemned recent terrorist incidents in Balochistan and expressed solidarity with the victims and their families. He accused the federal government of misappropriating billions of rupees in the past meant for internally displaced persons (IDPs), saying that when he allocated Rs4 billion for affected communities, the centre responded with corruption allegations. Afridi said his government was committed to providing up to Rs100 billion to support those impacted by conflict and displacement. The chief minister said he would consult tribal districts before deciding on a possible protest in Islamabad to seek broader support for provincial demands.





SPORTS



Nawaz grabs five wickets as Pakistan whitewash Australia in T20 series



PEAK POINT
LAHORE: All-rounder Mohammad Nawaz grabbed five wickets for Pakistan on Sunday as Green Shirts whitewashed Australia in a three-match T20 series by 3-0 at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

The last time Pakistan had clean-swept Australia in a T20 series was in October 2018 in the UAE.

While defending a gigantic 208-run total, Pakistan dominated the visitors by clinching a 111-run victory.

The stage was set by Shaheen

Afridi, who took the wicket of the Australian captain Mitchell Marsh in the first over.

In the next over, Mohammad Nawaz dismissed Australia's Matthew Short, as Babar Azam took his catch, and in the following over, Shaheen Afridi struck back with Matt Renshaw's wicket.

In his five-wicket haul, Mohammad Nawaz also dismissed Marcus Stoinis and Cameron Green.

Stoinis and Green added 23 and 22 runs, respectively, for Australia, while seven other batters could not even reach double figures.

Apart from Nawaz's five and Shaheen's two wickets, Abrar Ahmed and Naseem Shah also grabbed a wicket each.

In the first innings, Saim Ayub and Babar Azam scored half-centuries as Pakistan posted 207 runs against Australia — the Green Shirts' highest total against the visitors in a T20 game.

Winning the toss and opting to bat first, Pakistan decided to replace Sahibzada Farhan with Fakhar Zaman, who opened with Saim Ayub. Farhan was dismissed in the first match of the series without scoring any runs and had managed to score just five

runs in the second game. In today's match, Saim scored 56 runs. He shared a 69-run partnership with Babar Azam, who remained unbeaten on 50.

All-rounder Shadab Khan played a searing 46-run knock for Pakistan on just 19 deliveries, smashing five gigantic sixes.

Pakistan skipper Salman Agha, who scored 76 runs in the previous match, flopped today and scored just five runs.

For Australia, bowler Cooper Connolly conceded 47 runs in four overs and took a single wicket, while Ben Dwarshuis grabbed two wickets.

Asif off to dominant start at Asian Snooker Championships



PEAK POINT

DOHA: Pakistan's Mohammad Asif launched his Asian Snooker Championship campaign with a commanding 4-1 [61-52, 39-79(61), 102(51)-15, 57-36, 80-52] victory over Jordan's Tamer Elmasri in the group stage. The reigning national champion, seeking continental glory, wasted little time asserting his dominance. After a tight opening frame, Asif found his rhythm, crafting a break of 51 in the third frame to take control before sealing a straightforward win.

The result marks a strong opening statement from the three-time IBSF world champion, who leads a four-player Pakistani contingent at the championships. The event, which also features women's and junior categories, runs until Feb 6.

Asif is competing in a 43-player men's field divided into 11 round-robin groups. The top two finishers from each group will advance to a last-22 knockout round, where the 10 best group winners will receive a direct bye to the pre-quarter-finals.

Asif's team-mates, national runner-up Rana Irfan Mahmood, Asian U-21 bronze medalist Ahsan Ramzan and IBSF U-17 champion Hasnain Akhtar — are expected to begin their group stage matches in the coming days.

Pakistan to participate in T20 World Cup but will not play against India on Feb 15



PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: After a week of uncertainty, the government of Pakistan decided on Sunday to allow its team to participate in the Men's ICC T20 World Cup 2026 but barred it from playing against India on February 15, however, the Pakistan when the Green Shirts

take the field in the match scheduled on 15th February 2026 against India," a post of the government's X account said.

On Monday, Pakistan Cricket Board chief and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi had met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as the possibility of a boycott of the T20 World Cup loomed over Bangladesh's withdrawal from the tournament.** After the meeting, Naqvi had said he had briefed the PM on the "International Cricket Council (ICC) matter" and a "final decision would be taken either on Friday or next Monday". The meeting took place as questions were raised about Pakistan's participation in the tournament.

