



Old rules to apply to net metering cases filed before Feb 8: Leghari orders



Commerce Minister engages carpet sector to address sector-specific challenges, diversify exports



Advisor to Chairman Senate meets UAE ambassador

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PM Shehbaz lands in Washington for inaugural meeting of Board of Peace

PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Washington DC on Thursday on an official visit to the United States, at the invitation of US President Donald Trump to attend the inaugural meeting of the Board of Peace.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Information Minister Attullah Tarar and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi are accompanying the premier as part of the Pakistani delegation.

The prime minister will participate in the Board of Peace session in Washington today. He is also expected to hold meetings with senior US officials during the visit.

According to an official statement by the

Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the visit reflects Pakistan's inclusion in the Board of Peace, its "effective role for the promotion of global peace" and what it described as the country's growing diplomatic outreach.

"In addition to attending the inaugural session of the BoP, the prime minister will also engage with senior US leadership, as well as his counterparts attending the meeting," said a press release by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) dated Feb 18.

It added that the occasion would provide an opportunity for discussions on bilateral matters, as well as global issues of mutual concern.

All 22 invitees to the meeting have already joined the Board of Peace. Pakistan joined the board in late January, and signed the founding charter during the World Economic Forum in Davos.



WASHINGTON: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reaches Washington D.C to attend the inaugural session of Board of Peace.

At least 16 killed in Karachi Soldier Bazaar building collapse following gas explosion

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: At least 16 people, including women and children, were killed, and 14 were injured after a gas explosion caused part of a residential building to collapse in Karachi's Soldier Bazaar area, according to rescue officials. The incident occurred at a residence in the Gul Rana Colony area of Soldier Bazaar. The injured and the deceased were shifted to Civil Hospital.

Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Jamshed Asher said the incident occurred at around 4:15am during Sheri, and that the gas explosion took place on the building's first floor. In an update, Sindh Rescue 1122 said the death toll in the incident had reached 16, while 14 were injured. According to the director of Civil Hospital's Trauma Centre, Dr Mohammad Sabir Memon, 13 of the bodies had been brought to his hospital. Rescue 1122 said that search and rescue operations are ongoing, with an urban search and rescue team and a disaster response vehicle present at the scene. Speaking to the media, Rescue 1122 Chief Operating Officer Dr Abid Jalaluddin Shaikh also confirmed that a gas explosion was the cause of the structure's partial collapse.

Compensation cheques handed over to 36 martyrs' families of Islamabad Imambargah attack

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The compensation cheques have been handed over to the families of those martyred in the terrorist attack on Khadija-tul-Kubra Imambargah of Islamabad, as was announced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. So far, the cheques have been handed over to the families of 36 martyrs belonging to Islamabad, according to a PM Office statement.

However, the cheques are being delivered to the heirs of the remaining four martyrs hailing from Taunsa Sharif, Talagang, Astore and Skardu. As per the announcement, each martyr's family .

Demarche issued to Afghanistan over terror attack in KP's Bajaur

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan issued a demarche to the Taliban regime over the use of Afghan soil for a terrorist attack on security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bajaur that martyred 11 soldiers, it emerged on Thursday.

According to a press release by the Foreign Office (FO), the demarche was issued on Wednesday afternoon when the FO summoned the Afghan deputy head of mission.

"Pakistan condemned in the strongest possible terms the vehicle-borne suicide terrorist attack followed by a fire raid on Pakistan military and law enforcement agencies' posts in Bajaur, carried

out by Fitna al Khawarij [of] the TTP," the state-



ment said. Fitna al Khawarij is a term the state uses for terrorists belonging to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

The FO expressed concern that the group, whose entire leadership is based in Afghanistan, "operates with impunity from Afghan soil."

It re-emphasised that Pakistan had received repeated assurances

from the Afghan Taliban regime, "but, regret-ably, with no visible or concrete actions".

