



Pakistan moves to facilitate overseas citizens in Spain: Naqvi



Mushaal Mullick denounces Andrabi verdict as 'Assault on Justice'



Hanif Abbasi orders probe into Tezgam Express incident

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PM Shehbaz directs swift steps to boost food exports to Gulf states, strengthen port, flight operations

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday directed authorities to accelerate exports of surplus food items to Gulf countries while ensuring an uninterrupted domestic supply, and called for a comprehensive plan to expand flight operations and enhance port efficiency in view of the evolving regional situation.

Chairing a high-level review meeting at the Prime Minister's House on the supply of food commodities to Gulf states and Pakistan's maritime and logistics preparedness, the prime minister expressed satisfaction over the strategy formulated and progress achieved so far to support the region's food security needs, a Prime Minister's Office

news release said.

He appreciated the performance of relevant ministries and officials and instructed all departments concerned to remain in close coordination with Gulf countries regarding their food requirements. Referring to disruptions in global supply chains amid the current regional situation, the prime minister said Pakistan had a responsibility to help meet the food needs of friendly Gulf nations, adding that exports should be expedited without affecting domestic availability of essential commodities. He emphasized strict monitoring of demand and supply of food items within the country and warned that delays in decision-making at the institutional level would not be tolerated.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on exports food items to the Gulf countries and Pakistan's Maritime Operations in wake of current regional situation.

Iran rejects Trump's negotiation claims, warns against any pressure

PEAK POINT



TEHRAN: Iran's Revolutionary Guards has dismissed claims by US President Donald Trump regarding negotiations.

In a statement, Revolutionary Guards spokesperson Ibrahim Zulfagari questioned whether internal divisions in the US had reached a level where Trump was negotiating with himself.

He warned that Trump should not label his failures as a deal.

Zulfagari added that without Iran's consent, neither oil prices nor the previous system will return.

He emphasized that any thoughts of action against Iran must be abandoned, asserting that Iran's stance is final and non-negotiable.

This statement comes after Trump claimed that Iran was willing to forego nuclear weapons, that new Iranian leadership was open to a deal, and that the country had provided significant concessions on oil and gas.

US reportedly sends peace plan as Iran opens Strait of Hormuz to 'non-hostile' oil vessels

PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: Washington sent a peace plan to Iran, US media reported, as Donald Trump voiced optimism Tuesday at ending nearly a month of warfare and Tehran announced that it will let "non-hostile" oil vessels go through the crucial Strait of Hormuz.

The tentative signs of a diplomatic solution came despite new violence.

Trump, whose pronouncements in recent days have swung wildly from vowing massive attacks on Iran to declaring the nearly month-long war virtually over, said the United States was "in negotiations right now" with Iran. "They did something yesterday that was

amazing actually. They gave us a present and the



present arrived today. And it was a very big present worth a tremendous amount of money," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office. "That meant one thing to me — we're dealing with the right people." He did not explain further but said it related to the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran has largely blockaded in retaliation for US and Israeli strikes, sending global energy prices

soaring. Iran, in a message

benchmark price of crude oil dropped close to six per cent after the latest developments. Prices at the pump have soared in the United States after the war by Trump, causing him a political headache. Trump had earlier threatened to "obliterate" Iran's power plants, which some argue would be a war crime, if it did not open the strait by late Monday Washington time. Before US markets opened on Monday, Trump abruptly extended that deadline by five days, citing diplomatic progress. Pakistan's prime minister has offered to host US-Iran talks, which Trump said involved top officials, including Vice President JD Vance.

MBS lauds Pakistan's peace efforts as PM Shehbaz briefs him on diplomatic outreach

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday held a telephone conversation with Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and briefed him on Pakistan's constructive diplomatic outreach to all parties, urging de-escalation and resolution of differences through dialogue and diplomacy. During the "warm and cordial" conversation held early Wednesday,

DPM Dar, EU vice president discuss regional, int'l developments

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar spoke with the European Union's High Representative and Vice President Kaja Kallas on Tuesday night. During the conversation, the two leaders exchanged views on recent regional and international developments. The deputy prime minister emphasized the importance of de-escalation, underscoring that dialogue and diplomacy remained essential for maintaining peace and stability.

