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Royal delegation



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DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

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PM reaffirms commitment to Balochistan's development, public welfare

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reiterated that the development, prosperity and welfare of the people of Balochistan remained the federal government's top priority.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of senior politicians and members of the Senate from Balochistan at the Prime Minister's Office, a news release said.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that Balochistan was rich in natural resources and emphasized that the government was making every possible effort to ensure that the people of the province fully benefited from those resources.

He said the federal government, in collaboration with the provincial government, was actively working for the progress and uplift of Balochistan and undertaking measures aimed at improving the living standards of its people. The delegation included Senator Mir Dostain Khan Domki, Balochistan Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, Member of the Balochistan Assembly Sardar Changez Marri, and Mir Khuda Bakhsh Marri.

The participants also discussed matters relating to the overall development of the province and the welfare of the people of Balochistan.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of senior politicians from Balochistan called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Doha, Ankara support Pakistan's mediation efforts to end US-Israeli war on Iran: Qatari PM

PEAK POINT

DOHA: Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani supported Pakistan's mediation efforts in ending the US-Israeli war on Iran, in a press conference with Türkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, according to Al Jazeera. Sheikh Mohammed said the two countries discussed the "dire circumstances" in the Middle East because of the US-Israel war on Iran, with the Strait of Hormuz crisis limiting "freedom of maritime movement". Türkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan reiterated Ankara's strong support for Pakistan's mediation efforts. The Hormuz crisis has had a "dire" impact on the world, he said, stressing that the war needs to end for this reason among others, according to Al Jazeera. The waterway has been "used as a weapon in this war", exacting harsh repercussions on Gulf states, specifically economic, Qatar's prime minister added. Fidan also condemned Israel's "expansion policies" in Lebanon and Gaza, decrying the impact on civilian lives. Qatar's leader also condemned ongoing Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Gaza, saying Türkiye has emerged as a "leading partner" in these key regional issues.



At least nine dead, 33 injured in Lakki Marwat blast

PEAK POINT

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: At least nine people, including two traffic police personnel, were killed and 33 others injured in an explosion in the Sarai Naurang tehsil of Lakki Marwat in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) on Tuesday, Naurang hospital Medical Superintendent (MS) Ishaq Khan confirmed. According to the MS Ishaq, a total of 42 people were brought to the hospital from the site of the incident, out of whom nine had died. The death toll may rise further as rescue and medical operations continue in the area. In a statement, Bannu DIG Sajjad Khan said initial investigations suggested that explosive material had been planted in a motorcycle. He added that Bomb Disposal Squad experts reached the site, collected evidence, and were trying to determine the exact nature of the blast. "A heavy police contingent has been deployed in the area and was conducting a search and strike operation," Sajjad stated. He visited the blast site in Naurang Bazaar and later went to the District Headquarters Hospital, where he met the injured. Lakki Marwat police spokesperson Qudratullah Khan said the martyred police personnel were identified as Adil Jan and Rahatullah, saying the bodies were shifted to the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital, while several injured were referred to hospitals in Bannu in critical condition.



Peace deal hopes fade after Trump rejects 'garbage' Iran proposal

MAHPARA ZAMAN

WASHINGTON/DUBAI: Hopes for a peace deal on Iran faded on Tuesday after Donald Trump said a ceasefire with Iran was "on life support" as Tehran rejected a U.S. proposal to end the conflict and stuck to a list of demands the U.S. president described as "garbage". Iran has called for an end to the war on all fronts, including Lebanon, where U.S. ally Israel is fighting Hezbollah. Tehran also emphasized its sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz, demanded compensation for war damage, and an end to the U.S. naval blockade, among other conditions. Trump said Iran's response threatened the status of a ceasefire that began on April 7. "I would call it the weakest right now, after reading that piece of garbage they sent us. I didn't even finish reading it," Trump, who has repeatedly threatened to end the ceasefire, told reporters. The U.S. had proposed an end to fighting before starting talks on more contentious issues, including Iran's nuclear program. Brent crude oil futures extended gains in early Asian trade on Tuesday, climbing above \$104.50 a barrel, as the deadlock left the Strait of Hormuz largely closed.