"The Afghan Taliban regime has been told to take immediate, concrete and verifiable measures against all terror groups operating from its territory, including their leadership," the press release said. The ministry also "categorically informed" the Afghan Taliban that Pakistan "reserved the right to respond and eliminate any khawarij belonging to the group as well as their affiliates", wherever they were located, "to ensure [the] safety of its soldiers, civilians and territorial boundaries".

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), a terror attack involving an explosive-laden vehicle on a checkpoint in Bajaur martyred 11 security personnel on Monday.

The statement added that 12 terrorists were eliminated after security forces retaliated and "engaged the fleeing khawarij with precision". President Asif Ali Zardari condemned the terrorist attack and extended condolences to the families of martyrs.

Pakistan extends airspace closure for Indian aircraft until March 23

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: The Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) on Wednesday extended the airspace restrictions on Indian aircraft till March 23. The airspace will remain closed for all Indian civil and military registered aircraft till March 23, the Pakistan Airport Authority (PAA) said in a new notice to airmen (Notam) issued today. Pakistan's airspace is divided into two flight information regions (FIRs) — Karachi and Lahore, according to a Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) document from 2022. The Notam applies to both the Karachi (OPKR).

White House tells Iran to do deal as Trump hints at US strikes

PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: The White House warned on Wednesday that Iran would be "wise" to do a deal with the United States as President Donald Trump once again hinted at military action.

The two sides recently resumed indirect talks, mediated by Oman, after Trump repeatedly threatened military action against Iran over a deadly crackdown on protesters last month.

A previous attempt at negotiations collapsed when Israel launched surprise strikes on Iran last June, beginning a 12-day war that Washington briefly joined to bomb Iranian nuclear sites.

"Iran would be very wise to make a deal with President Trump and with his administration," White

House Press Secretary by a highly unstable and Karoline Leavitt told dangerous regime". CNN



reporters.

On Wednesday, Trump again suggested the United States might strike Iran in a post on his Truth Social site, with a US military buildup underway in the Middle East. He warned Britain against giving up sovereignty over the Chagos Islands in the Indian Ocean, saying that the archipelago's Diego Garcia airbase might be needed were Iran not to agree a deal, "in order to eradicate a potential attack

throwing the government", unnamed US officials told the newspaper.

Earlier on Wednesday, Tehran's top diplomat, Abbas Araghchi, said Iran was "drafting" a framework for future talks with the US.

Iran and the US held a second round of Oman-mediated negotiations on Tuesday in Geneva.

Araghchi said that Tehran had agreed with Washington on "guiding principles", but US Vice President JD Vance said Iran had not yet acknowledged all of Washington's red lines. Speaking on Wednesday, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkani insisted "we do not want war" but suggested Tehran could not give in to US demands. "From the day I took office, I have believed that war must be set aside.

'No leniency': Attaullah Tarar refutes reports of 'deal' offered to PTI founder Imran Khan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar on Thursday strongly rejected media speculations regarding any "deal" between the government and incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan.

In a statement shared on X, Tarar said, "There is neither any deal nor any leniency for Imran." He added that any impression of the government granting the ex-premier concessions was "entirely false and misleading".

"Imran Khan is a criminal convicted by courts, and the reports about leniency for him are baseless," Tarar asserted.

"There is no truth in these reports," Imran, imprisoned since August 2023, is serving a 14-year sentence at Rawalpindi's Adiala jail in a £190 million corruption case and was months ago convicted in another case regarding state gifts. He also faces pending trials under the Anti-Terrorism Act related to the protests of May 9, 2023.



SPORTS



Zimbabwe unbeaten in T20 World Cup after 6-wicket Sri Lanka win

PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi denies taking over PHE, pledges support to national hockey team



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board Chairman and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has dismissed reports claiming he would take over the presidency of the Pakistan Hockey Federation.

Naqvi met with national hockey team players in Lahore, assuring them of continued support until the resolution of ongoing issues.

