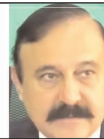




Gilani calls for stronger Pakistan-Bangladesh institutional cooperation



Pakistan, Indonesia agree to deepen cooperation in healthcare sector



Govt. to ensure timely payment of salaries to journalists: Dr Tariq Fazal

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PM Shehbaz says Pakistan taking measures on a priority basis to increase foreign investment

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that Pakistan was taking measures on a priority basis to increase foreign investment in the country, according to a statement by the Prime Minister's House (PMO).

He made the remarks during a meeting with a delegation from Qatar's Tameer Group, led by its founder Mohammad Al Ali, the PMO said in a statement.

"Qatar is a longstanding friend of Pakistan that has always stood by the country in difficult times," PM Shehbaz was quoted as saying.

"We are taking measures on a priority basis to increase foreign investment.

Obstacles hindering investment have been removed under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC)," he said.

The premier further said that Pakistan had vast potential for investment in tourism and hospitality, as well as the real estate and construction sectors.

He directed the authorities concerned to "provide facilitation and support to the group" on investment in the country.

The statement went on to say that the company's founder briefed the meeting about its investments in Pakistan and ongoing projects. "The group is interested in investing in Pakistan's hospitality and hotel industry, as well as the real estate and construction sectors, and work on several projects.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Tameer Group Qatar led by its founder Muhammad Hussain Al Ali calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PAF Air Chief meets Turkish Defence Minister, Commander Air Force

PEAK POINT



RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, NI (M), HJ, who is on an official visit to the Republic of Turkey,

held high-level meetings with General Ziya Cemal Kadioglu, Commander Turkish Air Force, Yasar Guler, Minister of National Defence, and Mr. Selcuk Bayraktar, Chief Technology Officer Baykar Technologies.

Both sides reaffirmed the growing strategic convergence and shared commitment of both nations towards enhanced collaboration in defence, aerospace innovation and emerging technologies, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

At Turkish Air Force Headquarters, Air Chief Zaheer Ahmed received a Guard of Honour and discussed enhancing interoperability through joint exercises, training programmes, and professional exchanges.

The Turkish Air Chief appreciated Pakistan Air Force's support in training Turkish pilots.

During his meeting with Defence Minister Yasar Guler, both sides reaffirmed the strong historical.

CDF Munir reaches Tehran as part of ongoing mediation efforts to end Iran war

PEAK POINT



TEHRAN: Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir reached Tehran on Friday as part of ongoing mediation efforts to end the US-Israel war on Iran, said Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement.

The military's media wing said that on arrival, Field Marshal Munir was received and warmly welcomed by the Iranian Minister for Interior, Eskandar Momeni. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi was also present at the reception, the statement added.

The CDF Munir will hold discussions on the ongoing Iran-US talks, regional peace and stability, and other matters of mutual interest during the visit, the security sources said earlier today.

During the visit, the COAS will also meet senior Iranian leadership to discuss bilateral cooperation and the evolving regional situation, the sources added. A shaky ceasefire is in place in the war that began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28, after which Iran fired at Gulf states hosting US military bases and fighting broke out between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

But there has been no big breakthrough in peace efforts, with a US blockade of Iranian ports and Tehran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global oil supply route, complicating negotiations mediated by Pakistan.

Pakistan says US made no request to use its airspace for Iran attack

PEAK POINT



RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, NI (M), HJ, who is on an official visit to the Republic of Turkey, held high-level meetings with General Ziya Cemal Kadioglu, Commander Turkish Air Force, Yasar Guler, Minister of National Defence, and Mr. Selcuk Bayraktar, Chief Technology Officer Baykar Technologies.

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Govt further slashes petrol, diesel prices

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) has announced a reduction of Rs6 per litre in the price of petrol and Rs6.80 in the price of high-speed diesel for the coming week.

According to an official press release issued by the ministry, the revised ex-dot prices will come into effect from May 23, 2026. Under the new rates, the price of petrol (motor spirit) has been reduced from Rs409.78 to 403.78 per litre, while the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) has been lowered from Rs409.58 to 402.78 per litre.