SC moved for Imran's transfer to hospital

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Imran Khan's sister, Uzma Khan, has approached the Supreme Court seeking his transfer to Shifa International Hospital for what the petition describes as proper treatment and continuous monitoring of his eye condition and related medical complications. The petition, filed against the Islamabad High Court's March 12 order directing the Islamabad administration to constitute a medical board for Imran Khan's examination, argues that concerns surrounding the PTI founder's health extend beyond the treatment of Central Retinal Vein Occlusion.

FO terms report claiming Pakistan allowed Iranian military aircraft to park at airbase as 'misleading and sensationalised'

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) on Tuesday termed a report by an American media outlet claiming that Islamabad "quietly allowed" Iranian military aircraft to park on its airfields while playing the role of a mediator in the Middle East conflict as "misleading and sensationalised".

Citing US officials, CBS News had alleged that days after US President Trump announced the ceasefire with Iran in early April, Tehran sent multiple aircraft to the Nur Khan Air Base.

"Among the military hardware was an Iranian Air Force RC-130, a reconnaissance and intelligence-gathering variant of the Lockheed C-130 Hercules tactical transport aircraft," the report claimed.

In a response issued on Tuesday, the FO said, Pakistan to facilitate the "Pakistan categorically movement of diplomatic personnel, security teams and administrative staff associated with the talks process," it said. The FO said that some aircraft and support personnel remained temporarily in Pakistan in "anticipation of subsequent rounds of engagement."

"Although formal negotiations have not yet resumed, senior-level diplomatic exchanges have continued. In this context, visits by the Iranian foreign minister to Islamabad were facilitated through the existing logistical and administrative arrangements," it said.

"The Iranian aircraft currently parked in Pakistan arrived during the ceasefire period and bear no linkage whatsoever to any military contingency or preservation arrangement. Assertions suggesting otherwise are speculative, misleading, and entirely detached from the factual context," the FO said.

"Pakistan has consistently acted as an impartial, constructive, and responsible facilitator in support of dialogue and de-escalation. In line with this role, Pakistan has extended routine logistical and administrative support where required, while maintaining full transparency and regular communication with all relevant parties," it said.



SC directs IHC to decide Imaan, Hadi's pleas against sentence within two weeks

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to decide within two weeks the pleas of human rights lawyer Imaan Zainab Mazari-Hazir and her husband, Hadi Ali Chattha, seeking the suspension of their sentence in the controversial social media posts case.

Until the IHC decides upon the petitions, the matter will remain pending before the apex court, a three-judge SC bench, consisting of Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Shafi Siddiqui, ordered. During the hearing, the couple's lawyer, Faisal Siddiqi H, argued that the legal requirements were not met in the trial against his clients.





SPORTS



Pakistan inflict 153-run defeat on Zimbabwe in T20I series opener



PEAK POINT
KARACHI: Pakistan secured a record 153-run victory over Zimbabwe following Ayesha Zafar's unbeaten century and Fatima Sana's three wickets during the first T20I at Karachi's National Bank Stadium on Tuesday.

Set to chase a daunting 238-run target, the touring side could accumulate 84 before getting bowled out in 18.2 overs and thus registered their third-lowest total in the format.

Right-handed batter Natasha Mtomba remained the top-scorer for Zimbabwe with her 20-ball 24, while Adel Zimunu (18) and

Beloved Biza (10) were the only other batters to breach double figures against the disciplined Pakistan bowling attack.

Captain Fatima spearheaded Pakistan's bowling charge with economical figures of 3/7 in her three overs, followed by Sadia Iqbal and Natalia Pervaiz with two scalps each, while Rameen Shamim chipped in with one.

Opting to bat first, the home side piled up 237/5 in their 20 overs, which was their highest in the format, surpassing the previous best of 181/4, which they achieved against South Africa in 2024. The hosts got off to a briefly

flamboyant start to their innings as their openers Muneeba Ali and inform Gull Feroza put together 23 runs until the former was dismissed by captain Nomvele Sibanda on the penultimate delivery of the second over.

