



ECC approves TSGs, education relief, disaster funding and power sector reforms



Egyptian Ambassador calls on Rana Ihsan Afzal



SAPM Haroon reviews Pakistan-Uzbekistan trade cooperation

Founded By:
(Late) Rehmat Khan

ABC CERTIFIED

Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com
Website: www.peakpoint.pk

Executive Group Editor
Arif Mehmood Khan



Saturday 07 March 2026 Ramazan 17, 1447 A.H VOI No: 06 Issue No. 37 Pages 4 Rs. 20

PM Shehbaz orders crackdown on fuel hoarders amid supply concerns

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A high-level meeting on petroleum products was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, where officials informed that sufficient petrol reserves are available in the country.

During the meeting, the Ministry of Petroleum briefed participants on petroleum reserves in light of the evolving regional situation and stated that adequate stocks of petroleum products are available to meet the country's requirements.

The prime minister directed provincial governments to take strict legal action against hoarders of petroleum products. He ordered that any petrol pump involved in

creating an artificial shortage through hoarding should be immediately sealed, its licence cancelled, and legal action initiated against those responsible. He also instructed the Petroleum Minister to visit the provinces and, in coordination with provincial governments, prepare a comprehensive strategy and planning to ensure conservation of petroleum products and their uninterrupted supply to the public. The prime minister further directed that a dashboard be developed to monitor the movement of petroleum products so that real-time data could be shared with the provinces and transportation of fuel could be effectively monitored. The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding petroleum products.

Operation Ghazab Lil Haq Pak Armed Forces destroy several Afghan Taliban posts in Kurram Sector



PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: In response to unprovoked aggression by the Afghan Taliban, Pakistan's armed forces have continued to carry out effective ground and air operations against the Afghan Taliban and Fitna al-Khwarezi.

During the ongoing Operation Ghazab Lil Haq in the Kurram sector along the Pak-Afghan border, the Pakistan Army conducted a successful operation against the Afghan Taliban, destroying several posts, security sources said.

The Pakistan Army targeted Taliban and Fitna al-Khwarezi positions with heavy artillery fire, the sources added. They said Operation Ghazab Lil Haq would continue until achieving its objectives.

Trump says not currently considering US ground forces in Iran

PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said it would be a "waste of time" currently to consider sending US ground troops into Iran, dismissing the Iranian foreign minister's warning that such a move would spell disaster for invaders.

"It's a waste of time. They've lost everything. They've lost their navy. They've lost everything they can lose," he told NBC by telephone, adding that Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi's earlier remark that Iran was ready for a US or Israeli ground invasion was a "wasted comment."

Trump also indicated he is keen to see Iran's leadership structure

removed and that "we want to go in and clean



everything" quickly. "We don't want someone who would rebuild over a 10-year period," he said. He added that he had ideas for a new leader but declined to name anyone.

Trump said earlier he would "have to be involved" in the appointment of Iran's next leader after US Israeli strikes killed

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei when the conflict began

spread to the Indian Ocean, where a US submarine sank an Iranian naval ship off the coast of Sri Lanka. Trump has called on Iranian Kurdish forces in Iraq to intensify their attacks against Iran, further escalating the ongoing Middle East conflict.

Speaking to Reuters on Thursday, Trump expressed support for Iranian Kurdish militias in Iraq, stating: "I think it's wonderful that they want to do that, I'd be all for it." These militias, based along the Iran-Iraq border in Iraqi Kurdistan, have been in consultations with the US on launching attacks on Iran's western security forces.

The conflict, now in its seventh day, has seen Iran target Israel, the Gulf states, Cyprus, Turkey, and Azerbaijan. The violence has also

18 injured in explosion on Bannu-Miranshah road in KP's NW: officials

PEAK POINT

MIRANSHAH: At least 18 people were injured in an explosion near the Chashma Sarbandki checkpoint on the Bannu-Miranshah main road in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan on Friday, according to police and hospital officials. Police officials said further investigation of the incident was under way. Initially, 14 people were reported injured in the incident, with district headquarters hospital Medical Superintendent Dr Asif Iqbal saying that four of them had sustained critical injuries.