Later, he took to the social media platform X to clarify the rumours. "I am not becoming the president of PHF, but I will continue supporting the players until the crisis is resolved," he said.

The clarification comes after PHF President Tariq Bugti resigned, and team captain Imad Butt received a two-year ban, barring him from domestic and international hockey competitions.



PEAK POINT

on Tuesday.

COLOMBO: T20 World Cup surprise package Zimbabwe beat Sri Lanka by six wickets in Colombo on Thursday to finish the group stage unbeaten and carry some winning momentum into the Super Eights.

Chasing 179, they finished 182-4 with three balls to spare against the co-hosts at the R. Premadasa stadium in Colombo.

Ranked 11th in the world, Zimbabwe upset former champions Australia last week.

They also beat Oman and shared the points when their game against Ireland was washed out

Zimbabwe needed a tricky 65 off 36 balls when captain Sikandar Raza blasted 20 off an over from leg-spinner Dushan Hemantha, including two sixes and a four, to swing the match.

Raza and Brian Bennett added 69 off 40 deliveries for the third wicket and though Raza fell in the 19th over for 45, Zimbabwe eased to their target.

Opener Bennett batted through the innings to be 63 not out.

Needing eight off the final over, Tony Munyonga clubbed Maheesh Theekshana's first ball

for six to calm any Zimbabwe nerves before Bennett hit the winning boundary.

"We have trained for every situation. Then we have the right personnel to send in at the right time," said Raza, who was named player of the match. "We have got all those roles clear and that is why you see the confidence in the changing room."

It was Zimbabwe's second-highest successful run chase in T20 internationals.

After opting to bat first, Pathum Nissanka held Sri Lanka's innings together again. Nissanka had become the first

centurion of the tournament against Australia on Monday and he followed that up with a solid 62 off 47 balls.

It was his seventh fifty in T20 World Cups, equalling Mahela Jayawardene for the most by a Sri Lankan.

Wicketkeeper batter Kusal Mendis said Sri Lanka now targets a place in the semi-finals.

"It's been a good campaign for us. We have three big games coming up and we have played these three teams frequently in the last 12 months — going to be an interesting week," said Mendis.

Pakistan Hockey Federation president resigns for Pro League mismanagement

Pakistan Women's A team to face Bangladesh A in Asia Cup Rising Stars semis



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) president Tariq Hussain Bugti announced his resignation on Thursday, citing mismanagement by the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) in handling funds for

international tournaments, particularly the shared schedules of International Hockey tours in advance and that financial control rested with his resignation has PSB. "After seven years, Pakistan hockey already been submitted to the prime minister. Blaming the sports board for the crisis, he said funds allocated for the Pro League were released to the PSB but were not managed properly, resulting in logistical problems during tours of Argentina and Australia. He also called for Bugti maintained an

inquiry, stating that the committee formed by the PSB had acted as "judge and jury".

Referring to internal matters, he alleged that the team captain had pressured players by showing them messages from influential figures, after which the federation imposed a two-year ban on Ammad Shakeel Butt.

Regarding funding, he said PM Shehbaz Sharif had allocated Rs250 million for hockey.



Pakistan Hockey Team demands probe, refuses to work with current management

T20 World Cup Super 8 showdown: Pakistan to face New Zealand, England, and Sri Lanka

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The captain and players of the Pakistan national hockey team held an emergency press conference at the airport upon their return, raising serious concerns about the administrative structure of the national sport. During the press conference, the players spoke about a severe lack of proper accommodation, food and basic facilities, stating that they were kept in inappropriate conditions. They also highlighted discrepancies in financial matters.

According to the Pakistan Sports Board, funds had already been released, while the position of the players' confi-



Federation has reportedly been different. This contradiction has raised serious questions about transparency in the handling of funds. In a clear statement, Imad Shakeel Butt announced that players will refuse to work with the current team management, manager, administrative personnel and video analyst until a full and transparent investigation is conducted. The decision reflects that the players' confi-

audit of the release and expenditure of funds. They have further demanded that those responsible be identified and proceeded against in accordance with the law, and that a transparent and accountable system be implemented for future foreign tours. Pakistan hockey is regarded as a matter of national pride and, according to the players, cannot be allowed to suffer due to personal interests or mismanagement. They stressed that immediate reforms are necessary to restore the players' trust and to put the national sport back on the path to revival.