Following Muneeba's dismissal, Ayesha joined Feroza in the middle, and the duo shared a brisk 34-run partnership for the second wicket before Precious Marange gave Zimbabwe a vital breakthrough by dismissing the opener, who walked back after scoring a 19-ball 37, laced with eight fours. Ayesha was then involved in two brief partnerships

with debutant Saira Jaben (five) and Natalia Pervaiz (nine) until eventually finding subtle support from the other end by Riaz.

The duo batted dominantly against the Zimbabwean bowling attack and put Pakistan on course to breach the 200-run barrier by putting together 67 runs in just 35 deliveries. Beloved Biza eventually broke the threatening stand on the third delivery of the 16th over by getting Aliya stumped, who fell agonisingly short of a well-deserved half-century as she made a quickfire 48 off 23 deliveries with the help of four sixes and as many fours.

Pakistan squad named for CASA 7s Rugby



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The Pakistan Rugby Union (PRU) on Monday announced a 10-member team for the inaugural edition of the Central South Asian 7s Rugby Championship being held in Tashkent on May 16-17.

The squad includes Amir Shahzad, Anjum Sajjad, Mohsin Raza, Mohammad Aqib Siddiqui, Abbas Bangash, Mohammad Haroon, Faig Shahzad, Mohammad Afzal, Touqeer Ali and Mohammad Irfan. Mohammad Mudassar (five) has been named captain for the event while Umair Khan will serve as vice-captain. Kashif Khawaja is the head coach.

Besides Pakistan, the other countries featuring in the event include Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, India and Uzbekistan. PRU secretary Salman Muzaffar Shaikh said CASA Rugby Alliance was jointly established by the rugby unions of Pakistan and India to promote the sport across the region.

"The alliance currently consists of 11 member nations, including the participating countries alongside Bangladesh, Nepal, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan and Iran," Salman said.

"This event marks the first-ever Rugby Sevens event under the CASA Rugby Alliance," he said.

Nahid Rana powers Bangladesh to 104-run victory over Pakistan in first Test



PEAK POINT

DHAKA: Bangladesh beat Pakistan by 104 runs in the first match of the two-Test series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur, Dhaka, on Tuesday.

Resuming the final session at 116-3, Pakistan were bowled out for 163 in 52.5 overs while chasing Bangladesh's 268-run target courtesy of an exceptional five-wicket haul by Nahid Rana.

The visitors suffered an early setback when Taskin Ahmed struck in the opening over, removing Imam-ul-Haq for just two runs off five deliveries. Despite the early blow, Azan Awaish and Abdullah Fazal steadied the innings with a crucial 50-run partnership for the second wicket, easing pressure and rebuilding momentum.

However, the stand ended at 54 when Azan was dismissed for 15 off 33 balls after striking one boundary off Mehidy Hasan Miraz, leaving Pakistan struggling at 57-2 in 12.1 overs.

The situation worsened soon after when Nahid Rana removed skipper Shan Masood cheaply for two runs off five

balls. Tajjul Islam struck early and got rid of Abdullah Fazal who was dismissed LBW after playing an outstanding knock of 66 off 113 deliveries comprising 11 fours and ending the 51-run stand alongside Salman Ali Agha.

In the very next over, Taskin Ahmed struck and picked up his crucial second wicket by dismissing Salman Agha for 26 off 39 deliveries including one four, leaving the team struggling at 121-5 in 32.4 overs. Mohammad Rizwan and Saud Shakeel came to bat and piled up crucial runs from their bats and helped form a solid stand as they took the team's total past the 150-run mark as well.

Mohyuddin Wani given additional charge as DG PSB



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has assigned additional charge of Director General, Pakistan Sports Board (PSB), to Secretary Provincial Coordination (IPC)

issued by the effect and until further orders. Meanwhile, Yasir Pirzada, a BS-20 officer of the Inland Revenue Service, has been repatriated to the duties of Director General PSB in addition to his existing responsibilities. The appointment has been made for a period of three months or until the posting of a regular incumbent. The post has been upgraded as personal to him with immediate effect.