UK warns citizens of risks in traveling to Pakistan

PEAK POINT

LONDON: The United Kingdom has issued a fresh travel advisory for Pakistan, warning its citizens about heightened security risks in several regions of the country. The UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) cited rising tensions related to developments in Iran and Afghanistan, possible protests in major cities, and disruptions to air travel across the Middle East. British authorities said the regional security situation has created increased risks for travelers in Pakistan. According to the FCDO,

Roads closed in major cities across Pakistan ahead of nationwide protests over US-Israel attacks on Iran

PEAK POINT

KARACHI/ISLAMABAD: Roads were closed in multiple cities across the country, including Karachi and Islamabad, ahead of nationwide protest calls by religious groups on Friday in the wake of US-Israel attacks on Iran last week and the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini. Earlier this week, the Jamaat-i-Islami Pakistan emir Hafiz Naemur Rehman announced nationwide protests for today against US-Israel attacks. Religious party Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen (MWM) also put out a call for protests across Sindh today, including in Karachi.

The Karachi Traffic Police announced the closure of several key roads across the metropolis ahead of the demonstrations. In a traffic advisory issued

today, authorities said MT Jinnah Bridge was being redirected towards I.I.



Road, and the route from PIDC towards Sultanabad have been closed for vehicular movement on both sides. Traffic police said vehicles coming from PIDC were being diverted towards Khajur Chowk, while commuters on Mai Kolachi were being turned back to avoid congestion. Meanwhile, traffic from

towards the Service Road.

Officials said traffic police personnel were present on the ground and actively managing the flow of vehicles.

Meanwhile, the Kharadar Police Station to Tower, and Main MA Jinnah Road has been closed for traffic as well, a traffic advisory said, adding that traffic from the area was being diverted towards Yaqoobiya Mosque.

Multiple routes leading to Islamabad's Red Zone closed. Separately, Islamabad police said that Margalla Road and the route via Islamabad Marriott Hotel will remain open for entry into the Red Zone. In a post on X, police said that "except for these routes, all other entry points to the Red Zone will be closed," adding that Fazal-e-Haq Road towards China Chowk will also remain closed for traffic.

US investigation points to likely US responsibility in Iran school strike, sources say



PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: United States military investigators believe it is likely that US forces were responsible for an apparent strike on an Iranian girls' school that killed scores of children on Saturday, but have not yet reached a final conclusion or completed their investigation, two US officials told Reuters.

Reuters was unable to determine more details about the investigation, including what evidence contributed to the tentative assessment, what type of munition was used, who was responsible or why the US might have struck the school. US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Wednesday acknowledged the US military was investigating the incident. The officials, who spoke on condition,



SPORTS



'There will be nerves': India face New Zealand for T20 World Cup glory



PEAK POINT
DUBAI: India face New Zealand on Sunday in Ahmedabad, looking to become the first side to lift the T20 World Cup for a third time but under huge pressure with the weight of a nation on their shoulders.

Standing in the way of Suryakumar Yadav's side are a team who have already upset the odds with a thumping nine-wicket win over the previously unbeaten South Africa to reach the final.

New Zealand believe, after Finn Allen's record 33-ball century in the semi-final in Kolkata, that they are capable of taking

down the hosts to win their maiden T20 World Cup title.

"We've got a lot of momentum going into the weekend," warned Allen. "I think if we play our best cricket, we can beat anybody."

India will not only have to withstand the expectations of 100,000-plus cricket-obsessed fans in a packed Narendra Modi stadium and hundreds of millions more watching on TV, but also the weight of history.

The world's top-ranked T20 team are attempting to become the first to win back-to-back T20 World Cups and the first to lift the

trophy on home soil.

"There will definitely be pressure and nerves, especially playing in India and going for the title," said Suryakumar after a nerve-shredding seven-run win against England in a high-scoring semi-final.

"But the boys and the whole support staff are excited as well."

India have effectively played three knockout games to reach the final, after losing their opening Super Eights match to South Africa.

They hammered Zimbabwe by 72 runs and chased down 196 to beat the West Indies in must-

win games to reach Thursday's semi-final against England.

After posting a mammoth 253-7 against Harry Brook's side, India needed a pivotal 18th over from death-bowling master Jasprit Bumrah to stave off an England batting assault.

"Showed character"

Bumrah conceded just six runs from his final over to leave England with too much to do and, despite Jacob Bethell's 105, India held on to spark wild celebrations. Suryakumar acknowledged he was lucky to have such a unique talent to call upon in the crucial moments.