Rubio says Pakistan remains 'primary interlocutor' in US-Iran talks

MAHPARA ZAMAN

NEW YORK: United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Friday reiterated that Pakistan remained the "primary interlocutor" in Washington's negotiations with Iran aimed at ending the ongoing conflict.

"The primary interlocutor on this has been Pakistan and continues to be and they've done a, you know, I think an admirable job. And that's what we continue to work through," Rubio told reporters in Sweden after meetings with NATO allies.

"Obviously, other countries, you know, have interests because especially Gulf countries that are, you know, in the middle of all this, may have their own situation going on. We talk to all of them. But I would just say that the primary

country we've been working with on all of this is



Pakistan, and that remains the case," he said.

He also referred to reports regarding Chief of Defence Forces Asim Munir visit to Iran, saying he had information about the trip and was in constant contact with him at the highest level of government. "And it's my understanding he was supposed to go yesterday, but it could be as early as today that Field Marshal Munir could

be travelling there very, very soon," Rubio was

quoted as saying by Fox News. "And we're in constant communication with him [and] the highest levels of our government are constantly talking to him."

He said the United States hoped to reach an agreement with Tehran, while cautioning that Washington and its partners must also prepare a "Plan B" if Iran refuses to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

He said he had raised the matter with NATO allies, adding that any contingency plan would not necessarily involve NATO as a whole but could include select partner countries with strategic interests in the waterway.

"We all would love to see an agreement with Iran in which the straits are open and they abandon their nuclear ambitions," Rubio said, adding that diplomatic efforts toward such an agreement were ongoing.

However, he warned that alternatives would be required if Iran declined to cooperate. "What if Iran refuses to open the straits? What if Iran decides, 'We refuse to open the straits, we're going to own the straits, and we're going to charge tolls for it?' At that point, something has to be done about it," he said.

Four suspected militants killed in CTD operation in Pishin



PEAK POINT

QUETTA: Four suspected militants were killed during a Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) operation in the Surkhhab Camp area of Pishin, according to a CTD spokesperson.

The spokesperson said security personnel conducted the operation in the area near Quetta, where an exchange of fire took place between the suspected militants and law enforcement personnel.

As a result of the gun battle, four alleged terrorists were killed, the spokesperson said.

Authorities also recovered a cache of weapons and explosives from the slain suspects, including hand grenades, improvised explosive devices, firearms and ammunition.



SPORTS



Babar, Naseem recalled as PCB announces 16-member squad for Australia ODIs



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday announced a 16-member squad on Friday for the upcoming three-match ODI series against Australia, scheduled from May 30 to June 4 in Rawalpindi and Lahore.

According to a press release issued by the cricket board, "Ahmed Daniyal, Arafat Minhas and Rohail Nazir are the three players selected in the squad who are yet to represent Pakistan in ODI cricket".

It added that left-arm fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi will continue to lead the side, while Babar Azam, Naseem Shah, Shadab Khan and Sufyan Moqim — who were not part of the away ODI series against Bangladesh in March — have been recalled.

Muhammad Ghazi Gori and Nazir have been named as the two wicketkeeper-batters in the squad after Usman Khan was not considered for selection due to illness, the PCB said.

The board further stated that

Fakhar Zaman and Saim Ayub were not considered for selection as they had earlier been ruled out due to injuries and "will continue their rehabilitation programmes under the supervision of the PCB medical panel".

"The 16-member squad will assemble in Islamabad tonight and will begin training under the coaching staff from Saturday (May 23)," the PCB said.

The Australian men's team will arrive in Islamabad on Saturday. They will also take part in training sessions at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, details of which will be announced in due course, it added.