ICC retains elite umpires and match referees panels for 2026-27 season



Noman Ali becomes oldest player to complete 100 Test wickets

PEAK POINT

DHAKA: Pakistan left-arm spinner Noman Ali completed 100 Test wickets, becoming the oldest player in history to reach the milestone during the first Test against Bangladesh at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Tuesday.

He claimed the milestone by dismissing Mehidy Hasan Miraz, joining an elite group of Pakistan bowlers and becoming the ninth spinner and 20th overall to achieve the feat. The left-arm spinner also picked up the crucial wickets of Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and Tajjul Islam. At 39 years and 217 days, Noman became the oldest player in Test history to reach the 100-wicket milestone. He surpassed former England spinner Bobby Peel, who reached the mark in 1896 at the age of 39 years and 180 days. The 39-year-old also reached

another landmark by becoming the joint fourth-fastest Pakistan bowler to claim 100 Test wickets, achieving the feat in his 22nd Test match. England great George Barnes (England) – 38y 310d Fastest Pakistani bowlers to



Test wickets, having reached the milestone in just 16 matches. Waqar Younis – 20 matches. Mohammad Asif – 22 matches. Noman Ali – 22 matches. Fazal Mahmood – 22 matches. Saqlain Mushtaq – 23 matches.

100 Test wickets Yasir Shah – 17 matches. Saeed Ajmal – 19 matches. Waqar Younis – 20 matches. Mohammad Asif – 22 matches. Noman Ali – 22 matches. Fazal Mahmood – 22 matches. Saqlain Mushtaq – 23 matches.



Punjab Council of the Arts faces crisis due to lack of appointments and political interference

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The vibrant halls of the Punjab Council of the Arts, once teeming with creativity and cultural exchange, now stand as a symbol of a larger crisis. As the country's largest cultural organization, it was envisioned to promote the arts, nurture talent, and uplift the cultural landscape. Yet today, it teeters on the edge of collapse, with its foundation shaken by political interference and a severe leadership vacuum. Sources informed that in the heart of this storm stands the Secretary of Information and Culture, Punjab, whose failure to fill critical posts has sent shockwaves through the organiza-

tion. Key positions, including directors of several Arts Councils across the province, have remained vacant for months, leaving the entire structure struggling to function effectively. From Sargodha to Faisalabad, Bahawalpur to Gujranwala, and even Murree, the lifeblood of the Punjab Council of the Arts is missing its key leaders. Despite a pool of qualified candidates ready to step into these roles, political maneuvering and a preference for appointing officers from outside the relevant cadre have further complicated matters. Instead of appointing the right individuals for the job, the administrative department has opted

for temporary, additional charge postings. Allegedly, these decisions, driven by political motives, have created a human resources crisis within the Council and hampered its ability to carry out its responsibilities. At the heart of the crisis are four unfilled director positions that have been vacant for an extended period. In addition, the Deputy Director's post in Murree has been unoccupied for over two years, with no explanation provided for the delay. Even more concerning is the temporary appointment of BS-18 officers from the Information Department to take on director duties for the Faisalabad and Bahawalpur Arts Councils—temporary

positions that have stretched for three months. Sources informed that these vacancies represent more than just a lack of leadership - they symbolize a much deeper issue within the Punjab Council of the Arts: the erosion of structure and order. Six more divisional deputy director posts remain unfilled, including a crucial position at the Head Office. Despite having qualified officers available to fill these positions, the Secretary of Information and Culture has failed to make permanent appointments, allowing the situation to spiral further out of control. Internal disputes among the officers regarding their service rights have only

added to the chaos. These disputes have left the Secretary of Information and Culture with an easy escape route from addressing the growing crisis, while the organization's work continues to suffer. While complaints and recommendations have been sent from the Chief Secretary's office, issues like irregular inductions, unauthorized transfers, and overage employee recruitments - contrary to established policies - remain unresolved. Perhaps most troubling is the Secretary's quick engagement in litigation against the Arts Councils, particularly regarding theater issues, rather than focusing on

resolving internal matters or improving the Council's governance. This political maneuvering has deepened the sense of disillusionment within the organization. Founded in 1975, the Punjab Council of the Arts was intended to serve as a beacon for cultural growth. It is governed by a Board of Governors (BoG) and an Executive Committee, both of which are supposed to play a vital role in shaping the rules, regulations, and policies that guide the organization. Sources further informed that the Secretary's office has remained silent on the non-functioning BoG, which expired on March 23, 2026.