FO condemns harsh sentences awarded to Kashmiri leader Asiya Andrabi, associates by Delhi court

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) on Wednesday condemned the awarding of a life imprisonment sentence to prominent Kashmiri leader Asiya Andrabi, as well as the 30-year prison sentences awarded to her associates Fehmeeda Sofi and Nahida Nasreen by a court in Delhi. Andrabi is the founder of a Kashmiri rights group called the Dukhtaran-i-Millat, or Daughters of the Nation. The court sentenced her, Fehmeeda and Nasreen under the Indian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) after government prosecutors alleged that Andrabi was involved in a conspiracy to carry out militant activities. In a statement posted to social media platform X, the FO said that the verdict constituted a "grave miscarriage of justice" and reflected the "continuing suppression of fundamental

rights" in India-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Andrabi has long been a vocal advocate for the



"Pakistan views this decision as part of a broader pattern of politically motivated prosecutions aimed at silencing dissenting voices and intimidating those advocating the legitimate rights of the Kashmiri people," the statement said. "The sentencing raises serious concerns regarding due process, judicial independence, and adherence to international human rights obligations." Asiya

Kashmir cause, the FO added, saying that her conviction and harsh sentencing underscored the "shrinking space for political expression and civil liberties" in the occupied territory. It stated Pakistan's belief that such actions further exacerbate tensions and undermine prospects for peace and stability in South Asia. The FO urged the international community, including

the United Nations and global human rights organisations, to take immediate notice of this development and to hold India accountable for its actions in the territory.

It called for the "protection of the political, social, and human rights of the Kashmiri people, including the right to freedom of expression and a fair trial".

"Pakistan reiterates its unwavering support for the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their just struggle for self-determination, as enshrined in relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions," the statement concluded. Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore had on Tuesday also strongly condemned the sentencing, terming the verdict a manifestation of "political coercion" aimed at silencing dissent in India-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Temporary pause in Operation Ghazab lll Haq against Afghanistan likely to continue, say sources



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The temporary halt in Pakistan's Operation Ghazab lll Haq against Afghanistan ended at midnight last night, though Islamabad has signalled that the suspension of operations against Kabul could be extended. A highly-placed source who is closely following the matter told Dunya News on condition of anonymity that Pakistan may continue this temporary halt in operations on certain "conditions". The source clarified that the pause will continue only as long as there are no attacks originating from Afghanistan. If terrorist activities from a Afghan territory cease, Pakistan will refrain from taking any action. However, any act of terrorism against Pakistan from Afghan soil will be met with a strong response.



SPORTS

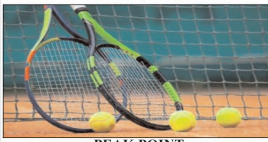


PSL 11 set to begin today as tournament kicks off in Lahore



PEAK POINT Speaking on the occasion, Marnus Labuschagne, captain of Hyderabad Kingsmen, said the team would aim to quickly build chemistry among players and perform as a united side. Meanwhile, Ashton Turner, captain of Multan Sultans, said he was pleased to be in Pakistan and Rawalpindi's team, expressed optimism about the tournament, saying fans could expect high-quality cricket as all teams look to deliver strong performances. The PSL 2026 season is set to begin tomorrow, with defending champions Lahore Qalandars taking on Hyderabad Kingsmen in the opening match at Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore.

Pak team secures 5th position in Asia/Oceania Pre-Qualifying event



PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Junior Billie Jean King Cup Junior team, comprising Zunaisha Noor, Hajra Sohail, Romaisa Malik, and team captain Sara Mansoor, participated in the Asia/Oceania Pre-Qualifying event held from March 16 to 21 in Sri Lanka. The team delivered a good performance and secured 5th position out of 12 participating nations. During the competition, Pakistan registered victories against Macau (China), Pacific Oceania, and Guam, said a press release. This marks the best-ever result for Pakistan's Under-16 team in the Junior Billie Jean King Cup. Pakistan faced defeats against Sri Lanka and Singapore, both of whom qualified for the next stage.

PCB announces PSL 11 ticket refund policy

PEAK POINT LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has announced the ticket refund policy for Pakistan Super League (PSL) 11. According to a PCB statement, ticket amounts will be refunded to the same accounts through which they were originally booked online. The board stated that refunds will be processed automatically, starting from March 30 and expected to be completed within the next 15 days.