16-member squad: Shaheen Shah Afridi (captain), Salman Ali Agha (vice-captain), Abdul Samad, Abrar Ahmed, Ahmed Daniyal, Arafat Minhas, Babar Azam, Haris Rauf, Maaz Sadaqat, Muhammad Ghazi Gori (wicket-keeper), Naseem Shah, Rohail Nazir (wicket-keeper), Sahibzada Farhan, Shadab Khan, Shamyul Hussain and Sufyan Moqim.

Pakistan Sports Board has issued orders to pay pensions



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Sports Board has issued orders to pay pensions for the month of April. Retired employees' families are celebrating Eid. The pensioners of the board were not paid on time for the month of April, so a representative delegation of the pensioners met the former DG/PSB Mr. Yasir Pirzada on 7th May, but the problem was not resolved. On 11th May 2026, the former DG/PSB was sent back to his department through a gazette notification and the DG/PSB the additional charge has been handed over to the Federal Secretary, Ministry of IPC. A delegation of pensioners comprising former senatorial officers of Pakistan Sports Board met the Federal Secretary / Acting DG/PSB in his office on 20th May 2026 and submitted a written request for immediate payment of pension for the month of April and May 2026 owing to Eid festival. The pensioners could not be paid the April pension on time due to some technical reasons, but since they took over the charge of DG/PSB, they have been continuously trying to make it possible to pay the April pension before Eid-ul-Azha. The responsible persons have also been contacted in a personal capacity.

Every year will be the year of women's football in Pakistan: PFF



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) on Friday reaffirmed its commitment to the growth of women's football as PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani declared that "every year will be the year of women's football in Pakistan" during the first-ever PFF Women's Football Symposium held in Islamabad.

Bringing together stakeholders from the football and develop-

ment sectors, the symposium served as a platform to exchange ideas on strengthening the women's game in Pakistan while outlining a strategic roadmap for future growth under the leadership of the newly-elected PFF administration. Mr Gilani highlighted the recent rise of Pakistan women's football on the international stage, saying it was encouraging to hear Pakistan women's football being "the talk of the

women should lead women's football structures.

Chief Guest Mehreen Razzaq Bhutto (Member of National Assembly) congratulated the federation on the women national team's FIFA Series campaign, participation in the SAFF Futsal Championship and AFC Women's Asian Cup qualifiers, noting that Pakistani women continue to break barriers when given opportunities.

Secretary IPC and Pakistan Sports Board Director General Mohyuddin Ahmed Wani announced plans for a national coaches, referees and schoolgirls football tournament and institutional support in logistics, grounds and equipment.

Australia ODI squad arrives in Islamabad



PHF to launch hockey activities in 1,000 schools across Pakistan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: As part of its efforts to revive the national game, Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has announced plans to introduce hockey activities in around 1,000 schools across the country during the current year. The programme will be launched in collaboration with federal and provincial governments as well as private sector partners.

It is designed to promote hockey at the grassroots level and identify young talent from an early age.

Secretary Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination/President PHF Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, said the initiative would focus particularly on boys and girls aged 10 to 12 years to build a strong foundation for the future of Pakistan hockey. "We want to take hockey back to schools and recon-

nect the younger generation with our national game. Grassroots development is the key to rebuild Pakistan hockey," he said. Wani added that PHF's vision goes beyond preparing national teams, emphasizing

Under the programme, schools will be encouraged to organize hockey matches, training camps, and introductory coaching sessions. PHF also plans to coordinate with educational institutions to ensure regular student partic-



that sustainable revival can only be achieved through structured youth development programmes.

"This is not a short-term effort. We are laying the foundation for the future by creating opportunities for children across Pakistan to learn and play hockey," he said.

in hockey-related activities.

The PHF President noted that Pakistan has immense untapped talent in both urban and rural areas and the school-based programme will help identify and nurture future stars capable of representing the country at the international level.

Ronaldo strikes twice to end long wait for Saudi title



PEAK POINT

SAUDI ARABIA: Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice as Al Nassr clinched the Saudi Pro League title with a 4-1 win over Damac on Thursday, ending his long wait for domestic silverware. A trademark free-kick and

a close-range finish, both in the final half-hour, sealed the win Al Nassr needed on the last night of the season, with Al Hilal finishing just two points behind.