PEAK POINT

COLOMBO: Pakistan cricket team has secured its place in the Super 8 stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup with a commanding victory over Namibia, winning by 102 runs in their final group-stage match.

This result ensures Pakistan progresses to the next phase of the 20-team tournament currently held across India and Sri Lanka. Super 8 lineup

The Super 8 stage has been finalised, featuring eight top teams from the group stage. Pakistan joins Group 2 alongside Sri Lanka, England, and New Zealand, while Group 1 includes India, South Africa, West Indies, and Zimbabwe. The remaining 12 teams have concluded their campaigns in the tournament.

Match schedule Pakistan's first Super 8 encounter will be against

New Zealand on 21 February, followed by a match against England on 24 February.

Pakistan qualify directly for T20 World Cup 2028 after emphatic win against Namibia

The group-stage phase will conclude for Pakistan with a clash against Sri Lanka on 28 February. Fans across Pakistan are eagerly anticipating the team's performance in these high-stakes encounters.



PIMS faces growing controversy over repeated contract extension requests for retired psychiatry professor

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: A dispute has erupted within the Psychiatry Department at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), where official documents reveal a request for a third consecutive extension to the contract of a retired Professor, Dr. Rizwan Taj. This follows claims from within the department that it is already fully staffed, sparking serious concerns over transparency, governance, and the abuse of power within one of the nation's top medical institutions. The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination (NHSRC) sent a formal letter to the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) on February 12,

2026, seeking approval to extend Dr. Taj's contract as Professor of Psychiatry (BS-20) for an additional year, beginning January 5, 2026. Dr. Taj, who retired in 2022, was initially appointed to a two year contract starting January 2023. His first extension from 2023 to 2025, second from 2025 to 2026 January. Total extension period, 3 years, and now he is applying for 3rd time and consecutive 4th year of extension... The latest request is for a further extension or until a permanent appointment is made. The Ministry's justification for this extension revolves around the claim that there are no senior Associate Professors available in the department to take on the Professor role, citing

the failure to fill an advertised Associate Professor position. However, this explanation has been sharply contested by department insiders, who argue that PIMS already has several qualified professionals, including Dr. Hafiz Sultan, who is expected to be promoted, and other senior staff members like Dr. Shafiq Nawaz, Dr. Tehreem Nisar, and Dr. Amir Naveed. Furthermore, a new Senior Registrar is about to join, and another medical officer is preparing for the FCPS Part II examination. Critics of the extension request argue that the department is well equipped with qualified faculty and that repeated reliance on contract extensions undermines merit based

promotions and stunts the department's development. The claims from within the department paint a troubling picture of power misuse, with accusations that Dr. Taj's repeated extensions are based on self interest rather than actual departmental need. The latest internal developments have raised broader questions about governance at PIMS, particularly concerning succession planning and the adherence to public service recruitment guidelines. Despite the claims of staff readiness, the Ministry has insisted that FPSC concurrence is necessary for further contract extensions, underscoring the complex political and bureaucratic forces at play. In a statement addressing the controversy, PIMS

Executive Director Imran Sikander emphasized that no current candidate is eligible for the position of Supervisor or Head of the Department due to the lack of the mandatory certificate from the College of Physicians and Surgeons (CPS). He specifically pointed out that Dr. Hafeez Sultan is facing an inquiry under the Establishment and Disciplinary (E&D) rules, which could result in his removal. Additionally, Dr. Tahreem Nisar, Dr. Amir Naveed, and Dr. Najmul are merely Medical Officers, while Dr. Shafiq Nawaz holds the title of Senior Registrar. None of these individuals meet the minimum requirement of being an Associate Professor or

Assistant Professor with five years of experience. "We submitted a requisition to the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) in late 2023, but the post remain unfilled due to a massive HR crisis involving over 1,200 vacant positions," Sikander stated. He further clarified that regarding tenure extensions, the Prime Minister holds the exclusive authority to grant 'relaxation of all rules.' Sikander also defended Dr. Rizwan Taj, explaining that Taj was fully justifying his dual roles as the PMDC President and his responsibilities at PIMS by actively managing OPDs, wards, and training, despite the challenging workload.

