



Unity, solidarity key for transforming national resolve into reality: Zardari



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Shehbaz Sharif hoists national flag to mark Pakistan Day

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday hoisted the national flag to mark the Pakistan Day during a simple but a dignified ceremony held here.

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar was also present at the ceremony along with other officials.

This year, the government observed the Pakistan Day under austerity and energy-saving measures, canceling the traditional military parade and all major ceremonies scheduled for the 23 March 2026.

The government had directed all public departments to keep celebrations limited, while the customary national civil awards

investiture ceremony was also postponed. The officials said the awards ceremony will now be held on 28 April 2026. The prime minister also instructed Pakistani embassies abroad to observe the Pakistan Day with simplicity and avoid large-scale events.

PM Shehbaz reviews food stocks in meeting with Minister Rana Tanveer

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday met Federal Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain, where the overall food stock situation in the country was reviewed. During the meeting, the PM extended Eid-ul-Fitr greetings to the federal minister. Rana Tanveer briefed the prime minister on national food reserves and informed him that essential food commodities.



PM Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif hoisted the National Flag in Lahore to make the celebration of Pakistan Day.

PM Shehbaz bans use of high-octane fuel in govt vehicles

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: In another step towards tightening austerity measures, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday imposed a complete ban on the use of high-octane fuel in government vehicles, shortly after the announcement of a Rs200 increase in the levy on high-octane fuel. The decision comes amid government efforts to manage the economic impact of rising global oil prices following the US-Israel war on Iran, which has triggered a fuel crisis. According to an announcement by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the premier directed relevant authorities to take action against government officials who used high-octane in their official vehicles. "If necessary, the officials will have to bear the cost of high-octane fuel from their own pocket," the announcement quoted PM Shehbaz as saying. He stressed the need for maximum conservation of fuel in view of global oil crisis due to the US-Israel war on Iran, and Iran's subsequent attacks on United States air bases and other facilities in Gulf States, including their oil refineries. On Sunday, PM Shehbaz had issued a directive to increase the levy on high-octane fuel.

Trump backs down on strikes on Iran's power network, claims US and Tehran holding talks

PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Monday he had given orders to postpone any military strikes against Iranian power plants for five days, hours ahead of a deadline that threatened further escalation in the conflict now in its fourth week.

Trump claimed in a post on his Truth Social platform that the US and Iran had had "VERY GOOD AND PRODUCTIVE" conversations over the past two days about a "COMPLETE AND TOTAL RESOLUTION OF HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST".

The White House did not respond to questions about the content

of the talks, who participated or where they



were held.

Meanwhile, Iranian media reported that there were no negotiations between Tehran and Washington. "There are no talks between Tehran and Washington," said the Mehr news agency, citing Iran's foreign ministry, adding that Trump's statements were part of a push to reduce energy prices. In

his message, written entirely in capital let-

ters, Trump said he had instructed the defence department to postpone the strikes pending the outcome of the talks. He claimed while speaking to Fox Business Network that Iran wanted "badly to make a deal", which could come within five days.

A source briefed on Israel's war plans said Washington had kept it informed of its talks

with Tehran, and that Israel was likely to follow Washington in suspending any targeting of Iranian power plants and energy infrastructure.

The Israeli prime minister's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on reported talks with Iran or Washington's decision to suspend strikes on some Iranian targets.

Trump's comments briefly sent the price of the Brent crude oil benchmark down around 13 per cent to back below \$100 a barrel. By 1245 GMT, it stood around \$101.80.

Global markets also recovered sharply, with US stock futures reversing losses to keep around 1.3pc.

Pakistan now worst victim of terrorism

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has ranked number one on the Global Terrorism Index for the first time, recording a six per cent increase in terrorism-related deaths, 1,139, in 2025, it emerged on Sunday. The Global Terrorism Index 2026, published by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), provides a comprehensive summary of the key trends and patterns in terrorism over the last two decades. The report ranks 163 countries (99.7pc of the world's population).

Imran undergoes third eye procedure at Pims

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf founder Imran Khan underwent a third eye procedure at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) on Monday. In a statement issued by the hospital, the PTI founder was brought to Pims for a third dose of an anti-VEGF intravitreal injection. He remained vitally stable before, during and after the procedure. A senior doctor at Pims with knowledge of the matter said that the former premier was brought to the hospital as the third injection was due. After obtaining informed consent, and under standard.