Ronaldo, 41, who was without a major club trophy since winning Serie A with

Juventus in 2020, arrived in the kingdom to great acclaim in 2023, wept as he watched the final minutes from the bench.

He adds the Saudi championship to his English, Spanish and Italian titles and five Champions League medals.

Al Nassr took a 2-0 lead but were back to 2-1 before Ronaldo's free-kick on 63 minutes evaded the goalkeeper and a forest of legs to find the far corner.

He struck again nine minutes from time, receiving a cut-back on the edge of the six-yard box and smashing high into the net.



Daily Wage Staff regularization under scrutiny as education ministry reveals pending FPSC cases, failed tests and non existing posts

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has disclosed details of daily wage and contract employees working in its attached departments since 2012, revealing that several workers were regularized under different government mechanisms while others remain stuck due to pending FPSC eligibility decisions, failed tests, ineligibility, appointments after cut off dates and non existence of sanctioned posts. The disclosure has raised questions about job insecurity, delayed regularization and the inconsistent treatment of low paid employees across education departments. The details were provided in response to a Senate question by Senator Haji Hidayatullah Khan, who sought information about daily wage and contract employees in attached departments of the Ministry, the number regularized since 2012, their qualifications and performance, and reasons for non regularization. The response covered four major attached departments: the Federal Directorate of Education, Directorate General of Special Education, Government Polytechnic Institute for Women and Pakistan Institute of Education. The data shows that while several employees were regularized under the Prime Minister's Package, FPSC recommendations and cabinet sub-committee deci-

sions, many daily-wage employees still face uncertainty. The largest number of affected employees appeared in the Federal Directorate of Education. The FDE record showed 158 non-teaching contract employees in administration, 551 teaching daily-wage employees in model colleges, 316 non-teaching daily-wage employees in federal government colleges and 29 teaching daily-wage employees in schools. According to the ministry, 158 contract employees were regularized under the Prime Minister's Package. It also stated that 350 teaching staff in model colleges were regularized based on FPSC recommendations, while 26 teaching staff in federal government colleges were regularized in compliance with Cabinet Sub Committee recommendations. Three school lecturers were regularized or appointed through FPSC. However, the ministry admitted that several daily wage employees could not be regularized because cases were still under process with FPSC for determination of eligibility criteria. The response stated that 213 daily wage employees possessed the required qualifications, while remaining cases were pending with FPSC. Similarly, 137 daily wage employees in another category had required qualifications, but remaining cases were still awaiting eligibility determination. The data also revealed that two female lecturers failed

the FPSC test and left their jobs, while one female lecturer was declared ineligible by FPSC due to having a third division in her master's degree. These details show that regularization is not only an administrative matter but is also tied to testing, qualification standards and formal eligibility rules. In the Directorate General of Special Education, several employees appointed under the Prime Minister's Package were regularized after an Establishment Division office memorandum. The list included upper division clerks, naib qasids, a sanitary worker and a chowkidar. The ministry said these employees possessed the required qualifications and had satisfactory performance. However, one employee, Wajahat Khan, a naib qasid, was not regularized despite possessing the required qualification and satisfactory performance because he could not meet the eligibility criteria under the policy guidelines. This case highlights how workers may still remain outside regularization even after meeting basic qualification and performance standards. At the Government Polytechnic Institute for Women, the record showed employees appointed on contract and daily wages over several years, including instructors, sweepers, malis, a hostel warden and an assistant hostel warden. The ministry said eight employees were regularized by the

Cabinet Sub Committee under the chairmanship of Syed Khurshed Ahmed Shah in 2013. The ministry said the employees possessed the required qualifications and satisfactory performance, but some could not be regularized because they were appointed after the relevant cut off date and because posts did not exist. This raises concerns over long term reliance on workers without sanctioned posts and the future of employees who continue serving without regular status. In the Pakistan Institute of Education, six daily wage workers from the former Academy of Educational Planning and Management were regularized by the Cabinet Sub-Committee in 2012 after fulfilling the required criteria. These included naib qasids, chowkidars, a mali and a sweeper. The official record shows that the ministry recognizes many daily-wage and contract employees as qualified and satisfactory in performance, yet regularization remains dependent on FPSC decisions, cabinet committee approvals, appointment dates, policy cut offs and availability of sanctioned posts. The disclosure has placed the federal education system's employment practices under question, particularly for low grade and support staff who have worked for years but remain vulnerable due to procedural delays and unclear regularization pathways.