Pakistan U-20 fall to Bangladesh in SAFF opener despite spirited display



PEAK POINT LAHORE: Pakistan's men's U-20 side produced a determined and spirited performance but were ultimately undone by a combination of misfortune and contentious officiating, slipping to a 2-0 defeat against Bangladesh in their Group B opener of the SAFF U-20 Championship. According to information made available here on Tuesday, Bangladesh debutant Ronan Benjamin Sullivan converted a well-struck free kick in the 50th minute, giving his side the lead against the run of play. Pakistan responded positively and believed they had drawn level in the 60th minute when Najeebullah powered in a header. However, their celebrations were cut short as the referee ruled out the goal, a decision that proved pivotal in shaping the outcome of the match. The setback appeared to dent Pakistan's momentum, and Bangladesh capitalised seven minutes later. Sullivan struck again, finishing smartly to double the advantage and effectively seal the result. While Bangladesh secured all three points, the margin of victory did not fully reflect Pakistan's effort and competitiveness throughout the encounter. The young Pakistani side showed promising signs, suggesting they remain capable of challenging strongly in the tournament. Pakistan now face a crucial fixture against India on March 26, where victory will be essential to keep their hopes of reaching the semi-finals alive.

Players vow to deliver despite empty stands in PSL 11



Georgia Voll's maiden T20I century seals Australia's 3-0 sweep

PEAK POINT KINGTOWN: Australia Women completed a convincing 3-0 T20I series sweep over West Indies Women to achieve the milestone. Despite limited support from the top order, captain Sophie Molineux provided late impetus with a quickfire 25, guiding Australia to a formidable 211-7. For West Indies, Hayley Matthews delivered a commendable all-round display, claiming 3-29 and later remaining unbeaten with 30. However, her efforts lacked support as the bowling unit struggled to contain Australia's aggressive approach. Chasing 212, West Indies faltered early, losing wickets at regular intervals. At 33-3 by the end of the powerplay, the required rate escalated beyond control. Matthews and Deandra Dottin attempted a recovery, but persistent rain halted play with the hosts at 61-3 after 10 overs. Following a prolonged delay, officials declared Australia winners by 40 runs under the DLS method.

Imran, Malik, Ghazanfar advance in RLK ITF Masters Tennis C'ship



The contest was headlined by a sensational maiden century from rising star Georgia Voll, whose explosive knock laid the foundation for Australia's imposing total. Voll struck a brilliant 101 off just 52 deliveries, combining elegance with power in an innings studded with nine fours and six sixes. Reaching her century in the 17th over, she displayed remarkable composure and shot selection, marking herself as a future mainstay in Australia's batting lineup. Her effort was particularly significant as it became the first T20I century recorded against West Indies Women.



Rs1 Billion Youth Skill Development Initiative: NAVTTC's Push for 50,000 trained youth faces industry challenges

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) has launched an ambitious program to provide free skills training to 50,000 youth in over 200 high demand trades, with a particular emphasis on 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, and Cloud Computing.

The initiative, part of the Prime Minister's Youth Skill Development Program (PMYSDP) Batch III, aims to equip young people with the necessary skills to meet both local and global workforce needs. Despite the promising scale of the program, NAVTTC faces significant challenges in scaling its impact across Pakistan.

The program, which aims to train youth in both high tech and traditional industrial trades such as Advanced Welding and Mechatronics, also has a vision for long term sustainability, aiming for 1 million youth trained annually under the National Skills Strategy Roadmap (2026-2030).

NAVTTC's registration and accreditation process has been designed to ensure quality, but it faces a growing demand for accountability and transparency. With 844 private TVET institutes registered, including 461 accredited institutes spread across Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and Islamabad, lawmakers raised

questions about the effectiveness of the accreditation system in ensuring the quality of training provided.

The "Uniform National Registration Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) 2024" have been formulated to streamline the process, setting fees ranging from Rs 50,000 for short courses to Rs 300,000 for awarding bodies. Institutes undergo strict evaluations on infrastructure, hygiene, and quality of trainers, with performance evaluation by the Text Accreditation & Quality Evaluation Committee (TA&QEC), comprising 20 high-profile members from TEVTAs, HEC, and PEC. Despite these measures, concerns remain about private sector participation and whether the institutes can meet the demand for high quality training to match industry needs. One of the most critical aspects of the program is the transparent selection of trainees and training service providers (TSPs).