Army 'unwavering' in resolve to protect nation, ISPR says on Pakistan Day

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: The Armed Forces of Pakistan reaffirmed their commitment to defence, internal security and national sovereignty on the occasion of Pakistan Day, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Monday.

Pakistan Day — observed on March 23 every year — commemorates the passing of the Lahore Resolution on March 23, 1940, when the All-India Muslim League demanded a separate nation for the Muslims of the British Indian Empire.

A press release by the military's media wing said that the army remained "united and unwavering" in its resolve to eradicate threats to Pakistan's security in the face of ongoing

terrorist threats. The armed forces felt congratulations to the nation on the 86th anniversary.



remain committed to protecting national sovereignty, and maintaining internal security against "all forms of aggression and terrorism", the statement added.

According to the statement, Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir, Chief of Naval Staff Naveed Ashraf and Chief of Air Staff Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu extended their heart-

sary of Pakistan Day on March 23. "The 23rd of March 1940 stands out as a defining moment in our history as the day that crystallised our collective vision and set the course for the creation of an independent homeland.

Rooted in faith, guided by hope, and strengthened by resilience, this day epitomises the unwavering resolve of the people of Pakistan," the ISPR state-

ment said. "With steadfast determination and divine guidance, Pakistan remains resolute in strengthening its democratic institutions, ensuring national security, and safeguarding the wellbeing of its citizens," it added.

According to the ISPR, Pakistan stands today as a responsible and principled member of the global community, advocating peace, stability, and cooperation across the globe.

"As one united nation, we move forward with eternal hope, unmatched resilience, and an unshakable commitment to enduring prosperity," the statement concluded.

Last week, the government announced that it would not hold the usual Pakistan Day parade and other ceremonial events.

Afghan Taliban flog nearly 1,200 people, carry out six public executions during past year

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Afghan Taliban flogged at least 1,186 people and carried out six public executions in Afghanistan during the last year — March 2025 to March 2026. The official statements and data compiled by an Afghan television channel, and drawn from statements issued by the Taliban's Supreme Court, indicate the continued application of corporal punishment in most parts of the country. The total excludes the final 12 days of July 11 to July 22, implying that the actual number of floggings could be higher. These punishments took place across dozens of provinces, including Kabul, Herat, Balkh, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Khost, Badakhshan, Ghor, Paktia, Paktika, Faryab, Laghman, Kapisa, Parwan, Uruzgan, Zabol.



SPORTS



Star-studded Commentary panel announced for PSL 11



PEAK POINT
LAHORE: Former West Indies all-rounder Carlos Brathwaite will make his HBL PSL commentary debut and former Australia women's player Lisa Sthalekar is set to return as the Pakistan Cricket Board announced a star-studded 23-member bilingual commentary panel for the upcoming marquee event.

Shoab Malik, who has featured in all the previous 10 editions of the HBL PSL as player, will be appearing as Urdu commentator in the 11th edition and he

will be joined by former Pakistan captains Salman Butt and Sana Mir. Seasoned commentator Tariq Saad, former Pakistan women's international Marina Iqbal, Shah Faisal and Pepsi Voice of Pakistan 2022 winner Ayaz Chaudhary will form the seven-member exclusive Urdu commentary panel for the HBL PSL 11.

Apart from Barbadian Brathwaite, the English commentary panel will comprise South Africa's Jean-Paul Duminy and the melodic Michael Haysman,

England's Dominic Cork, Nick Knight and Mark Butcher, Martin Gupitll from New Zealand, Greg Blewett and Lisa Sthalekar from Australia and Athar Ali Khan from Bangladesh.

Among Pakistan voices in the English commentary panel, former captains Wasim Akram, Ramiz Raja, Aamir Sohail and Urooj Mumtaz Khan will be calling out the action along with former Pakistan international Bazid Khan.

Sikandar Bakht will be part of the English commentary panel as well as the four-member present-

ers' lineup. Renowned sports broadcasters Neroli Meadows and Jess Crowe are set to feature in the HBL PSL for the first time and they will join Zainab Abbas as the official presenters and hosts during the tournament.