Wajiha Qamar meets Ambassador of Egypt, discusses key areas to enhance cooperation in Education sector

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training Ms. Wajiha Qamar on Thursday met Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Dr. Ihab Abdel Hamid, along with the Political Officer, and discussed measures to enhance bilateral cooperation in the education sector.



of Egypt. Wajiha Qamar meets Ambassador of Egypt, discusses key areas to enhance cooperation in Education sector

The meeting followed the Minister's earlier engagement with the Egyptian Minister of Education and focused on advancing key areas of collaboration between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Arab Republic

of Egypt. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening strategic cooperation in education, particularly in quality enhancement and institutional development.

During the discussion, Egypt shared its experience in curriculum rationalization, including efforts to simplify curricula while maintaining learning outcomes.

Models of collaboration with international partners such as UNICEF and the British Council were also highlighted. Pakistan expressed interest in learning from the Egyptian approach.

The Egyptian side briefed the Minister on

its government-led Baccalaureate System aligned with international standards. It was agreed that Pakistan would explore the feasibility of developing a similar model for A-Level and O-Level streams.

Matters relating to Pakistani medical students studying in Egypt were also discussed. Both sides agreed to improve coordination and follow-up mechanisms to facilitate students.

Egypt shared its "re-organization" strategy to address classroom overcrowding, and Pakistan agreed to study its applicability in local contexts.

Opinion & Editorial

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Terrorism spiral

WITH a spate of terrorist attacks occurring in the country, a national-level response is required to address the issue. The latest atrocity has occurred in Bajaur, where a suicide bomber reportedly belonging to the banned TTP attacked a checkpoint in Bajaur on Monday. At least 12 people were martyred in the incident — 11 security personnel and one minor girl. Meanwhile, on the same day, a motorcycle rigged with explosives was blown up outside a police station in Bannu, causing two fatalities. Furthermore, law enforcers said on Wednesday that terrorists attacked a police station and a customs office in Dera Ismail Khan, martyring a policeman and a customs officer. They added that the terrorists also fired at passenger buses in the area. Several acts of deadly violence have occurred in this area over the past few weeks. Following the Bajaur attack, the prime minister commented that "under the vision of Azmi-Istehkam, security forces are gaining major success in the fight against terrorism". While that may be so, Pakistan continues to pay a high price as it loses security personnel and civilians in frequent terrorist attacks. For example, apart from the latest violence in KP, an inambarghah in Islamabad was attacked earlier this month causing major casualties.

Will the BoP assert itself?

Ahmer Bilal Soofi
DAYS before the Board of Peace's first meeting (scheduled for today), Israel made the very unusual move of registering broad swaths of the West Bank as state property. It smartly disguised its intentions as a move to fill in ownership gaps in the occupied areas; it plans to claim the ones where the Palestinians are unable to prove their ownership. While the specifics are yet to be known, it is a settled and trite principle of international law that an occupying power is not allowed to alter the local status quo, let alone attempt to find ways and means of claiming title to the territory itself. This is the essence of the well-known Fourth Geneva Convention relating to the occupying power. The Convention was adopted in 1949, just four years after the UN Charter, which prohibits the use of force, save the light of day in 1945. The Charter had effectively declared that acquiring territory through the use of force is illegal. It was thus considered necessary to establish a global regime, building on the Hague Regulations of 1907, that would deny any occupying power the right to claim title of the territory it occupied. Read together, the UN Charter of 1945 and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 made it clear that all occupations are by definition temporary and sooner or later