NAVTTC employs a merit based digitized selection system, where applicants are assessed based on aptitude, literacy, and trade specific criteria through third party testing by National Testing Service (NTS). However, the rigorous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process is also being questioned.

Third party monitoring firms have been hired to ensure proper execution, and funds are released to TSPs based on performance outcomes, but some lawmakers raised concerns about

the over reliance on private sector training providers and the lack of consistent monitoring.

The biometric attendance system for both trainees and instructors is mandatory, yet attendance issues and ghost institutes continue to be flagged by independent auditors. Early flag trackers must report any non compliance or fraud within 24 hours, but critics argue that these mechanisms may not be sufficient to eradicate widespread inefficiencies. To enhance the employability of graduates, NAVTTC has formed several industry partnerships, including with Saudi Arabia under the Takamol Skill Verification Program (SVP), where Pakistani workers are certified to international standards before migrating for work. Additionally, the Skills Impact Bond is being introduced to provide guaranteed employment for graduates, but funding gaps for such initiatives continue to pose a challenge.

The Industry Led Training Program (ILTP) involves direct collaboration with industrial associations to develop targeted curricula for On the Job Training (OJT) and employment guarantees. This approach aims to align the training with regional economic strengths but requires significant coordination with both provincial TEVTAs and private sector employers. While NAVTTC's focus on 4IR technologies such as AI and Cyber Security has garnered attention, traditional industrial sectors like

industrial stitching and plumbing are struggling to meet the growing demand for skilled workers. Welding, AutoCAD, and HVACR are key areas where training gaps still exist, particularly for women, who are encouraged to pursue technical trades but often face barriers to entry in male dominated fields. Gender equality has been a core principle of NAVTTC's strategy, with a 10% reservation of slots for women in training programs.

However, gender representation in high tech sectors still lags behind, with male dominated industries like fashion design and beauty therapy seeing better female participation, but technical fields still face gendered disparities. While NAVTTC's strategic roadmap is ambitious, implementing the vision of training 1 million youth annually presents significant challenges.

Funding shortfalls, over reliance on the private sector, and lack of capacity in many regions raise concerns about the sustainability of the program. The program's success hinges on greater public private partnerships, government funding, and consistent monitoring to ensure that training quality matches industry demands.

The skills gap between 4IR sectors and traditional industries also poses a major hurdle, as both must be developed concurrently to ensure balanced workforce development across sectors.

Pakistan Navy extends warm welcome to People's Liberation Army Ship DAQING

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Navy has extended warm welcome to People's Liberation Army (Navy) Ship DAQING for its participation in the 4th iteration of bilateral exercise SEA GUARDIAN, scheduled from March 25 to April 2. Upon arrival, PLA(N) Ship DAQING was accorded a ceremonial welcome and escorted into port by Pakistan Navy ships with traditional zeal, said an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release issued here. The SEA GUARDIAN exercise aims to further strengthen bilateral relations through the mutual exchange of maritime expertise and enhanced interoperability between the two friendly navies, reflecting their shared commitment to regional peace. The exercise will feature a range of harbour and sea-phase activities, including subject matter expert engagements, a young officers' seminar on contemporary topics, gunnery firings.

Opinion & Editorial



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Washington's Dual Narrative and the Drift Toward a "Law of the Jungle" in Global Politics



The Middle East appears once again to be approaching a perilous inflection point one where the widening gap between rhetoric and action is becoming increasingly visible. On the one hand, the U.S. State Department has issued emergency advisories, initiated evacuations of its citizens, and suspended consular services across countries such as Israel, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Iraq, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. On the other hand, it continues to issue statements emphasizing diplomacy, dialogue, and de-escalation. This contradiction is not merely a function of diplomatic complexity; it signals a calculated approach that may aptly be described as a "dual narrative." This pattern is far from unprecedented. The United States has historically pursued diplomacy and coercive power in parallel. Whether through backchannel engagements mediated by Oman or formal diplomatic efforts on platforms such as the European Union, periods of negotiation have rarely translated into sustained de-escalation. The killing of Qasem Soleimani and subsequent strikes involving Iran reinforced a growing perception that diplomacy is often