Journalists protest Mass Layoffs and unpaid salaries Ahead of Eid; PRA walks out of NA Press Gallery

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Tensions escalated in Pakistan's media sector as the Parliamentary Reporters Association of Pakistan (PRA) staged a walkout from the National Assembly Press Gallery on Thursday, protesting mass layoffs and non-payment of salaries at several leading news channels, including Suno News and Dunya News. The protest highlights growing concerns over the treatment of journalists and media workers, particularly as Eid-ul-Adha approaches. PRA officials warned that unless the government takes immediate and clear action to address these grievances, they will escalate their protest to include a full walkout from the budget session and a demonstration outside Parliament House at Gate No. 1. The association condemned what it described as "cruel and arbitrary" treatment of media employees. The walkout came after PRA representatives criticized Suno News for terminating 170 employees last week. Although the Information Minister, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, announced the suspension of advertisements on Suno News in response, the ban was lifted following negotiations with the channel management, leaving many laid-off journalists still without salaries.

Dunya News also faced criticism for failing to pay journalists. Several other channels, including Aaj News, Abb Takk, GTV, 365 News, and some local outlets, have not yet cleared salaries for April 2026, compounding difficulties for media workers preparing for Eid. During the National Assembly session, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry stressed that journalists belong to the working class and must receive timely payment of their wages, calling it a basic right. He assured that the government is making all possible efforts to ensure salaries are disbursed before Eid. The PRA president, M.B. Soomro, highlighted that several outlets, including Geo News, ARY News, Express News, Dunya News, Sama News, GNN, and 92 News, consistently pay journalists on time and were commended for their worker-friendly policies. However, the non-payment by other channels is causing severe hardships for families trying to prepare for Eid celebrations. The PRA demanded immediate action to end these violations and urged the government to intervene on an emergency basis to resolve the crisis. Officials warned that without prompt resolution, stronger protest measures will follow.

Opinion & Editorial



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FIA misconduct

Those tasked with upholding the law cannot be seen violating it. This is not a complicated principle. It does not require legal training to grasp, nor institutional wisdom to apply. And yet FIA's operation at Karachi's Sarafa Bazaar on May 15 during which officials raided a jewellery shop and manhandled, even slapped, the owner in front of his young son has become the latest reminder that Pakistan's law enforcement machinery continues to struggle with the most basic obligation of professional conduct. Whatever silver smuggling the raid was meant to uncover, what the public saw were allegations of excessive force and abuse of authority by officials who arrived with the power of the state behind them. That the FIA has since suspended one officer, transferred another and initiated a departmental inquiry suggests the institution understands something went wrong. It does not yet suggest the institution understands why this keeps happening. What almost never follows is a serious reckoning with the institutional culture that makes such incidents not just possible but recurring. Public trust in law enforcement determines whether communities see enforcement agencies as protectors or predators. Pakistan already carries a significant deficit on this count.

Reconsidering assessments

Faisal Bari
When Javed told me that he had 'failed' his Matriculation examination, I was saddened. I knew that Javed, despite the very trying financial circumstances of his household, had worked hard. He had not 'failed' as such. He had just not obtained the percentage needed to get into a decent public sector college. This was the same thing as failure to him as this meant he had to leave his studies and start working. His parents could not afford a college education for him. And his marks were not enough to get him a scholarship. So, there was not much of a choice.