Commentators: Aamir Sohail, Athar Ali Khan, Bazid Khan, Carlos Brathwaite, Dominic Cork, Greg Blewett, Jean-Paul Duminy, Lisa Sthalekar, Mark Butcher, Martin Gupitll, Michael Haysman, Nick Knight, Ramiz Raja, Sikandar Bakht, Urooj Mumtaz Khan and Wasim Akram.

Pakistan Cricket Board issues revised PSL 11 schedule



PEAK POINT
LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday announced revised schedule for the 11th edition of the HBL PSL after austerity measures have been adopted in consultation with the Government of Pakistan, and in line with the officially announced national austerity and resource conservation measures.

The number of host venues for HBL PSL 11 has been streamlined from six to two. All matches will now be staged in Lahore and Karachi. In the updated schedule 44 matches will be taking place in a space of 39 days with Lahore and Karachi hosting 22 matches each. The opening match between Hyderabad Kingsmen and Lahore Qalandars remains intact, while Lahore will also see Eliminator 1, 2 and the final. Qualifier will be played in Karachi. With the tournament temporarily shifting to a watch-from-home model, HBL PSL will introduce enhanced broadcast and production features aimed at delivering an even stronger viewing experience for fans across Pakistan and around the world. The League remains confident that the passion of its audience, combined with innovation in coverage, will make this edition one of the most widely watched in its history.

ICC names Sahibzada Farhan player of the month for Feb after 'stellar' performance with bat at T20 World Cup



PEAK POINT
DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday declared Pakistan opener Sahibzada Farhan as ICC Men's Player of the Month for February after his "stellar display with the bat" at the recent T20 World Cup.

In a press release, the global cricket body said, "Pakistan opener Sahibzada Farhan has grabbed the ICC Men's Player of the

standing Virat Kohli's record of most runs at the T20 World Cup in a single edition," the ICC said.

Farhan has become the first male Pakistani player to achieve this title since pacer Haris Rauf in November 2024.

He was also the only Pakistani player included in the 12-member Team of the Tournament for the 2026 season of ICC T20 World Cup, the ICC press release stated. It quoted Farhan as saying, "It's an incredible feeling to win this ICC award, especially for performances on the World Cup stage, where fans from all over the world are watching every moment. That makes it even more special. It was truly a

tournament I'll always cherish, and I'm determined to carry this momentum forward in the series and competitions ahead. I'm deeply grateful to my teammates for their constant support and belief in me — this wouldn't have been possible without them." The press release further mentioned that the opener also became the first batter to score two centuries in a single global event against Namibia and Sri Lanka in the shortest format. "Farhan attained a new career-high rating on the latest Men's T20I Batting rankings as he moved to second spot post an outstanding ton against Sri Lanka in Pallekele," it said.

Jazz, PCB unite to power Rise of women's cricket in Pakistan



King, Perry shine as Australia seal T20I series against West Indies

PEAK POINT
KINGSTOWN: Australia secured an unassailable lead in their T20I series against West Indies with a composed 17-run victory in the second match at Arnos Vale Stadium, successfully defending 164 for the second time in three days. Leg-spinner Alana King once again led the charge with the ball, returning figures of 2-25 to follow her match-winning performance in the series opener. Her crucial breakthroughs stalled West Indies' chase and helped restrict the hosts to 147-4. West Indies captain Hayley Matthews mounted a strong challenge with a fluent 56 off 41 balls, keeping her side in contention through the middle overs. However, her dismissal in the 12th over proved pivotal, with the required rate climbing sharply thereafter. King also accounted for Stafanie Taylor, while

Georgia Wareham provided valuable support with an economical spell. Earlier, Kim Garth set the tone by conceding just three runs in her opening two overs, applying early pressure on the West Indies top order. Despite late



dropped chances to anchor the innings, while late boundaries from Nicola Carey pushed the total beyond 160. With a 2-0 lead in the series, Australia have already secured the contest ahead of the final T20I at the same venue, before the teams shift focus to the upcoming ODI series in St Kitts.

Malakhra-Sumo wrestling to feature in first Pakistan-Osaka Culture Festival 2026 in Japan

世界の古代レスリングの伝統が出会う
MALAKHRO & SUMO
ANCIENT WRESTLING TRADITIONS MEET
World's First Malakhra vs Sumo (Wrestling)
1st Pakistan-Osaka Culture Festival 2026



Nation celebrates Pakistan Day, 3rd day of Eid festivities together

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The nation celebrated Pakistan Day with traditional zeal and patriotic fervour, as the occasion coincided with the third day of Eid festivities, adding to the spirit of joy and unity across the country.