employed as a temporary façade, while the underlying strategy remains rooted in the projection of force. It is therefore unsurprising that current calls for dialogue are being met with skepticism. Recent reports of increased activity linked to NATO, alongside heightened naval movements and expanded military preparedness in the region, further deepen concerns that developments may not remain confined to declaratory policy. Historical precedent suggests that when major powers begin evacuating civilians, scaling down diplomatic presence, and reinforcing defensive postures, such measures often precede significant action. A particularly delicate dimension of this unfolding scenario is the potential response from Iran. Any large-scale military escalation would likely transcend national boundaries, engulfing the broader Middle East. Critical arteries such as energy supply routes, maritime corridors, and infrastructure networks could face severe disruption, with cascading consequences for the global economy. Perhaps even more troubling, however, is the erosion of the moral foundations underpinning the international order. In critiques of Israeli policies, one phrase recurs with notable frequency: the "law of the jungle" a system in which power alone determines legitimacy. If major global actors begin to internalize or endorse such a paradigm, the very relevance of international law and diplomatic norms is called into question. This raises a fundamental concern: if powerful states themselves disregard established rules, who remains to enforce them? Institutions such as the United Nations cannot function effectively unless leading powers demonstrate a genuine commitment to the principles they espouse. Otherwise, the notion of a "civilized world order" risks devolving into little more than rhetorical aspiration. The world now stands at a critical juncture where the balance between diplomacy and force is increasingly unstable. If negotiations are reduced to instruments of delay, and war is normalized as the ultimate arbiter, the implications will extend far beyond the Middle East, posing a grave threat to global peace. At this pivotal moment, responsibility does not rest solely with major powers. The broader international community particularly Muslim-majority countries must adopt a proactive, principled, and courageous stance. Should Pakistan succeed once again in positioning itself as a center for meaningful diplomacy, it could contribute to a constructive regional shift, though resistance from actors such as Israel cannot be ruled out. The choice before the world is stark: to uphold a system grounded in law, justice, and diplomacy or to acquiesce to an uncertain and dangerous order defined by the primacy of power.

Affordable housing

Zafar Masud

A HOME IS MORE THAN A physical structure; it provides psychological security, financial resilience and social stability. Post World War II, home ownership was considered a passport to middle-class status in countries that are considered developed today. Therefore, access, particularly to attainable housing, is not merely a policy objective, but a fundamental socioeconomic necessity. Pakistan faces a substantial economy housing shortfall, estimated at 10 million units, with an annual addition of approximately 350,000 units. This reflects a combination of demographic pressures, rapid urbanisation, and evolving household structures. Yet the issue extends beyond numbers. Housing also carries considerable macroeconomic significance. It accounts for 25 per cent of core inflation, linking it closely with interest rates and broader price stability. At the same time, housing demand itself is influenced by inflation and borrowing costs, creating a two-way relationship between monetary conditions and home-ownership. Broadly, three sources dominate housing finance: household savings, developer financing and formal financial institutions, including banks and microfinance institutions, typically account for 50pc to 70pc, 20pc to 40pc, and only 5pc to 20pc, respectively, in emerging markets. The same pattern is reflected in Pakistan with an estimated 80pc to 85pc of housing finance originating from informal sources and comprising personal savings and developer-led arrangements. Mortgage data in Pakistan is often understated. While it is commonly said that mortgages account for less than 1pc of private sector credit, this figure captures only commercial bank direct lending. When overall housing finance (including construction), microfinance institutions and government housing programmes are considered, as they are all delivered with funding and/or risk-sharing support from commercial banks, the housing finance stock is estimated to be in the north of Rs700 billion, or approximately 7pc of private sector credit versus approximately 17pc in India and 6pc in Bangladesh.

Courtesy Dawn

Pakistan moves to facilitate overseas citizens in Spain: Naqvi



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A high-level meeting chaired by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Saalik Hussain reviewed in detail the progress on facilitating Pakistanis seeking the Spanish Resident Card.

Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, Federal Interior Secretary, Secretary Overseas Pakistanis, DG FIA, Additional Secretary Foreign Affairs, MD OPF, as well as senior officials from NADRA and the Directorate General

of Immigration & Passports attended the meeting.

Pakistan's Ambassador to Spain Dr. Zahoor Ahmed, Consul General in Barcelona Muhammad Ali Wazir, and the Community Welfare Attaché joined the session via Zoom. It was decided that ahead of Spain's upcoming regularization scheme for undocumented migrants, passports and other required documents for Pakistani applicants will be issued within one week. Minister Saalik Hussain noted that nearly 15,000 Pakistanis are expected to benefit from the Spanish scheme.