Following the ICC's decision to replace Bangladesh with Scotland, Bangladesh were replaced by Scotland on January 24, following their refusal to tour India over safety concerns in the wake of soured political relations between the Asian neighbours. The governing ICC had rejected Bangladesh's request to move their matches to tournament co-host Sri Lanka, saying it was not feasible to change the schedule so close to the February 7 start of the tournament. Hours before the ICC had announced its decision, Naqvi had said that Bangladesh was being treated unfairly and should be allowed to participate in the tournament.

Mohsin Naqvi lauds national team for making Pakistan proud



Farhan keeps faith as Pakistan face India in must-win clash

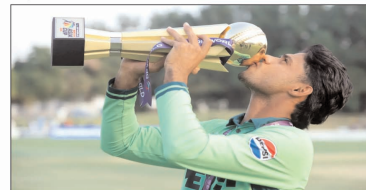
PEAK POINT
BULAWAYO: Pakistan Under-19 team captain Farhan Yousaf said his side were confident of putting a strong performance as they gear up to face arch-rivals India in a must-win Super Six fixture of the ICC Under-19 World Cup on Sunday.

Pakistan need to beat India by a big margin to pip their rivals to a semi-final spot from Group 2 with table-toppers England having already sealed their berth. They head into the match having won the last match between the two sides in the Under-19 Asia Cup final in December.

India enter the clash unbeaten in the tournament, having swept past Bangladesh and New Zealand in the group stage before easing past Zimbabwe in the Super Six. With three wins and a commanding net run rate of +3.337, five-time

champions India sit second in the group with six points. Pakistan are third, two points behind. They lost to England but beat Zimbabwe in the group stage before securing an eight-wicket victory over New Zealand in the

strong performance." Opener Sameer Minhas, whose whirlwind knock in the Asia Cup final made the difference, echoed similar views. "The environment in the squad is very positive," he said. "The team has been



Super Six. Their net run rate might be +1.484 but Farhan is unfazed by the task at hand.

"The morale of the squad is very high," Farhan said. "Not only for this match, but over the last few games as well, the players have shown great intensity and we are confident of putting in a

performing well in recent matches and we are looking to carry the momentum forward and take confidence into the next game."

The only action at the tournament on Saturday was a dead rubber Group 2 match between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe in Harare which the former won by 74 runs.

Ahmad Baig triumphs at Rashid D. Habib Memorial Golf Tournament





Parliament grills PMDC and IHRA over vacant medical seats, exam disputes, and regulatory lapses

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's health sector regulators came under intense parliamentary scrutiny on Tuesday as lawmakers raised serious concerns over hundreds of vacant medical seats across the country, widespread dissatisfaction with the National Registration Examination (NRE), and a complete failure to regulate private healthcare facilities in the federal capital. The issues were discussed during a heated meeting of the Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, where officials of the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) and the Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA) were questioned over what members described as weak oversight, policy confusion, and regulatory paralysis. Briefing the

committee, PMDC officials acknowledged that a large number of medical seats remain unfilled in private colleges, with hundreds vacant in Punjab and Sindh and dozens in Islamabad, while data from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was stated to be incomplete. Committee members rejected earlier claims that the seats would remain vacant, accusing the regulator of policy inconsistency and failure to proactively resolve the issue. Lawmakers expressed concern that seats were being lost not due to lack of demand, but because of rigid merit thresholds, delays in decision-making, and unresolved flaws in the admissions process. Members urged PMDC to transparently extend merit lists where seats remain vacant, instead of allowing valuable training capacity to go to waste. The

committee also took up complaints regarding the National Registration Examination, taken by graduates of foreign medical institutions. Members said the exam had generated widespread dissatisfaction, with candidates describing it as a barrier rather than a facilitative mechanism for entry into Pakistan's medical system. Concerns were also raised over confusion in merit calculation and the absence of a clear policy when seats remain unfilled after initial rounds. A major point of debate was the extended validity of entrance exam scores. Committee members noted that allowing test results to remain valid for multiple years, despite variations in exam difficulty, had distorted merit, encouraged seat switching from dentistry to medicine, and led to increasing vacancies in BDS