With renewed determination, the nation pledges greater hard work, unity, and sacrifice to ensure Pakistan's development, stability, and prosperity.

The morning was heralded with a thirty-one-gun salute in the federal capital and twenty-one-gun salutes in provincial capitals.

These ceremonial tributes reflected the nation's dignity, sovereignty, and the professional strength of Pakistan's armed forces. The national flag was hoisted on important government buildings, which is a symbol of national dignity and cohesion.

Observed annually on March 23, Pakistan Day commemorates the historic Lahore Resolution of 1940, which laid the foundation for the creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent. This year, the day was marked with renewed enthusiasm as citizens balanced national celebrations with ongoing Eid activities.

In Larkana, President Asif Ali Zardari hoisted flag



at Neudero House. A contingent of the Sindh Police presented a guard of honor, and the national anthem was played.

In Lahore, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif hoisted the national flag to mark the Pakistan Day during a simple but a dignified ceremony.

In the federal capital, a graceful guard-changing ceremony

was held at Mazar-e-Iqbal on the occasion of Pakistan Day, where a contingent of the Pakistan Air Force formally took over guard duties.

Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Shahid Afzal attended the ceremony as the chief guest.

In the federal capital, the day began with special prayers for the prosperity,

unity, and progress of the country. Despite the Eid holidays, a large number of people actively participated in Pakistan Day observances while continuing their festive engagements with family and friends.

Public spaces, including parks and main avenues, were adorned with national flags, bunting, and decorative

lights, reflecting a blend of patriotic and festive spirit. Families visiting recreational spots were seen carrying national flags, while children expressed their excitement by wearing outfits in green and white.

Talking to APP, Atir, a visitor at Lake View Park, said that the overlap of Pakistan Day and Eid had

doubled the joy of celebrations. "It is a unique moment where we celebrate both our religious and national identity together," he said.

Another visitor, Ghalib, said that the combined celebrations created a lively atmosphere across the city, where people could enjoy time with their families while also expressing their love for the country.

Restaurants and commercial centres also witnessed increased activity, as families combined outings with Pakistan Day celebrations. Special discounts and themed decorations were observed at various outlets, attracting a large number of visitors.

Educational and cultural institutions, though largely closed for Eid holidays, marked the occasion through limited yet meaningful activities, including flag-hoisting ceremonies and online messages highlighting the significance of the day.

Citizens also paid tribute to the sacrifices of the founding leaders and reaffirmed their commitment to the country's progress and stability. Social media platforms were flooded with messages of patriotism alongside Eid greetings, showcasing a harmonious blend of national pride and festive joy.

Opinion & Editorial



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Assessing Pakistan's trust

PAKISTAN has long remained on the US threat radar. However, evolving dynamics in West Asia, particularly Iran's assertive posture, have placed the country under renewed scrutiny. America's 2026 Annual Threat Assessment [ATA] presented to the Senate Intelligence Committee last week, names Pakistan alongside China, Russia, North Korea and Iran among the states developing a range of advanced and traditional missile delivery systems, capable of carrying nuclear or conventional payloads that could potentially strike the US homeland.

The ATA categorises nations based on certain criteria, including their strategic orientation. There's a complex profile in Pakistan's case, which is seen to tilt towards China, signal ambiguously on Iran, support Saudi Arabia, and be increasingly inclined towards Russia in the strategic and geo-economic domains. This kind of a posture is often seen as uncertain and is hence suspicious in Washington's strategic calculus. Even countries with long-standing security partnerships with the US are under scrutiny.

At the same time, the ATA acknowledges Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts, which were also recognised by President Donald Trump in his first address to Congress last year and by Centcom chief Gen

Michael Kurilla. But CT cooperation can't ensure broader strategic alignment; it simply opens space for dialogue and cooperation in other areas, as was reflected in Pakistan's securing IMF support and reaching a fairly acceptable tariff arrangement with the US.

Two internal dimensions also shape such assessments. First, the ideological and political orientation of the public, and, where divergence exists, the power elite's ability to manage public sentiment at times of crises. Second, persisting internal conflicts can trigger instability and influence elite decision-making, particularly in ways that affect the regional and global geopolitical landscape.