they have to end. During the interim, the occupying forces are de facto running the affairs of the occupied territory were to behave in a certain fashion. That's what the Fourth Geneva Convention explains in 159 articles. It imposes a long list of actions and measures that the occupier will not take. Failure would mean a minor or a grave breach of the Convention. Even in 1949, the principles were so widely agreed upon that Israel felt obliged to sign the Fourth Geneva Convention on Dec 8 of the same year and then, after due reflection and deliberation within the country, stretching over almost two years, it was ratified on July 6, 1951. This was in the backdrop of UNGA Resolution 181, which in 1947 had already proposed the partition of Palestine into a Jewish state, an Arab state and an international Jerusalem. The BoP's will be tested by Israel's move to register parts of the West Bank as state land. During its long occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, both referred to as 'occupied territories' in the world press for the last several decades, Israel has regrettably been violating several of the 159 articles of the Convention that it had ratified after almost two years of internal deliberations. Now the latest violation is the gradual registering of these lands as Israel state lands. What does all this mean for

the Board of Peace? The political domestic controversy with regard to the BoP is an issue for political parties to resolve but from a legal standpoint it is to be taken as a regional arrangement that member states can enter into under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. UNSC Resolution 2803, which was passed a few months ago, positions itself as leading to a sort of "pathway to Palestinian self-determination and statehood". Para 16 of the plan annexed to the UNSC Resolution declares that "Israel will not occupy or annex Gaza". It also approves the raising of an International Security Force; once created, the right to use force of any kind and of any nature — to the extent of Gaza — by Hamas and the Israeli Defence Forces ought to cease. However, it is to be borne in mind that Palestinians have a right to resist the occupation. That right is not negotiable and neither should the recent UNSC Resolution 2803 be read as curtailing this right. This right is given to every population — irrespective of race, religion or ethnicity — that is living under unlawful occupation. The more brutal the tactics of the occupying power the fiercer the tactics of resistance. The greater the repression of the local population in venues such as the West Bank, the greater the justification to seek assistance from third countries. Courtesy Davan

Take a breath, Gen Z

Abbas Moosvi
Gen Z has created quite a whirlwind over the past couple of months, putting its foot down and announcing that it has just about 'had enough' of the old. As a member of this fascinating bunch, I'm incredibly proud of its reverence, tech-savviness, and proclivity for political resistance. Unfortunately, these traits only represent a surface-level assessment. Gen Z seems to find itself in a peculiar kind of predicament. In the words of one of its idols, DJ Khaled, it is 'suffering from success'. All its strengths, which are many, unfortunately, only lead to its own demise. Stay with me... A fierce brand of independence runs through Gen Z blood. It loves everything to do with individuality and self-expression, and is solely to credit for the birth (and rise) of the 'influencer' in modern society. It was the first generation born into the 'postmodern' epoch, when all established norms, religio-cultural shibboleths, state/national symbols and historical traditions had been reframed as little more than social constructs generated on the basis of asymmetric power relations. When tribalism, deference to authority and vacuous romanticism had all gone out of vogue. In their stead, Gen Z embraced irreverence and self-reliance and chose to 'chart its own path', so to speak. While these traits have undoubtedly allowed for operating in an unbecoming manner, they have sadly only led to flippancy and narcissism. Gen Z is the perfect embodiment of the 'progressive' in GK Chesterton's famous fence analogy: who, when encountering a fence in an open field, will immediately rush to remove it rather than pausing to ask why it may have been placed there to begin with. This default philosophical assumption of 'arbitrariness behind all things' kills its sense of curiosity, which, in turn, prevents a granular understanding of how the world works despite all its flaws. Linked to this is nonchalance. Courtesy Tribune

No peace without justice, no solution without Palestinian's rights: Dar tells UNSC



PEAK POINT

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan on Thursday told the United Nations Security Council that there could be no durable peace without justice, no stability without accountability, and no sustainable solution without the realization of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

The deputy prime minister, in his remarks at the United Nations Security Council's briefing on "the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question" held here, emphasized Pakistan's unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people in their legitimate pursuit of dignity,

freedom, and self-determination.