Saalik Hussain expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Interior for its strong support to the Pakistani community in Spain.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi emphasized that the swift issuance of passports to overseas Pakistanis is a top priority. However, he directed that no passport should be issued to

any criminal or wanted individual. He also ordered immediate deployment of additional staff to the passport section at the Pakistani embassy in Spain.

Naqvi further stated that the National Police Bureau has significantly streamlined and expedited the verification of police character certificates, which are now being issued on a priority basis.

Ambassador Dr. Zahoor Ahmed and the Consul General provided a detailed briefing, noting that all relevant institutions are working together to ensure timely provision of essential documents to Pakistani nationals. The briefing highlighted that the issuance of passports and character certificates has notably accelerated.

The embassy and consulate have so far issued 10,000 authority letters to applicants as part of the facilitation process.

Nayyar urges global efforts to prevent escalation of US-Iran conflict

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Secretary General of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Nayyar Hussain Bukhari Wednesday stressed the need for coordinated international efforts to prevent further escalation in the ongoing tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran.

In a statement, Bukhari said Pakistan has adopted a cautious and balanced diplomatic approach in the prevailing situation, which reflects maturity and responsibility on the global stage.

He said that as an Islamic country, Pakistan is deeply concerned as the repercussions of the conflict are largely affecting Muslim nations.

Highlighting Pakistan's role, he said the country's leadership has played a constructive and positive part by "calling right as right and wrong as wrong."



demonstrating principled diplomacy. Nayyar Bukhari said that Iran maintains it has no hostility towards any Islamic country or its people. He emphasized that the international community must step forward to mitigate the adverse impacts of the conflict, warning that prolonged tensions would not serve the interests of any country. Nayyar Bukhari underscored the importance of peace in Gulf countries, terming it essential for global stability and humanity at large. Expressing optimism, he said Pakistan's diplomatic efforts are expected.

MQM-P calls for revisiting proposed 28th Amendment, transforming 'feudal democracy into participatory democracy'



PEAK POINT

KARACHI: The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) urged authorities to revisit the proposed 28th Constitutional Amendment and make necessary changes to safeguard citizens' rights and uphold democracy.

Speaking at a press conference in Karachi, MQM-P Chairman Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, alongside Mustafa Kamal and Farooq Sattar, highlighted what they described as the escalation of long-standing political tensions.

"Today, to address this properly, the 28th Constitution Amendment needs to be

reviewed, and if necessary, amended. This would allow a decisive resolution to be made urgently," Siddiqui told reporters.

"Pakistan seems prepared, and political parties do not appear to oppose the 28th Amendment with the same intensity," he added.

He added that after the amendment is tabled and cleared by the country's lawmakers, people should know they did it for the sake of the country.

Farooq Sattar also weighed in, emphasizing local governance and citizen participation. "Now's the time to transform Pakistan's feudal democracy into a participatory democracy that's inclusive. Every city in Pakistan should have the right to decide its own fate." "A system of empowered local governments should be established in Pakistan, including Karachi. This will ensure progress, stability, and strengthen Pakistan's unity, territorial integrity, and development."

Mustafa Kamal added a broader perspective, linking constitutional reform to national security. "When you look at today's tense regional scenario.

Hanif Abbasi orders probe into Tezgam Express incident

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi has ordered a high-level inquiry to determine the exact cause of an incident involving the 8-Down Tezgam Express.

According to a spokesperson for Pakistan Railways, the investigation's findings will help identify any lapses and ensure measures are taken to prevent similar incidents in the future.

The spokesperson said Pakistan Railways launched an immediate relief operation following the incident. The Multan Division responded swiftly by dispatching a relief train and trucks to the site.

He said the rescue teams, including Rescue 1122 personnel and railway medical staff, reached the location promptly and are actively engaged in assistance efforts.

He further confirmed that no casualties have been reported. Work is currently underway to restore the affected track at the earliest, aiming to resume normal train operations without delay.