The US views Pakistan's efforts to modernise its missile programme with caution.

The ATA also reflects views long held by analysts who shape public discourse and are taken seriously by policymakers in Islamabad. Since the Iran-Israel-US crisis escalated last June, some analysts have warned that Iran's collapse could bring Israel closer to Pakistan's strategic horizon. Israel and Pakistan see threats in each other as a result of ideological, strategic and regional factors. Israel's close links with India and Pakistan's strong military capabilities and ties with the Gulf states have contributed to such a view. In particular, Pakistan's nuclear capability is often framed in Israeli dis-

course in connection with Saudi Arabia's security concerns. Pakistan, however, has consistently maintained that its nuclear programme is for deterrence and to preserve the strategic balance in South Asia, primarily with regard to India. When Pakistan engaged with the Trump-led Board of Peace, it did so partly to reduce suspicions and demonstrate a responsible role on the Palestinian issue together with its partners in western Asia and the larger Muslim world — it was a political move to secure its relevance to America's security paradigm. And yet, US threat perceptions have their own logic. The US views Pakistan's efforts to modernise and upgrade its missile programme with caution, particularly with regard to systems that it feels could threaten the US homeland. Given the deep intelligence and strategic links between the US, Israel and India, it is difficult to ignore the fact that both countries may reinforce Washington's concerns about Pakistan's defence capabilities. US-Pakistan relations have always been complex. They've been marked by cycles of cooperation and divergence driven by differing strategic priorities. Pakistan's geographic position, its large Muslim population, and its strategic relevance have provided it with leverage, but these factors have also exposed it to regional rivalries, especially with India.

Courtesy Dawn

Mission creep amid an elusive off-ramp

Shahzad Chaudhry

The Iran war has stagnated. The two sides are in a state of pervasive attack and defence without causing a change in position, physically, politically or diplomatically, or what would constitute altering behaviour. Iran and Israel attack each other in situ and defend against it to the best of their remaining capability. True, people lose lives and businesses, and infrastructure will be rebuilt, but there is no substantive change in how these nations are constituted or think. Welcome to the 'trench warfare' of the modern era. The last time the world experienced this was in World War I, or later in the Iran-Iraq War. Both exhausted themselves to the point of inability to do much beyond where they were, waiting to be disentangled. In the ongoing war, they are in their last 'oomph' in the hope that the other guy will exhaust first. They, and the world, do not deserve a war with non-existent or fleeting political objectives, and where the mission creeps in search of an off-ramp.

The ongoing Iran war has no political aims on either side, save Israel. For Iran, defiance, and an implicit sense of showing the aggressor down would be the popular refrain. Three weeks into it, they must have a sounder political reason to continue. The thousands who perish may be a small number by their count to sacrifice for the larger aim of national honour and dignity, but it is as important to give the living the same honour and dignity, and a chance at a fulfilling life.

Equally, the infrastructure and the progress that Iran has made despite the most stringent sanctions are going to waste because the leadership may hold other motives dearer. The Iranian people remain at the receiving end in the name of civilisational pride and boastful nationalism. The war thus goes on unabated. They may not throw in the towel, but when foolishness meets hardness, catastrophe results.

Courtesy Tribune

War starving millions

The World Food Programme's estimation that another 45 million people worldwide will be pushed into acute hunger in the next three months is yet another indictment of the incompetence of the top leadership of the US war machine.

The coming famine is a wholly man-made disaster authored by US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, both of whom are considered the most corrupt men ever to lead their respective countries and are being credibly accused of attacking Iran to keep themselves in power and out of prison.

The fact that the war has lasted for more than a few days without the Iranian regime capitulating, despite heavy losses, is being seen as a defeat and an embarrassment for the invaders, though at the same time, it still accomplishes the goal of pushing their domestic legal and political problems out of the headlines. Trump and Netanyahu are the architects of the shipping collapse and surge in fossil fuel prices, triggering inflation. Meanwhile, the US had already slashed foreign assistance — including food aid donations and funding — meaning that there was already less assistance available for vulnerable populations before a single bomb was dropped.

DPM/FM Dar hopes nation to successfully navigate recent challenges



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Monday, expressed the hope that amid the austerity measures adopted by the Government in view of the recent ongoing regional conflicts, the nation while sticking to the values of unity, faith and discipline would be steadfast and together they would successfully navigate this challenge as well.