NAVTC asked to strengthen quality assurance amid funding concerns

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat raised concerns over funding constraints, transparency, quality assurance and certification standards in the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission. The committee directed the institution to improve its financial sustainability, strengthen accreditation processes and explore additional funding from international institutions. The committee's discussion placed NAVTC's

role under scrutiny at a time when youth skills development, employability and technical training are presented as key national priorities. During the meeting chaired by Senator Saleem Mandivilla, the committee received a comprehensive briefing from NAVTC on its functioning, financial management, selection criteria, transparency measures, third-party evaluation mechanisms and performance outcomes. The briefing focused on how the institution manages vocational and technical training programmes, how


candidates are selected and how training quality is verified. Officials informed the committee that NAVTC has significantly expanded skill development opportunities for youth through greater engagement with the private sector. They said the commission is working to improve employability by linking training programmes with market needs and industry demand. However, concerns were raised over funding constraints, which could affect the scale, quality and continuity of vocational training initiatives. The com-

mittee observed that sustainable financing is essential if NAVTC is to deliver meaningful training outcomes and support young people seeking employment in competitive local and international job markets. The committee recommended that NAVTC explore additional funding avenues through international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. It also advised the commission to make effective use of EDF funds to support technical and vocational training pro-

grammes. The committee also stressed the need for stronger quality assurance and accreditation mechanisms. Members emphasized that certification must remain transparent, credible and properly monitored so that trainees receive qualifications trusted by employers and relevant to market requirements. The discussion also focused on third-party evaluation systems, which are considered important for checking whether training programmes are delivering real results. The committee underlined that independent

assessment, transparent certification and strong monitoring are necessary to prevent weak training outcomes and ensure public money is used effectively. NAVTC's performance came under review as part of wider discussions on governance, regulation and institutional transparency. The committee's recommendations signal that vocational training bodies will be expected to show stronger accountability, clearer financial planning and better proof of results.

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When dismantling the tiger

Jawed Naqvi
SOMETHING is notably common in the politics of Donald Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu, Narendra Modi, Nawaz Sharif, Imran Khan, Sheikh Hasina and even Asif Zardari. Several others qualify, naturally, but this little sample explains the way democracy has turned into a zero-sum game between political leaders at the expense of the masses. In other words, all the eminences listed above are either riding the tiger of power or rode one to face its fateful consequences. A zero-sum game is a competitive situation in game theory where one participant's gain is exactly balanced by another's loss, meaning the total benefits and losses sum to zero. The total amount of resources is fixed, so one player can only win at the expense of another. The masses can only stare in disbelief. Abraham Lincoln and Immanuel Kant would be horrified by the hollowing out of democracy into a fossil of itself. All the above leaders would likely be in jail should they get off the tiger's back, assuming they are not already there or living in exile. The fear of reprisal grips Trump and Netanyahu most starkly. They may be the most powerful men today, going about wrecking the world at will and threatening Armageddon. Trump faces impeachment the moment he leaves office, having revelled in the fear

and anguish of his foes during his stay at the helm. The revenge could come earlier, in November, should the mid-term polls give Democrats a majority in both Houses. Desperately, Trump's supporters have floated the idea of a perpetual presidency or at least a third term even if it is done without legal sanction. Why do politicians turn to crime to get even with the opponent? Supporters see another remote route to Trump's reprieve. They saw Gerald Ford granting Richard Nixon the presidential pardon. Trump may be hoping for similar reprieve from J.D. Vance or Marco Rubio, should one of them muscle their way to the next presidency. A Hillary Clinton-supported Democratic presidency, on the other hand, remains Trump's biggest nightmare come November 2028.