Mushaal Mullick denounces Andrabi verdict as 'Assault on Justice'

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussain Mullick, wife of imprisoned Kashmiri freedom leader Yasin Malik, vehemently denounced a recent Indian court verdict sentencing Aasiya Andrabi to life imprisonment, terming it a "deliberate conspiracy" to silence Kashmiri leadership and suppress the right to self-determination in Kashmir. Ms Mullick said the ruling was "not justice, but a pre-meditated plot," adding that the sentence handed to Andrabi reflected a systematic attempt to crush dissenting voices in the region. She maintained that such decisions run in stark contradiction to the principles of justice and due process.

Describing the move as part



of a broader crackdown, she alleged that "controversial laws" were being used as tools to stifle the freedom movement. "This is not merely the punishment of a few individuals; it is an attack on an entire nation's right to self-determination," Mrs Malik said.

She further warned that efforts to silence Kashmiri leadership had intensified. "The conspiracy to suppress Kashmiri voices is at its peak," she said, adding that those imprisoned had become a "collective cry."

PILDAT report flags inconsistency in Pakistan National Security Committee meetings

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: As the second year of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's term commenced on March 5, 2025, PILDAT reviews the performance and effectiveness of Pakistan's National Security Committee (NSC) during this period. In its annual review of the NSC, PILDAT has noted that while the Committee was convened on three occasions during the year, its functioning remained largely episodic and reactive, triggered primarily by acute security crises. The April-June 2025 meetings, convened in response to the Pahalgam attack in Jammu and

Kashmir (IIOJK) and subsequent cross-border escalation, underscored the NSC's critical role in facilitating civil-military consultation and coordinated national responses. The June 2025 meeting further demonstrated the NSC's capacity to assess broader regional developments, including the Israeli military strikes on Iran, highlighting its potential as a platform for strategic deliberation beyond immediate bilateral crises. PILDAT's review indicates that the NSC's overall use remained irregular. The Committee continues to function primarily as a crisis-response mechanism rather than as a regular forum for continuous.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Chaudhry chairing a meeting to discuss measures aimed at facilitating maritime trade at ports.

World TB Day Observed at PIMS Islamabad with Renewed Commitment to End Tuberculosis

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad: World Tuberculosis (TB) Day 2026 was commemorated at the MCH Auditorium of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), Islamabad, under the theme "Yes! We Can End TB - Commit, Invest, Deliver." The high-level event was organized by Health Solutions Pakistan in collaboration with the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, bringing together leading public health experts, clinicians, policymakers, and development partners to reaffirm their commitment to eliminating TB in Pakistan. The session was

chaired by Professor Dr. Imran Sikandar and supported by the PIMS administration, including Dr. Irum (DED Non-Medical) and Dr. Aneza (DED Medical). Prominent participants included Dr. Ejaz Qadeer, Chairperson Health Solutions Pakistan; Dr. Razia Fatima, TB Consultant and Advisor to national and global TB initiatives UNOPS; Dr. Karam Ali Shah, Advisor Stop TB and Dopest Foundation; and Dr. Abdul Ghafoor, Founding Member of Pakistan Chest Society. The event was moderated by Professor Dr. Nasim Akhtar from the Infectious Diseases Department. Speakers high-



lighted the historical importance of March 24, marking the discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis by Robert Koch, which laid the foundation for diagnosing and treating TB worldwide. Dr. Razia Fatima shared insights on Pakistan's progress in combating TB, noting significant improvements in case detection due

to enhanced diagnostic capacity. However, she emphasized that a substantial number of TB cases remain undetected and called for stronger private sector engagement to address this gap. She also stressed the need for sustainable financing and a multisectoral approach to accelerate TB elimination efforts. Dr.

Fatima was also recognized for her global contributions, including receiving The Union Medal in 2024, one of the most prestigious honors in lung health. Dr. Ejaz Qadeer appreciated the Government of Pakistan's leadership in the national TB response and reiterated the private sector's commitment to supporting TB control efforts through collaboration and expansion of service delivery. Dr. Karam Ali Shah highlighted the importance of strengthening capacity at tertiary care hospitals and called for continued engagement through technical working groups to effectively address institutional needs. Professor

Dr. Nasim Akhtar presented case studies on complicated TB management, underscoring the need for improved human resource capacity and integrated diagnostic systems using multi-disease testing platforms. The event concluded with a symbolic awareness walk and the distribution of shields among TB champions in recognition of their contributions to the fight against tuberculosis. The gathering reinforced a unified message that ending TB requires collective action, sustained investment, and innovation across all sectors.