He said they were celebrating the 'National Day' at a time when the region was engulfed in conflicts and the economic and political repercussions of the ongoing conflict have affected them as well.

In a message on Pakistan Day, the DPM/FM extended his warm greetings to the fellow Pakistani citizens on the momentous occasion of the day.

"Today we honour the 'Pakistan Resolution' adopted on 23 March 1940, under which the Muslims of the Subcontinent demanded a separate homeland where they could live according to the principles of Islam," a press release quoted the DPM/FM as saying.

As they proudly commemorate March, he said they paid homage to the unwavering and courageous efforts, vision, and determination of their ancestors that resulted in the establishment of an independent Pakistan.

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah led the Pakistan movement, overcoming numerous challenges with remarkable resilience, bravery, and conviction, he added.

Dar said the brave nation rendered countless sacrifices to achieve the homeland envisaged in this resolution.

The DPM/FM further said Pakistan remained firmly committed to eradicate the menace of terrorism.

Pakistan's actions inside Afghanistan against the menace of Fitna-al-Hindustan and Fitna-ul-Khawarij/TTP were directed towards this goal, he added.

Dar said "Our brave sons of the soil are sacrificing their lives in its pursuit. We pay tribute to our martyrs and heroes, who have rendered supreme sacrifice for the betterment of our collective future."

On this day, he said that they could not forget their Kashmiri brothers and sisters and the exceptional sacrifices given by them in their quest for the inalienable right to self-determination.

He said Pakistan remained steadfast in its commitment to providing moral and diplomatic support until the oppressed individuals of IIOJK attain their right to self-determination. On this special day, he also extended warm greetings to fellow Pakistanis living abroad and commend their patriotism.

PAF Contingent takes charge of the Guard duties at Mazar-e-Iqbal



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Day was celebrated at all PAF Bases and installations with traditional zeal and fervor. The day-long celebrations started with special prayers after Fajar for the solidarity, progress and prosperity of Pakistan and the Muslim World. To commemorate this auspicious day in a befitting manner, a guard mounting and wreath laying ceremony was held at the Mausoleum of great poet and

philosopher Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal. A smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Air Force took over guard duties from Satluj Rangers. The Chief Guest Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Shahid Afzaal, PAF Officer Commanding, PAF Airmen Academy, Korangi Creek laid a floral wreath and offered Fatcha at the grave of Allama Iqbal on behalf of Chief of the Air Staff, Officers, Airmen and Civilians of PAF.

Unity, solidarity key for transforming national resolve into reality: Zardari

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has said that Pakistan Day reminds us that unity and solidarity are the most important elements in transforming national resolve into reality. Extending his heartfelt felicitations to the entire Pakistani nation on the occasion of Pakistan Day, the president, in his message said that on this very day in 1940, the Muslims of the Subcontinent adopted the Pakistan Resolution and presented the idea of establishing a separate homeland where they could live their lives freely in accordance with Islamic principles. Today, we pay tribute to our elders whose struggle and sacrifices led to the creation of Pakistan. "At the time of Pakistan's creation in 1947, we faced numerous challenges. History bears witness that through mutual cooperation, hard work and capability, we overcame those difficulties and achieved remarkable success in every field," he said adding "We established state institutions, made our defence capability impregnable, acquired nuclear deterrence,

fought a long and successful unconventional war against terrorism and set shining examples of sacrifice and mutual support during natural disasters."

During Marka-e-Haq in May last year, we confronted the enemy's aggression with courage and taught such a lesson that it will remember for a long time. Even today, we face challenges on the internal front and along our external borders, the president added.

Like Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos, he said Operation Ghazab-Lil-Haq has also achieved significant and desired results. Our clear message to the illegally imposed group in Afghanistan is that we will not allow Fitna al-Khawarij, Fitna al-Hindustan or any other group to use Afghan soil for actions against Pakistan. "We will also completely eliminate those who sponsor terrorism and those who, through India or its proxy elements, seek to undermine our peace and our efforts for peaceful coexistence, so as to secure our settlements and our borders," he remarked. He said in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

March 23 marks gift of independence under Jinnah's leadership: Zamurrad Khan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Sweet Home Chief Executive Officer Zamurrad Khan on Monday said March 23 is observed as a day to pay homage to the benefactors who, under the visionary leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, bestowed the nation with the gift of independence.