Likewise for Netanyahu, who has been pleading for support from Trump and through him with various power brokers in Israel. He needs their help to dodge serious corruption charges that look set to send him and possibly his wife to prison if and when he dismounts from drunken power. The war with Iran among its other uses has kept the law from catching Netanyahu by the neck. Nawaz Sharif and Pervez Musharraf had a bruising fight that left both physically impaired and sent them both to live in exile, by turn.

Imran took on Zardari and Sharif, and Zardari's party joined hands with arch-foe Sharif's group to ensure that Imran gets his comeuppance. Hasina was fortunate not to be devoured by the Bengal tiger after a timely helicopter ride ferried her to Delhi. The beast on its part had shovelled her off its back with a very mean intent.

Modi is going about wrecking the opposition as a man possessed. The tricks he has used can be regarded as his own patented innovations. Narendra Modi's circumstances seem indulgent, for now. But he shares the fraught playbook with Trump, Netanyahu et al. As luck would have it, the Indian opposition is crawling with individual ambitions and calculations stalking a range of diverse regional interest groups, some with links to enticing sources of lucre. Modi blatantly bulldozed his way to scalp another state for his party in West Bengal, recently. The election commission was widely seen as a member of Modi's team. Voters' names were removed by the millions, offices of the ruling Trinamool Congress raided, its strategists arrested only to be released after the elections. Aparna Bhattacharya argued in The Wire that "in 150 seats, more than half of West Bengal's 294, total deletions were greater than victory margins, and BJP won 99. In 2021, it won just 19 of these".

Courtesy Dawn

China's role in the Middle East

Shahid Javed Burki

I write this as Donald Trump is preparing for his visit to Beijing to meet with Xi Jinping. He is set to meet the Chinese leader on May 14 for a two-day session. I will follow up with another article when the talks have taken place and the two sides have reported on their impressions of what was achieved.

When the visit was planned, Trump had imposed and then eased the stiff tariffs he had levied on imports from China. Then, the Beijing talks were planned to deal with trade issues. But now, the focus is likely to be the war in Iran that was launched by Trump on February 28 with little planning. It is now known that the attack on Iran was prompted by a push by Benjamin Netanyahu, who is afraid of Iran becoming a nuclear power.

There is little doubt that the war in Iran, which has now developed into skirmishes involving several states in the area, will feature prominently in the Beijing talks. China, like Pakistan, is worried about the way its own interests in the area would be adversely affected by the continuing war in the Middle East.

The two countries have close relations and have been involved in persuading Iran to reach a deal with Washington to end the war. Pakistan, which hosted a round of US-Iran peace talks in Islamabad - where the American delegation was led by Vice President JD Vance and included President Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and US Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff - was unable to bring the two sides closer to an agreement.

Vance held uninterrupted talks with the Iranian side in an Islamabad hotel for 21 hours. Another round of talks was planned, and the US team was on its way to Islamabad when there was a breakdown in negotiations between Washington and Tehran. Pakistan, along with China, had been working to find a way to bring the two sides to agree on a plan of action that would resolve the issues that were being pursued by the two warring capitals.

Courtesy Tribune

Space for dissent

Aurat March has, over the years, become one of Pakistan's most visible platforms for debate on women's rights and social justice. Whether or not one agrees with every slogan raised at the march, the broader principle underpinning it must remain beyond dispute. The right of citizens to peacefully assemble and express their views is fundamental to any democratic society. This year's Aurat March in Karachi unfolded under tighter scrutiny and amid concerns following the brief detention of women's rights activists earlier in the month. Yet hundreds still gathered at Seaview to raise issues that continue to affect countless women across the country. Among the most poignant moments was the tribute to Shanti, the 19-year-old bride from Lyari whose tragic death after alleged sexual violence reignited difficult but necessary conversations around marital abuse and the silence that often surrounds it. The significance of such gatherings lies in the space they create for conversations society is often reluctant to confront openly. Pakistan's Constitution guarantees both freedom of speech and the right to peaceful assembly. These rights are not reserved for one class. They belong equally to all citizens, regardless of whether their views are popular or controversial.