Bangladesh announce squad for ODI series against Pakistan



PEAK POINT

DHAKA: The Bangladesh Cricket Board has unveiled its squad for the upcoming One-Day International (ODI) series against the Pakistan national cricket team, set to take place in Dhaka.

The three-match series will begin on March 11, while the remaining fixtures are scheduled for March 13 and March 15. All matches will be played at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.

All-rounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz will lead the side for the series. The squad also includes players such as Soumya Sarkar, Najmul Hossain Shanto, Litton Das, and Mustafizur Rahman, among others.

The series is expected to provide competitive preparation for both teams as they continue their international campaigns.

Bangladesh Squad: Mehidy Hasan Miraz (Captain), Soumya Sarkar, Saif Hassan, Tanzid Hasan, Najmul Hossain Shanto, Tawhid Hridoy, Litton Kumer Das, Afif Hossain, Mahidul Islam Bhuiyan, Rishad Hossain, Tanvir Islam, Mustafizur Rahman, Taskin Ahmed, Shoriful Islam, Nahid Rana.

Misbah, Sarfaraz join Pakistan selection committee after Dar's exit



PEAK POINT
LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has restructured its national men's selection committee, appointing former captains Misbah-ul-Haq and Sarfaraz Ahmed to the panel following the resignation of former international umpire

Aleem Dar. The four-member selection committee now includes Misbah-ul-Haq, Sarfaraz Ahmed, former fast bowler Aqib Javed, and former Test batter Asad Shafiq. The reshuffle reflects the board's effort to strengthen the selection process by combining experienced leadership with technical expertise, particularly at a time when the national team is undergoing transition. Aleem Dar stepped down after a relatively short tenure, having joined the committee in October 2024. Sources indicate that his resignation followed experienced

agreements during recent selection meetings, where he reportedly felt his views were not given sufficient consideration. The former ICC Umpire of the year had also expressed reservations regarding the inclusion of players such as Babar Azam, Shadab Khan, and Usman Khan in Pakistan's squad for the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Instead, Dar reportedly supported wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan, arguing that if the team management was willing to continue backing players struggling with form, Rizwan deserved the same level of confidence and opportunity.

Ricky Martin to perform at ICC T20 World Cup closing ceremony



Nominations open for 'Hamaray Heroes' initiative in PSL season 11

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Super League (PSL) has opened nominations for the 11th edition of its 'Hamaray Heroes' initiative, inviting fans across the country to recommend individuals who have made notable contributions to society.

According to the organisers, nominations can be submitted through an online form until 3 pm on Tuesday, March 24, 2026.

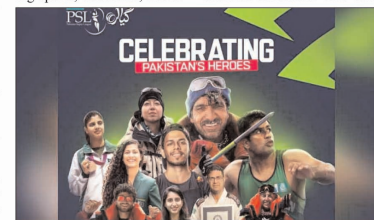
The 'Hamaray Heroes' programme was first introduced during the fifth season of the Pakistan Super League in 2020 and has since become a regular feature of the tournament. The initiative recognises people from different fields who have played a significant role in promoting a positive image of Pakistan.

The upcoming 11th season of the league will begin on March 26, when defending champions Lahore

Qalandars face Hyderabad Kingsmen in the opening match at Gaddafi Stadium. Under the initiative, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) honours individuals from various sectors, including sports, education, health-

care, arts, culture, social work, technology, and entrepreneurship. Notable figures recognised in previous editions include mountaineer Ali Sadpara, Olympic javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem, professional e-sports player Arslan Ash, wrestler Inam

Butt, swimmer Kiran Khan, boxer Muhammad Waseem, and astrophysicist Dr Mariam Sultana. A panel formed by the Pakistan Cricket Board will review the nominations and shortlist candidates who will



be honoured during matches of the upcoming PSL season. Shortlisted individuals will receive cash awards, while short documentaries highlighting their achievements and life stories will be shown during match broadcasts and across the league's digital platforms.



SARGODHA: Badminton players in action during the Ramadan Night Sports Festival at the Sports Gymnasium, organized by the Sports Department on instructions of Deputy Commissioner Hussain Ahmed Raza.