programmes. Members cautioned that unless exam standardisation and validity rules are reviewed, the system would continue to suffer from imbalance and inequity. In a separate but related discussion, the committee sharply criticised the Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority for failing to license even a single private hospital since the enactment of the IHRA law. Presenting findings of a sub-committee, Dr Shazia Sobia informed members that more than 200 hospitals and clinics in Islamabad were operating without valid licences, despite the legal framework being in place for years. Members expressed alarm after being told that IHRA had at one stage claimed that licensing forms did not exist, even though they were part of the law itself. The committee was

further informed that inspections had effectively ceased following changes in the authority's board, allowing unregulated clinics to operate openly, including alleged illegal procedures and overcharging. Serious allegations were also raised against private hospitals, including demands for advance payments before emergency treatment and refusal to release bodies until dues were cleared. Representatives of some hospitals rejected these claims and highlighted their charity work, while committee members cited first-hand accounts and questioned compliance with teaching hospital obligations. Responding to the criticism, IHRA Chief Executive Officer Dr Zaeem admitted that no licences had yet been issued but said enforcement had recently been stepped up, with several

facilities inspected and sealed. He informed the committee that licensing had been delayed due to a non-functional board, which has now been constituted. The committee directed IHRA to issue licences to all eligible hospitals within one month and submit a detailed compliance report. PMDC was also instructed to present concrete policy proposals to fill vacant seats within the current academic cycle, review extended test validity, and address persistent grievances related to the National Registration Examination. Members warned that continued regulatory failure would not only endanger patients and students but also undermine public trust in Pakistan's healthcare and medical education systems.

Trust is the scorecard: IGP Rizvi reviews police stations' performance

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi held a comprehensive meeting with all Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) of police stations to review performance, development projects and service delivery across the federal capital. A police spokesperson

told APP on Sunday that the meeting focused on a detailed review of ongoing development projects at police stations, availability and utilization of budgets, and transparency in expenditures. The IGP Rizvi directed officers to ensure that all development projects are completed within the stipulated time frame, stressing that negligence, misuse of



funds or any irregularity in the utilization of government resources would not be toler-

ated. He emphasized that providing effective, timely and quality policing services

to the public is the top priority of Islamabad Police, adding that public trust is the true benchmark of police success. IGP Rizvi instructed officers to further strengthen the policing system through improved planning, professional initiatives, financial discipline and transparency, in line with modern policing standards.

He also directed police station heads to ensure

prompt resolution of public complaints at the station level, improve conduct and behavior, and deal with citizens with courtesy, responsibility and professionalism.

The meeting also included discussions on future strategies, enhancement of police station capacity, improvement of basic facilities, and administrative reforms aimed at improving overall service delivery.

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Gangsterism — the new American doctrine

DR MUHAMMAD ALI EHSAN
 P resident Trump is posing a dilemma for historians focusing on the Middle Eastern war theatre. Will history repeat itself? I haven't heard a single European leader speaking against the possible American military action against Iran. This means both US and EU allies can be in a possible war against Iran. Quite like how Allied powers joined hands to defeat the Ottomans in WWI, both US and the EU join hands now to undo what is left of Iran.

I say what is left of Iran, because it is the West that joined hands to execute a maximum pressure campaign against Iran and created circumstances to destabilise it both politically and economically. One big question that the West hesitates to ask and answer is whether the street protests that erupted in December 2025 in Iran were indigenous, homegrown and organic, or whether they were foreign-driven, imposed and a result of Western interference and Western agents that provoked the Iranians to resort to protests against the regime. In WWI, the Allies used 'Ottoman Empire' and 'Turkey' interchangeably and displayed a marked preference for the latter designation as the war went on, to help fortify the notion that the non-Turkish population of the Ottoman Empire was somehow 'captive people' in need of liberation. Similar to how the Allies are now portraying the Iranians whose freedoms are shackled