He highlighted ongoing diplomatic efforts to consolidate the ceasefire in Gaza, alleviate civilian suffering, and implement the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, as endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2803.

DPM Dar appreciated peace initiatives led by US President Donald Trump and noted Pakistan's active collaboration within the Group of eight Arab and Islamic countries — Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Türkiye — to advance a just resolution.

He strongly condemned Israel's recent illegal measures to expand control over the West Bank, including annexation attempts, settlement entrenchment, and designation of lands as "state land."

These actions, he said, violate international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention, Security Council Resolution 2334, and the 2024 International Court of Justice advisory opinion.

opinion.

The deputy prime minister also expressed grave concern over repeated Israeli ceasefire violations in Gaza and condemned attacks on UN premises, including UNRWA facilities, restrictions on humanitarian aid, and impediments to assistance, describing the situation as unacceptable and fragile.

He said that a credible, irreversible, and time-bound political process was essential for Palestinian statehood on pre-1967 borders with AI-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, in line with international legitimacy and UN resolutions.

"Palestinian-led governance and institutional strengthening, with a central role of the Palestinian Authority, are indispensable in this regard," he added.

DPM Dar said that Pakistan had joined the Board of Peace to support a permanent ceasefire, scaled-up aid, Gaza reconstruction, and realization of Palestinian self-determination through coordinated diplomacy.

Rana Mashhood meets Italian Envoy, pledges deeper Pakistan Italy cooperation in youth and education

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan met Italy's Ambassador to Pakistan Marlina Armellini at the Prime Minister's Office on Thursday to discuss strengthening Pakistan Italy relations, expanding cooperation in youth development, education, skills training, and labour mobility, and advancing joint initiatives through policy coordination, institutional partnerships, and effective implementation of existing agreements. During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the longstanding friendship between Pakistan and Italy, particularly in the fields of education, research, and youth empowerment.

Rana Mashhood expressed appreciation for Italy's support for Pakistan's candidature for a non permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, terming it a reflection of growing diplomatic trust and shared

international outlook. Describing Italy as an important educational destination for Pakistani students, the chairman emphasized the need to further expand academic and research collaboration between institutions of both countries.

He highlighted the potential of Pakistan's young and skilled workforce for Italian industries and called for the effective implementation of the Labour Mobility Memorandum of Understanding, alongside enhanced cooperation in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. Rana Mashhood also stressed the importance of simplifying, streamlining, and making more transparent the processes for worker and student visas, noting that improved mobility frameworks would help create sustainable employment opportunities and better align skills with international labour market needs. He further underlined that expanding global partnerships, promoting youth exchanges, strengthening skills development.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan called on Italy's Ambassador H.E. Marlina Armellini.

Old rules to apply to net metering cases filed before Feb 8: Leghari orders

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari on Thursday directed that all net metering applications submitted up to February 8 be processed under the previous regulations. The decision safeguards applicants who filed before the deadline from being affected by subsequent regulatory changes. According to the announcement, all electricity distribution companies, including K-Electric, have been instructed to provide net metering facilities to these applicants and to ensure immediate implementation of the orders.

Currently, a total of 5,165 applications have been submitted across all distribution companies, including K-Electric, by February 8. These applications represent a cumulative capacity of 250.822 megawatts, which will be added to the national grid once processed. The decision by Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari has removed uncertainties surrounding existing net metering applications.

Mohsin Naqvi visits police stations to review infrastructure, modernisation push

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi visited multiple police stations in the federal capital to review progress on newly rebuilt and under-construction facilities, highlighting the government's emphasis on modern, citizen-centric policing.