2,828 cigarette cartons stolen from FBR warehouses as senate panel probes possible smuggling nexus

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: A major theft of 2,828 cartons of cigarettes from Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) warehouses in Swabi and Mardan has triggered parliamentary scrutiny, with the Senate Sub Committee on Interior and Narcotics Control seeking accountability and warning of possible links with smuggling networks. Lawmakers also questioned why similar incidents had occurred earlier without proper legal action. The committee meeting, chaired by Senator Saifullah Abro at Parliament House and attended by Senator Muhammad Talha Mahmood, examined the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of cigarette consignments stored in FBR godowns. The committee

demanded explanations from concerned departments and called for recovery of the stolen goods and identification of those responsible. At the start of the meeting, the convener expressed serious concern over the absence of the Director General of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), stressing that senior officials must be present during parliamentary oversight proceedings. Officials from the FBR informed the committee that the case was initially reported as a theft and an FIR was registered with the local police. However, the police later treated the incident as a case of misappropriation and referred it to the FIA for further investigation. The convener questioned the legal mechanism under which the police transferred the case to the FIA and

sought clarification from the authorities. The FBR representative explained that such incidents are generally reported first to the local police before further proceedings are initiated. He added that a formal notification exists outlining the procedure for referring such cases to the FIA and assured the committee that the FBR would fully cooperate with investigators. He also stated that approval from the Board of Members is required before initiating proceedings with the FIA. During the discussion, Senator Talha Mahmood pointed to another similar incident that occurred in April 2024 in which 908 cartons out of a stock of 1,262 cartons stored in a godown were allegedly stolen, yet no FIR had been registered in that case. He

questioned why cigarette consignments stored in warehouses under the jurisdiction of the Regional Tax Office (RTO) Peshawar appeared to be repeatedly targeted. FBR officials informed the committee that in the current case the stolen cartons had reportedly been recovered in May near Jahangira at Flow Petroleum. They added that security arrangements had since been strengthened, including the installation of CCTV cameras in all FBR warehouses from 14 January 2026 and the introduction of new standard operating procedures to improve monitoring. As part of disciplinary measures, 10 officers of BS-16 and BS-17 have been suspended, while several officers suspected of having links with the business community have been trans-

ferred to other stations to dismantle any possible nexus. The committee also asked for the record of all FBR warehouses since 2012. Officials informed members that records from 11 out of 17 godowns had been submitted so far, and a consolidated report would be presented soon. Senator Talha Mahmood also raised concerns about industries established near border areas around Sust, which could potentially be involved in smuggling activities. He warned that border crossings such as Torkham and Arandoo remain vulnerable to illegal trade and stressed the need for stronger border control measures to counter smuggling and related security threats. The convener observed that regions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and

Balochistan remain particularly vulnerable to such activities and directed the FBR and Pakistan Customs to adopt concrete measures to prevent smuggling. Officials including the District Police Officer Swabi, DC Tobacco and representatives of law enforcement agencies briefed the committee on the progress of the investigation. The convener noted that lack of coordination between KP Police and the FIA appeared to be slowing the inquiry. Emphasizing that the case involved government property and national revenue, the committee directed the Director General FIA to ensure an expeditious investigation and bring those responsible to justice.

Three credit hour course of AI mandatory in all universities: HEC chairman

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Higher Education Commission (HEC) Chairman Professor Niaz Ahmed Akhtar said on Friday that a three-credit hour course in Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being made mandatory at the undergraduate level in all universities of Pakistan so that students can be prepared according to the requirements of the digital economy.

He said in a statement that the HEC was committed to comprehensive reforms in the higher education sector in the country. Dr Niaz said important steps were being taken to make universities compatible with national needs and global trends. He said that to make university education effective and productive, an Outcome Based Education Committee has been established, which

will formulate recommendations for improving the curriculum, academic results and examination system. According to the Chairman HEC, a special committee has also been formed to strengthen the Research, Innovation and Commercialization Offices, the aim of which is to promote cooperation between industry and universities and commercialize research.

He said that HEC has decided to make the degree and document verification system completely online, after which students will not need to come to HEC offices for verification. Dr Niaz Akhtar further said that a ranking committee has been established to improve the global ranking of Pakistani universities, which will provide universities with strategies to

improve their global rankings. Special committees are also being established at the provincial level for reforms in the higher education sector, which will include vice-chancellors, provincial HECs and representatives of higher education departments. Professor Niaz Ahmed Akhtar said that HEC will also review the quality of degree programs in engineer-

ing, medical education and agriculture so that educational programs can be improved according to needed standards. He said that work is also underway to make the testing system for undergraduate admissions more transparent and standard because the quality of graduates of any university is linked to the quality of its admitted students.