Yousaf Raza Gilani meets Belgian Royal delegation



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, on Tuesday met with the Belgian Royal Delegation comprising Prince Édouard de Ligne La Trémoille and Princess Isabella Orsini de Ligne La Trémoille at Parliament House.

During the meeting, both sides exchanged views in a cordial atmosphere on bilateral relations, parliamentary diplomacy, regional developments, and avenues for enhancing cooperation between Pakistan and

Belgium, said a news release.

The Chairman Senate conveyed warm greetings and best wishes from the Parliament and people of Pakistan to the people of Belgium and expressed satisfaction over the growing relations between the two countries.

He remarked that the visit of the distinguished Belgian delegation reflected the longstanding friendship, mutual goodwill, and strengthening people-to-people ties between Pakistan and Belgium.

The Chairman Senate said that Pakistan attached great importance to its friendly relations with Belgium and regarded as an important partner in Europe.

He added that Pakistan-Belgium relations were rooted in mutual respect, democratic values, and constructive engagement at bilateral and multilateral forums.

Highlighting Belgium's significance as the host country of key European institutions, he said Belgium served as an important gateway for Pakistan's engagement with Europe.

He also appreciated Belgium's continued support for Pakistan's GSP Plus status, acknowledging its positive contribution towards enhancing trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

Emphasizing the importance of parliamentary diplomacy, the Chairman of the Senate said that the Senate of Pakistan remained actively engaged in promoting dialogue and cooperation with parliamentary institutions across the world.

Ayaz Sadiq expressed sorrow and deep grief over the tragic demise of son of Aijaz Hussain

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A Fataha Khawani was held at the Parliament House for the late son of Aijaz Hussain Jakhri, Chief Whip of the Pakistan Peoples Party and Member of the National Assembly. Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq expressed profound sorrow and grief over the tragic demise and conveyed his heartfelt condolences to Aijaz Hussain Jakhri and his bereaved family. Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq remarked that the loss of a child is an immense tragedy for any parent, and the death of a young son is an irreparable loss that cannot be adequately expressed in words. He noted that parents attach countless hopes and dreams to their children, and their untimely separation brings profound pain and anguish. Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq further stated that he



stands in solidarity with Aijaz Hussain Jakhri and his family during this difficult time and prayed to Allah Almighty to elevate the ranks of the departed soul and grant patience and strength to the bereaved family. Federal Ministers, Senators, Members of the National Assembly, members of the Parliamentary Reporters Association (PRA), representatives of civil society, as well as officers and officials of the National Assembly Secretariat attended the Fataha Khawani and offered prayers for the departed soul.

Finance Minister, textile representative discuss proposals for upcoming budget

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held an extensive meeting with a high-level delegation representing Pakistan's textile and apparel sector on Budget 2026-27 aimed at strengthening the competitiveness, sustainability and long-term growth of the country's textile sector and export industry.

The delegation comprised leading chambers, associations, exporters and industry stakeholders from across the country, said a press release issued by finance ministry. The delegation presented a comprehensive set of proposals and recommendations for the Federal Budget 2026-27 aimed at strengthening the competitiveness, sustainability and long-term growth of the country's textile sector and export industry. During the meeting, the delegation highlighted the textile sector's vital contribution to Pakistan's economy as a major source of exports, employment generation, industrial activity and foreign exchange earnings. The representatives emphasized the importance of maintaining a stable, growth-oriented and internationally competitive poli-

cy environment to enable the industry to effectively respond to evolving global market dynamics and increasing regional competition. The delegation shared a broad range of policy recommendations focusing on taxation reforms, energy affordability, export facilitation, industrial modernization, liquidity management, investment promotion and ease of doing business. The proposals were aimed at reducing the cost of production, improving industrial efficiency, enhancing exporters' liquidity position, encouraging technological upgradation and creating a more predictable and investor-friendly business environment.

The industry representatives stressed that timely policy support and structural reforms would help strengthen Pakistan's export competitiveness, promote value-added manufacturing, attract fresh domestic and foreign investment and facilitate greater integration into international supply chains. They noted that improving the operating environment for exporters would support industrial expansion, employment generation and economic growth while also contributing positively towards fiscal stability and foreign exchange inflows.