He said the day also reminds the nation of its duty to serve the country with sincerity and to continue striving for the establishment of a welfare society.

Zamurrad Khan said the nation's freedom, pride, and honor are inseparably linked with Pakistan, and emphasized that no sacrifice should be spared for its progress and prosperity.

He said the day calls upon the nation to pledge unwavering efforts to realize the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Poet of the East Allama Muhammad Iqbal, and to safeguard the country's freedom and sovereignty against any harm.

"One Million Trees" campaign has been launched from Central Jail Bannu

ABDUS SALAM BAITAB

BANNU: The "One Million Trees" campaign has been launched from Central Jail Bannu. Around 550 fruit-bearing and shade-giving saplings have been planted. In compliance with the directives of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Suhail Afridi, and on the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Bannu, Muhammad Faheen, the plantation drive was inaugurated at Central Jail Bannu on the occasion of March 23 by Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance and Planning Bannu, Yousef Haroon, Special Assistant to the Chairman of the DEDC



Committee, Hashmatullah Khan, and Chairman WSSC Sikandar Hayat. On this occasion, officers from southern districts, Muhammad Sadiq, Divisional Forest Officer Inamullah Khan, Sub-Divisional Forest Officer Naumanullah Wazir, Deputy Superintendent Central Jail Bannu Najeeb Ahmed, Chairman Suhail Khan, and others were also present. Speaking at the event.

Pakistan Day celebrated in Australia



PEAK POINT

AUSTRALIA: Pakistan Day celebrated in Australia. A Pakistan Day flag ceremony was held in Shellharbour, Australia bringing together the Pakistani community alongside civic leaders. The ceremony was hosted by Ghulam Mustafa Chudhary, Chairperson of the Shellharbour Islamic Society alongside Vice Chairperson Altaf Abbasi. Among the distinguished guests were Chris Homer, Mayor of Shellharbour and Councillor John Davey. The event saw strong participation from the Muslim community

including women and children reflecting a family-oriented atmosphere. Speaking at the ceremony, Mayor Chris Homer highlighted the importance of multicultural harmony and community engagement in the region. "Shellharbour is proud of its diverse community and events like this showcase the strength that comes from embracing different cultures," he said. "Celebrations like Pakistan Day not only honour heritage but also help strengthen cultural understanding and friendship between Australia and Pakistan," the Mayor added.



GARHI KHUDDA BAKHSH: President Asif Ali Zardari and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited the mausoleums of Shaheed Mohtarman Benazir Butto, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Begum Nusrat Bhutto, offered Fatcha and laid floral wreaths.

Govt bears Rs 69b shock to maintain POL prices: Muhammad Aurangzeb

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said on Sunday that the government had borne the burden of Rs 69 billion to maintain stability in the prices of petroleum products and provided possible relief to the people. Talking to the media here, he added that ongoing tension and possible war situation in the region may pose risks to the energy infrastructure, which is also likely to have an impact on the supply chain. He hoped that the energy supply situation



would improve by April and the country would not face any major crisis. He clarified that government's top priority is to put minimal financial pressure on the people and effective steps

are being taken at various levels for this purpose. Government is following a serious and comprehensive strategy to keep the economy stable despite limited resources, he vowed. Finance Minister said that resources are not unlimited, therefore it is necessary to find sustainable and long-lasting solutions. In this regard, consideration is being given to promoting demand management, efficient use of energy and saving measures to reduce unnecessary consumption. Muhammad Aurangzeb asserted that a targeted relief package is being prepared for the deserving and low-income groups, which aims to reduce the effects of inflation and provide facilities to the real needy.

Pakistan Day celebrated in Kenya



PEAK POINT

KENYA: Pakistan Day was marked by holding a simple yet dignified flag hoisting ceremony at the High Commission for Pakistan in the morning of March 23, 2026. The ceremony was attended by a sizeable number of Pakistanis, and Kenyans of Pakistani origin representing all walks of life. The ceremony started with the recitation of the Holy

Quran followed by reading out of the messages from the President, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister. Senior members of the community also shared their views. While addressing the gathering, the High Commissioner urged the community to remain united, and to strive for enhancing the image of the country and dedicate themselves to upholding the principles for which Pakistan was created.