Opinion & Editorial



Arif Mehmood Khan
 Group Editor: 0333-5366814
Samra Athar Kakakhel
 Resident Editor
Nadim Tanoli
 Joint Editor: Mob-0301-777874
 Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com
 www.peakpoint.pk

Divide et impera

As if the high loss of life in Iran, regional escalation and economic turbulence caused by the US-Israeli aggression against the Islamic Republic were not enough, there are now reports that America is preparing plans to sponsor mercenaries to help it bring down the regime. CNN has reported that the CIA is in contact with Iranian Kurdish groups opposed to Tehran's clerical government, and that these outfits may be used for ground operations inside Iran. While the Americans, too, have refused to rule out 'boots on the ground' inside Iran, there is a strong likelihood that these boots will not be regular US troops, but Iranian Kurdish mercenaries, and possibly Kurdish fighters from Iraq and Syria. The idea, it seems, is to use the militants to foment rebellion within Iran, and give a 'final' push to an embattled Iran, already reeling from US and Israeli strikes. This is an extremely dangerous proposition that may spark ethnic fragmentation and violence inside Iran. But it has been a part of the Israeli playbook for long, just as attempts have been made to carve out ethnic and confessional cantons in Syria. Meanwhile, there are even more disturbing reports that many US military commanders have been delivering sermons to their troops, telling them that the Iran war is part of "God's plan", and will pave the way for the "End Times".

Organic for whom?

Nasira Habib
THE Balochistan Organic Agriculture Policy 2024 was an important step in the right direction. At a time when climate change, water scarcity and soil degradation threaten rural livelihoods, the policy recognises that chemical-intensive agriculture is neither ecologically sustainable nor economically secure in the long term. Yet the real test lies in implementation. The policy's impact will depend on whether it genuinely centres small farmers, women producers and food sovereignty — or whether it becomes another market-led reform that leaves structural inequalities intact. The policy responds to the growing global demand for organic products and understandably seeks to position Balochistan within that opportunity. However, organic agriculture is more than certification and export value chains. At its core, it is about restoring soil life, conserving water, strengthening local food systems and enhancing farmer autonomy. If the primary emphasis remains on certified commodities for distant markets, the province risks narrowing organic agriculture into a commercial niche rather than allowing it to transform diversified production systems that serve both income generation and household food security. Benefits must accrue first to farmers — not to exporters, certifiers or textile buyers. Organic agriculture should not become another externally driven compliance regime in which farmers shoulder production risks while premiums are captured elsewhere. Instead of borrowing definitions wholesale, the policy should articulate its own locally grounded understanding of organic agriculture —

Why Iran will win!

Anela Shahzad
Both the US and Israel possess advanced air forces, electronic intelligence architectures, precision strike platforms and integrated joint force networks that might dwarf Tehran's capabilities in scale and technology. Yet in modern conflict theory, superiority does not always translate into decisive victory. A nation like Iran, strategically constrained in airpower and external projection, can nonetheless wield specific asymmetric and geographic advantages that allow it to impose significant operational costs, shape enemy strategy and arguably achieve strategic leverage that could give it an upper hand in conflict dynamics. Even under constraint of relentless sanction for over five decades, Iran possesses one of the Middle East's largest ballistic missile inventories — Khorramshahr, Ghadr and Fatah-2 — with ranges up to 2,000 km, sufficient to reach all of Israel, all US bases in the Gulf, and other regional vistas. Indigenous production may not rival America's precision-guided munitions, but their relatively low production cost has enabled Iran to produce massed missile salvos which can overwhelm layered defences, forcing the defenders to expend interceptors at a high rate. In a sustained barrage, even highly capable systems like Patriot, THAAD, Iron Dome and Arrow have proven to be impotent, with their interceptor inventories depleting fast in the face of continuous salvo attacks. Iran not only outnumbered its opponents in low-cost inventory, it also has another unique edge: its arsenal is reportedly hidden so deep under the ground that even the US B-2 stealth bombers cannot penetrate to that depth. This double edge gives Iran a 'second-strike' logic, meaning that even if its over-ground infrastructure is degraded, it retains the ability to strike back. This creates a mutual assured attrition dynamics in a regionally constrained context where complete destruction of Iranian strategic forces is nearly impossible without a full-scale invasion plus the combing down of the full terrain. Courtesy Tribune

ECC approves TSGs, education relief, disaster funding and power sector reforms



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet met on Friday approved a summary submitted by the Petroleum Division seeking a Technical Supplementary Grant (TSG) of Rs. 13.1 million to meet Pakistan's annual contribution to the International Energy Forum (IEF).