under the present Iranian regime in a sovereign country and who must be liberated. History tells us how the Ottoman Empire was made to accept peace terms and history may repeat itself in what may become of others in the Middle Eastern theatre of war. In WWI, Germany and Austria-Hungary went down together with the Ottoman Empire. While Iran is presently in the crosshairs of an Allied military campaign in the Middle East, who, like Germany and Austria-Hungary, will be the other fall guys in the current war? Let there be little doubt that there will be others, if not immediately but in the years to follow. The Whiteman's burden of civilising the Middle East is heavy and that burden will remain on the Whiteman's shoulders until all threats to its own civilisation are eliminated. Jeffrey D Sachs is a professor at Columbia University, US, and as an SDG advocate for the UN Secretary General on the Sustainable Development Goals, has described the American use of threats against Iran as 'gangsterism.' Post-Cold War, all that the US has done is engage in wars and regime change operations that stood out as the main tools of its militarised and hegemonic foreign policy. For the mighty Americans, developing an international consensus before undertaking such operations has little or no meaning. Is gangsterism now the new US principle or doctrine of conducting foreign

affairs? Can prioritising strategic interests over international norms be considered a form of gangsterism? Is the use of coercion more than persuasion also a form of gangsterism? The world is no longer suspicious or concerned; it is alarmed and almost convinced that the new American doctrine of gangsterism under President Trump's leadership is pushing the world towards another global conflict. Iran is at high alert and there is an hourly exchange of warnings between the two countries. President Trump is reminding Iran that "time is running out" for a nuclear deal. But there are some very pertinent questions that one must ask to understand the nature of the current American gangsterism. Didn't Iran agree to sign a nuclear deal with the West in 2015? Was it Iran or President Trump who backed off from the deal? What evidence has the US shared with the world to prove that Iran's nuclear programme is not for peaceful purposes? Can any self-respecting nation agree to negotiations with a gun pointing to its head? Why do Europeans speak up only when the US is ready to attack Europe (Denmark, Greenland)? Are the threats of invasion and kidnapping of the President the new principles of America's doctrine of gangsterism under President Trump? Are the rules-based order and respect for international laws only designed for the weak?

Courtesy Tribune

Pakistan's Trump test

MUHAMMAD AMIR RANA
 PAKISTAN has emerged as one of the beneficiaries of the evolving regional order reshaped by US President Donald Trump's policies, particularly in the West and South Asian context. However, it remains to be seen how far the country can maintain its relevance, and whether it will make deliberate strategic moves or continue drifting with the Trumpian wave. After the initial shocks, the world appears ready to respond to the new challenges created by President Trump. A key question revolves around the post-Trump scenario and how the US will behave. Will it continue the Trump approach regardless of who wins, or will it review or reverse Trump-era policies? European nations may seek to renegotiate their economic, political, and strategic terms with the US. Canada, India, and Japan are likely to proceed with greater caution, while China may focus on protecting and consolidating the gains it has been accruing under Trump's policies.

In this evolving situation, where will Pakistan stand? Will the country return to the pre-Trump status, when its diplomacy was under strain, and it struggled to safeguard its geostrategic and geo-economic interests? It is a dual balancing act that reflects Pakistan's persistent dilemma. The recently announced EU-India free trade framework and the generally expanding European economic cooperation with India signals a broader recalibration of Europe's engagement with Asia. China, too, appears to be a relatively reliable economic partner, even though there are certain political economy caveats that are no secret. In terms of trade, Pakistan cannot be compared with its big neighbours China and India. Even with its position as a medium-scale state, trade is constrained by a limited ability to meet international expectations as they evolve.

Courtesy Dawn

Balochistan attacks

THE seemingly coordinated terrorist attacks across Balochistan on Saturday reinforce the fact that the state must confront the menace of terrorist violence in the province firmly. As per security sources and official media, terrorists belonging to Fitna al-Hindustan, the term the state uses for Baloch separatists, struck at least 12 cities and towns in the province, including Quetta. A large number of terrorists were killed by the security forces. Security men and civilians have also been martyred in the attacks. The sophistication of the strikes indicates that the militants had received training, and backs the state's suspicions that hostile actors in the region are stirring up trouble in Balochistan. Yet it is also a matter of concern that the terrorists were able to hit such a large number of towns, including the provincial capital, which is supposed to be well-protected. The seriousness of the situation can be gauged from the federal interior minister's dash to Balochistan to take stock of the situation. Were it not for the sacrifices of the police and security forces, the terrorists could have succeeded in causing greater havoc. Unfortunately, this pattern of violence in Balochistan is not new. Last year's assault targeting the Jaffar Express, as well as a similar coordinated terror campaign in August 2024, shows that despite the state's counterterrorism efforts.