Fahd Haroon meets Nawaf to discuss digital media landscape

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State / Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Digital Media, Fahd Haroon met Ambassador of the Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki on Tuesday.

During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on matters of mutual interest, including developments in the digital media landscape, evolving media trends, and broader areas of cooperation and engagement, said a news release issued here.

The discussion reflected the long-standing and brotherly relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, while underscoring the importance of continued dialogue on emerging communication and media dynamics in an increasingly digital world.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of mutual goodwill and a shared commitment to strengthening bilateral engagement across diverse sectors.

Naqvi orders major upgrades during visit to National Police Academy

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid an official visit to the National Police Academy (NPA) on Tuesday, where he chaired a high-level meeting and reviewed multiple development projects aimed at modernising police training in Pakistan. During the visit, the minister inspected the under-construction multi-storey hostel and examined the model room, issuing directives to further enhance its facilities. He also assigned a deadline of May 31 for the completion of the Elite Police Training School project, announcing that elite-level training for officers will now be conducted at the NPA instead of provincial institutions. Naqvi



ordered the installation of a solar power system at the Academy and instructed a comprehensive renovation of the existing buildings. To strengthen modern police education, he approved the establishment of three new IT-equipped classrooms, along with advanced training using drones, night-vision gear, and modern weaponry. The minister also directed reforms in promotional courses, emphasising modern standards and improved service delivery.

Govt launches nationwide drive to address "Out-of-School Children": Wajiha Qamar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training Wajiha Qamar on Tuesday informed the National Assembly that the government had launched a comprehensive campaign to address the issue of out-of-school children and learning poverty across the country. Responding to a Calling Attention Notice moved by MNAs Ibrar Ahmad, Anjum Aqeel Khan, and Malik Shakir Bashir Awan regarding the presence of around 26 million out-of-school children, the minister said the government was implementing targeted interventions through formal and non-formal



education sectors. She said a campaign titled "No Child Left Behind" had been launched in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), Basic Education Community Schools, and several non-governmental organizations.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb holding a meeting with a high-level delegation representing Pakistan's textile and apparel sector, comprising leading chambers, association, exporters and industry stakeholders from across the country, at the Finance Division.

PM issues directives for rehabilitation of Faisalabad Motorway: Tariq Fazal



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Tuesday informed the Senate that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has issued directives for the rehabilitation of the Faisalabad Motorway.

Replying to a calling attention notice raised by Senator Abid Sher Ali about the massive cracks on different parts of Pindi Bhattian-Faisalabad Motorway section which needed immediate repair and maintenance, the minister said that the PM has also instructed to make this motorway a four to six-lane road. He said the credit went to Pakista Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) government for laying network of motorways in the country. In another response, Minister of State for Interior, Muhammad Tallal Bader Chaudhry told

the upper house that the rehabilitation and compensation funds for the displaced residents of South Waziristan were disbursed by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He was responding to a calling attention notice raised by Senator Dost Muhammad Khan regarding the non-disbursement of rehabilitation/compensation funds for the displaced residents of South Waziristan who lost their homes and livelihoods during different security operations carried out in the area during the years 2008 and 2009.

Governor Kundi, Rana Sanaullah discuss KP security, governance issues



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday met Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah and discussed the overall political situation in the country, with particular

focus on law and order and governance issues in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During the meeting, both leaders expressed serious concern over the deteriorating security situation in the province and what they termed the provincial government's lack of interest in addressing the issue. Governor Kundi apprised the adviser of public concerns regarding poor governance, worsening law and order situation and problems being faced by the residents of the merged districts. He also expressed grave concern over the closure of CNG sta-

tions in the province, terming it an inappropriate decision that required immediate redressal by the federal government. The Governor said issues being faced by the CNG Stations Union should be heard and resolved without delay. Rana Sanaullah assured the Governor that he would convey his concerns to the Prime Minister and would play his full role in resolving the issue. Governor Kundi said the federal government would have to take practical measures to remove the sense of deprivation among the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.