The ECC met under the chairmanship of Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad

Aurangzeb, which was also informed that continued membership in the IEF remains important for Pakistan's participation in global energy dialogue and cooperation.

The ECC also approved another summary from the Petroleum Division seeking a TSG of Rs. 3 billion for provision of gas supply schemes in villages located within a five-kilometer radius of gas production fields. The schemes are being implemented through Sui Southern

Gas Company Limited (SSGCL) and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL).

The ECC further approved a summary submitted by the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training for a TSG of Rs. 200 million during FY 2025-26 to facilitate payment of outstanding dues to teachers of Basic Education Community Schools (BECS). The financial liability arises from court directives regarding payment of salary differentials in accordance with notified minimum wages for the period from August 2017 to June 2021.

The committee also considered another summary from the same Ministry seeking exemption from relending terms for an additional \$4 million allocated to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) under the restructured Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) Project. The ECC was informed that the World Bank reallocated these funds to the Investment Project Financing/Technical Assistance.

Leghari, Bayraktar discuss expanding bilateral energy cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Friday held a virtual meeting with Türkiye's Minister for Energy and Natural Resources, Alparslan Bayraktar, to discuss ways to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in the energy sector.

During the meeting, the two ministers discussed Pakistan's ongoing power sector reforms and the privatization of electricity distribution companies (DISCOs), according to a press release. The federal minister briefed his Turkish counterpart on the comprehensive reforms being implemented in Pakistan's power sector, aimed at enhancing operational efficiency, strengthening institutional governance, and improving service delivery.

He noted that the Government of Pakistan is actively pursuing the privatization of its power distribution companies as part of a broader strategy to ensure long-term sustainability and efficiency within the sector.

Leghari emphasized that the privatization process is being carried out in a transparent,

competitive, and well-structured manner. In this context, he underlined Pakistan's interest in attracting reputable and experienced global investors to participate in the process.

The minister highlighted that Turkish companies, given their strong track record and extensive experience in the energy sector, could play a constructive role in the successful privatization of Pakistan's distribution companies. He also appreciated the ongoing engagement between the relevant institutions and experts of both countries and thanked the Government of Türkiye for its continued support and cooperation. Türkiye's Minister Alparslan Bayraktar noted that Turkish investors are closely following developments in Pakistan's power sector and have shown considerable interest in the privatization process. He expressed confidence that Turkish companies would actively explore opportunities and participate at an appropriate level. He further reaffirmed Türkiye's commitment to supporting Pakistan's efforts to reform and modernize its power sector. Both sides also discussed the possibility of bringing together relevant Pakistani stakeholders.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Friday held a virtual meeting with Türkiye's Minister for Energy and Natural Resources, Alparslan Bayraktar.

Ali Pervaiz Malik, Ambassador of Sweden discuss bilateral cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Ali Pervaiz Malik, held a meeting with Alexandra Berg von Linde, Ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan, to discuss ongoing bilateral cooperation and explore new avenues of partnership, particularly in the mining and energy sectors.

During the meeting, both sides acknowledged the long-standing relationship between Pakistan and Sweden and emphasised the importance of strengthening economic and industrial col-

laboration, said a news release.

Alexandra Berg von Linde noted that Sweden has maintained strong engagement with Pakistan for the past 77 years, with cooperation spanning multiple sectors including transport, telecommunications, packaging, and industry.

She highlighted that more than 40 companies are currently members of the Swedish Business Council in Pakistan, reflecting the depth of Swedish commercial presence in the country.

The Ambassador under-



scored mining as a promising sector for future collaboration, stating that Sweden possesses extensive expertise in mining, particularly in digitalization, sustainability, mining services, and environmental protection.