'Situation has become intolerable for Pakistan': Envoy to UN highlights rise in terror attacks from Afghan soil



PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, highlighting the "exponential rise" cross-border terrorist attacks from Afghanistan, has said that the situation has become "intolerable for Pakistan". His remarks come against the backdrop of a spate of coordinate attacks in Balochistan on Saturday. Clearing operations following the attacks continued on Sunday while Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said in the afternoon that 145 militants had been killed within a span of 40 hours.

The military's media affairs wing said the attacks were carried out by

Fitna-al-Hindustan — a term that the state has designated for Balochistan-based terrorist groups to highlight India's alleged role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan.

Pakistan has also been raising alarm over the presence of terrorists in Afghanistan and accuses the Afghan Taliban of harbouring them. Islamabad has repeatedly urged Kabul to rein in terrorist outfits operating out of Afghanistan.

Speaking to Dawn on Sunday, Ambassador Ahmad reiterated the accusation that the Afghan Taliban were sheltering militant groups operating against Pakistan and highlighted what he described as India's longstanding support for proxy elements active from Afghan soil. He said the UN secretary general had "quite rightly pointed out" earlier this week that the international community expected the Afghan Taliban to ensure Afghan soil was not used for cross-border terrorism. The envoy noted that this commitment was central to the original Doha process but remained unfulfilled.

Under the Doha agreement in

2020, which paved the way for the US withdrawal from Afghanistan after 20 years, Kabul had committed to preventing militant groups from using its soil to threaten the security of the US, its allies and other countries. A recent article in US-based magazine Foreign Affairs said that terrorist violence in Pakistan has surged since the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021.

It further described the Pakistan-Afghanistan border as "the most worrisome flashpoint in South Asia today."

The magazine noted that the simmering conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan now threatened to escalate, with potentially damaging consequences for the wider region.

Citing Pakistani research organisations, Foreign Affairs reported that 2025 was Pakistan's deadliest year in a decade.

According to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies and the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies, the country experienced a sharp rise in terrorist attacks, including by the banned.

Pakistan committed to promoting interfaith harmony: President

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari said Pakistan remained committed to promoting interfaith harmony at the national and international levels and to contributing constructively to global peace and understanding.

In a message on the occasion of World Interfaith Harmony Week to be observed from February 1 to 7, 2026, he said, "I extend my warm greetings to the people of Pakistan and to the international community. This observance reminds us of the shared values of peace, compassion, mutual respect and coexistence that lie at the heart of all faiths and belief systems."

"Pakistan is a society enriched by religious, cultural and ethnic diversity. Our Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and equal rights for all citizens, regardless of faith or creed," he said adding, "These principles reflect the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who emphasised tolerance, unity and harmony as the foundation of our nation. World Interfaith Harmony Week offers an important opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to these ideals." "Interfaith understanding has a direct bearing on the daily lives of ordinary citizens. Where harmony prevails,



regardless of faith or creed," he said adding, "These principles reflect the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who emphasised tolerance, unity and harmony as the foundation of our nation. World Interfaith Harmony Week offers an important opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to these ideals." "Interfaith understanding has a direct bearing on the daily lives of ordinary citizens. Where harmony prevails,

Pakistan, Bangladesh discuss cooperation on overseas employment, human resource development

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Bangladesh exchanged views on shared challenges faced by their overseas labour force and discussed best practices in skills development and training for expatriate workers.

On the sidelines of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain held a meeting with Dr. Asif Nazrul, Adviser to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment of Bangladesh, a press release, on Sunday, said.

The Pakistani side briefed the meeting on the role and initiatives of the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), while the Bangladeshi side shared insights into the operational framework of its Technical Training Centers.

Both delegations also explored avenues for enhancing bilateral cooperation in the

fields of education, health, tourism, and trade.

The Chairman, Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI), Pakistan apprised the meeting of the institution's mandate, functions, and role in providing social protection to workers.

"Emphasizing the importance of structured collaboration, both sides expressed keen interest in learning from each other's experiences and best practices in human resource development and labour export, including recruitment processes, skills training, and reintegration mechanisms for returning workers," it was added.

Both sides expressed their commitment to continued engagement and constructive dialogue to strengthen cooperation in areas of shared interest. Senior officials of the Pakistan and Bangladesh diplomatic missions in the UAE were also present during the meeting.