An official told APP on Thursday that the interior minister, accompanied by Inspector General of Police Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, Chairman CDA, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad and other senior officers, inspected three police stations, including Police Station Kohsar, the under-construction Women Police Station G-6, and Police Station Korla.

During the visit to Police Station Kohsar, Mohsin Naqvi reviewed the newly completed building and examined public



facilitation arrangements, including the front desk and operational sections. He directed officers to further improve facilities for citizens to ensure better service delivery. Mohsin Naqvi said that modern, technology-equipped police stations were essential for strengthening the policing system and enhancing public trust. He observed that upgraded infrastructure and the use of modern technology would help align policing standards with international practices. While reviewing the under-construction Women Police Station G-6.

Advisor to Chairman Senate meets UAE ambassador

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Chairman Senate, Misbah Khar, held a high-level meeting with the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Pakistan, Salem Mohammed Salem Al Bawab Al Zaabi, at the UAE Embassy to further reinforce the longstanding and fraternal ties between Pakistan and the UAE. The meeting featured comprehensive and forward-looking discussions focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation across key areas including investment promotion, parliamentary engagement, trade expansion, and deepening people-to-people contacts. Both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to translating the historic friendship between the



two nations into tangible economic and diplomatic outcomes. During the meeting, Ms. Khar—who also serves as Secretary of the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers Conference (ISC)—briefed the Ambassador in detail on the recent official visits undertaken by Chairman Senate Yousaf Raza Gillani to various countries, with particular emphasis on his significant engagements in the United Arab Emirates.

Commerce Minister engages carpet sector to address sector-specific challenges, diversify exports

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan chaired a meeting with representatives of the Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) to review the challenges confronting Pakistan's hand-knotted carpet export sector, a traditional powerhouse of craftsmanship, employment, and foreign exchange earnings, and discuss immediate facilitation measures. The PCMEA delegation, led by Patron-in-Chief, Abdul Latif Malik and Senior Vice Chairman Mr. Usman Ashraf, highlighted disruptions in the supply of essential intermediates required for carpet production



which are adversely affecting exporters' ability to honor international commitments, risking loss of market share and exports.

The delegation sought urgent government intervention to resolve operational bottlenecks, said a release issued here issued here on Thursday. Minister Jam Kamal Khan reaffirmed that promoting value-added exports such as hand-knotted carpets remains

SAPM assures chemical manufacturers of policy support, industry friendly budget

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Thursday assured chemical manufacturers of policy support and an industry-friendly federal budget. He said during a meeting with a delegation of the Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers Association and discussed key issues facing the chemical industry, the upcoming federal budget, and the proposed petrochemical policy, said a news release. The meeting was

also attended by the CEO of the Engineering Development Board (EDB) Hamid Mansoor.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the challenges confronting the chemical sector, including high utility costs, elevated taxation, and the high cost of borrowing.

Haroon acknowledged the pressures faced by industries and reiterated the government's commitment to addressing these concerns through targeted reforms and policy support.

He emphasized that



strengthening industries in line with the economic vision of prime minister remains a top priority. "We are taking concrete measures to promote industrial growth and

encourage local manufacturing across all sectors," he stated.

The SAPM informed the delegation that the National Industrial Policy is being pre-

pared to pave the way for sustainable growth and long-term development. He invited industry stakeholders to submit their detailed proposals and analytical recommendations so that practical and beneficial measures can be incorporated into the upcoming budget.

Under the leadership of the prime minister, the government ensures comprehensive consultation with stakeholders before finalizing key economic decisions. The EDB will present the Petrochemical Policy after thorough consultation with

all relevant industries, he added.

Haroon assured that the forthcoming budget will be industry-friendly and aimed at facilitating businesses while also benefiting the general public. He noted that due to the tireless efforts of PM, economic indicators are gradually moving towards improvement.

The meeting concluded with a mutual understanding to maintain close coordination between the government and industry representatives to ensure inclusive and sustainable economic progress.