527 Afghan combatants killed, 237 check posts destroyed in operation Ghazab lil-Haq: Atta Tarar



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that the security forces have killed 527 combatants of the Afghan Taliban regime, destroyed their 237 posts, and "captured and destroyed" 38 others during Operation Ghazab lil-Haq.

Providing a summary of Afghan Taliban regime's losses at 16:00 hours, the minister said that over 755 Afghan operatives were injured during the Operation Ghazab lil-Haq (Righteous Fury).

Around 205 tanks, armoured vehicles, and artillery guns have also been destroyed during the operation, he added.

The minister noted that around 62 locations across Afghanistan were also targeted by air, effectively.

SAPM Haroon reviews Pakistan-Uzbekistan trade cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Friday chaired a meeting of the Pakistan-Uzbekistan Joint Working Group and reviewed progress on bilateral economic cooperation and explore new avenues for expanding trade between the two countries. The meeting marked the second session of the joint working group on trade, aimed at strengthening economic engagement and enhancing bilateral trade, said a news release.

Secretary Commerce Jawad Paul, along with representatives from various ministries and the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), attended the meeting.

During the session, participants reviewed progress on previ-



ously agreed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and discussed measures to promote trade, improve trade routes, and expand cooperation in multiple sectors.

Speaking on the occasion, Haroon said that under the prime minister's vision, a Five-Year Roadmap (2026-2030) would be presented to significantly increase trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, said adding that the implementation of agreed protocols would also be carried out through the strategic roadmap.

Egyptian Ambassador calls on Rana Ihsan Afzal

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan Dr Ihab Mohamed Abdelhamid Hassan on Friday met with the Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Commerce Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan and discussed matters of mutual interest and review avenues for strengthening bilateral engagement.

During the meeting, the two dignitaries exchanged views on the overall state of Pakistan-Egypt relations and highlighted the importance of continued dialogue to further deepen cooperation, said a press release.

Discussions focused on opportunities to enhance eco-



nomical engagement, strengthen institutional linkages, and promote greater interaction between the business communities of the two countries. The importance of facilitating commercial exchanges and encouraging closer collaboration among relevant stakeholders was also emphasized. The conversation also covered broader regional and global economic developments.

Two separate sabotage attempts foiled

ABDUS SALAM BAITAB

BANNU: Two separate sabotage attempts were foiled in Bannu, saving the city from a major disaster. The Bomb Disposal Unit defused explosive materials at two different locations. According to details, the police in Bannu acted promptly and neutralized explosive materials found at two separate places. The first incident occurred near the jurisdiction of Kakki Police Station, where police received information about suspicious explosive material inside a bag. According to sources, wires were also attached to the bag, after which the Bomb Disposal Squad was immediately called to the scene. The BDS team arrived and, using professional expertise, safely defused the explosive material. The second incident took place on Bannu-Miranshah Road, under

the Saira Tube Well bridge, where information was received about explosive material placed at the site. As soon as the report was received, Bakakhel Police Station personnel cordoned off the area and called the Bomb Disposal Squad. The BDS team carried out the operation and safely defused the explosives, thereby preventing a major disaster in the area. Due to the timely actions of the police, a potentially large loss was averted. Investigations at both locations are currently ongoing. According to DPO Yasir Afridi, during this wave of terrorism it is very important for the public to remain vigilant. Wherever any suspicious object is noticed, the police should be informed immediately. With public cooperation, it will be easier to confront the current situation.

laboration, said a news release.

scored mining as a promising sector for future collaboration, stating that Sweden possesses extensive expertise in mining, particularly in digitalization, sustainability, mining services, and environmental protection.

Swedish companies are actively supporting the project by providing products and services, connectivity solutions, as well as explosive parts.

Ali Pervaiz Malik appreciated the continued Swedish investment and business presence in Pakistan, noting that the government is committed to working with international partners to develop the country's natural resource sector.

He described the Reko Diq Project as "the jewel of Pakistan's mining sector," adding that it is commend-

able that despite challenges, the project has not faced a single day of delay, crediting all companies and stakeholders involved for their professionalism and dedication.

The Minister said that Pakistan is expanding its mining activities and plans to showcase investment opportunities in allied sectors at the upcoming Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 and invited Swedish mining sector companies to expand beyond Reko Diq.

Ambassador Berg von Linde recalled the previous edition of the forum.