Altaf Wani mourns demise of President Barrister Sultan Mahmood

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Senior Vice Chairman Jammu and Kashmir National Front (JKNF), Altaf Hussain Wani has expressed his deep sense of shock and sorrow over the demise of Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, who died after a prolonged illness. In a condolence message issued here, Wani said, "With his death, Kashmir has lost a very sincere friend and supporter who, for decades, championed the Kashmir cause globally". He maintained that the death of Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry was a huge loss for Kashmiris.

Wani described the late leader as a seasoned politician and a steadfast supporter of the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination. He also highlighted that Barrister Chaudhry rendered invaluable political and social services and played a pivotal role in projecting the Kashmir issue at international forums.

He said the deceased leader's contributions.

Naqvi, Bugti, and Balochistan Corps Commander visit injured at CMH



PEAK POINT

QUETTA: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, and Balochistan Corps Commander Lieutenant General Rahat Naseem Ahmed Khan visited the injured police personnel at the CMH here and praised their high morale. Naqvi commended the injured officers, saying they confronted the terrorist attacks brave-

ly and thwarted the militants "like lions." Chief Minister Bugti, while encouraging the wounded personnel, said he saluted their courage for foiling the conspiracy to create instability in Balochistan. He added that the injured officers were "their lions" and that the entire nation stood with them. The injured police officers said they would rejoin the fight against this menace.

Nawaz Sharif reviews Data Darbar expansion project

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif on Sunday visited the holy shrine of Sufi saint Hazrat Ali Bin Usman Hajveri (Data Darbar) to review the renovation and expansion of the sacred site.

The former prime minister said that it is a national responsibility to serve the devotees who visit the shrine.

He said that the provision of maximum facilities for visitors—including security, cleanliness, and ease of access—remains among the government's top priorities.

Nawaz Sharif added that all



possible resources are being utilized to preserve the sanctity, historical heritage, and spiritual environment of Data Darbar.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was also accompanying Nawaz Sharif during the visit.

PML-N president said that millions of devotees from across the country and abroad visit Data Darbar every year.



On the sidelines of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue 2026, H.E Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resources Development, held a meeting with H.E Dr Asif Nazrul, Adviser to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment of Bangladesh in Dubai.

Pakistan Textile Council welcomes PM's export recognition, market-based support measures

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Textile Council (PTC) on Sunday welcomed the prime minister's decision to recognise top exporters, terming it a strong vote of confidence in Pakistan's export sector and a reaffirmation of the government's commitment to performance, compliance and global competitiveness.

In a statement, PTC expressed appreciation to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, and

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan for honouring members of the council among the country's leading exporters.

Commenting on the development, PTC Chairman Fawad Anwar said the recognition had come at a critical juncture for the economy and sent a positive signal to export-oriented industries operating under challenging macroeconomic conditions.

"At a time when Pakistan has limited fiscal space due to the IMF pro-

gramme, the government's decision to support exports through smart, market-based measures is both courageous and economically sound," he said.

The PTC particularly welcomed the recent reduction in Export Refinance Facility (ERF) rates, noting that the move reflected prudent macroeconomic management and had been achieved without imposing a fiscal burden.

Anwar lauded the role of State Bank of Pakistan Governor Jameel Ahmad and his team in designing

and operationalising the framework, which he said was anchored in sound monetary policy. He pointed out that the one percent reduction in the Cash Reserve Requirement (CRR) had released over Rs300 billion in liquidity into the banking system, allowing banks to absorb a 300-basis-points cut in ERF rates while maintaining financial sector stability.

"This approach strengthens market liquidity, lowers financing costs for exporters and preserves confidence in the banking system, reflect-

ing close coordination between fiscal and monetary authorities," he added.

The council also welcomed the prime minister's announcement to remove cross-subsidies from industrial power tariffs, terming it a long-overdue correction of structural distortions that have disproportionately penalised export-oriented sectors.

According to Anwar, the measures signal a shift toward targeted, export-led growth in the post-stabilisation phase of the economy. Addressing concerns

over the recently concluded India-EU Free Trade Agreement, Anwar cautioned against what he described as unnecessary alarmism.

"There is no case for panic. Competitiveness not fear, should guide policy," he said, adding that the perceived threat to Pakistan's exports to the EU was being overstated. He noted that while the agreement would take effect next year and competition could intensify, Pakistan's leading exporters, particularly in value-added textile,