This is not just the story of Javed. It is also the story of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of young people in Pakistan. Government schools are free, books used to be free too; the Punjab Education Foundation and similar bodies from other provinces subsidise school education for millions of children. But, post-Matriculation, the support becomes a lot less. We have fewer colleges as well. Millions do not continue beyond Matriculation.

One could argue this is how it should be. Children who get more marks in school-leaving examinations should be the ones to get the opportunity to continue to college level. This makes sense if marks are based on talent, intelligence and ability. In a country where

inequality is high, the education system fragmented and where financial capacity determines the type of education a child gets, examination marks do not simply measure ability. Javed, on the basis of his intelligence and keenness, is comparable to any student coming from top private schools. But his parents could only send him to a government school where, even though he was the top student in his class, the quality of education imparted was so poor that he would never have been able to compete with students coming from higher quality private and public schools.

But who needs access to college education more? A child from a richer household or Javed? Both. But for Javed, education is, most likely, the only means of social and economic mobility. When in school, he dreamt of one day clearing his CSS examinations and becoming a DMG officer. Now he has to think about taking up a trade because his father, the sole breadwinner, needs support; and since college is not an option, he has to put his shoulder to the task as well. Should school-leaving exams be the only way to judge who ought to continue their education? Should school-leaving summative assessments be the only way to judge who ought to continue their education? Especially when the examinations test more memory and reproduction and not critical thinking or intelli-

gence and when access to school education is so dependent on parental incomes?

The high-stakes nature of the school-leaving examination shows up in the tremendous stress and pressure that students and their parents undergo. Every year, we hear stories of children who die by suicide or go into depression after results are announced. The anxiety during examination season, currently ongoing, is also palpable. It can be felt by parents too. This is neither healthy nor desirable. It is definitely unnecessary as the high-stakes summative nature of school-leaving examinations is not an essential feature of all school systems. We can design assessments to be different. There are many countries that do not have summative high-stakes school-leaving exams. And there are plenty that have formative assessments that take into account performance over a longer period of time and across a range of abilities, so that memory and reproduction are not preferred over the ability to think, analyse and present. We are currently seeing another stress point too. High-stakes summative examinations provide a strong incentive to ensure results — which is often at the cost of fairness. Getting access to examination papers before exam time becomes an 'advantage' that many parents and students are willing to pay a substantial amount for.

Courtesy Dawn

Status over service

Mujeeb Ali

Recently, I attended an educational seminar at a society convention where three distinguished professionals — a judge, a professor and a senior police officer — addressed a hall full of audience, including students. The purpose of the seminar was to motivate young people through experiences of individuals who had built successful careers in public service.

The judicial officer spoke at length about the prestige and authority attached to a career in judiciary. According to him, the profession offers influence, social respect and attractive benefits. Addressing the students, he encouraged them to pursue higher education and consider joining the judicial service in the future. His remarks stated that judiciary is a powerful institution where individuals can play an important role in the state structure.

However, the discussion remained largely focused on the privileges of the profession rather than on its responsibilities and challenges. The honourable judge emphasised the authority vested in judicial officers but said little about the harsh realities of the justice system. In our country, courts are burdened with an enormous backlog of cases, and ordinary citizens often spend years seeking justice. For many people, justice delayed eventually becomes justice denied. These are painful realities that millions of litigants experience without being heard to their final disposition.

During the question-and-answer session, a few individuals raised concerns about these everyday issues. One participant asked about the persistent delays in the judicial system and why courts struggle to provide timely relief to citizens. The judge's response was cautious and somewhat unsatisfactory. Rather than addressing the problem directly, he spoke in general terms about the complexity of legal procedures and the limitations within the system.

Courtesy Tribune

Gilani calls for stronger Pakistan-Bangladesh institutional cooperation



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has said that greater interaction between the parliaments, training academies, universities, and policy institutions of Pakistan and Bangladesh would help promote regional stability and sustainable development.

Addressing the closing ceremony of the Executive Development Programme organised for a Bangladesh Civil Services delegation by the Civil Services Academy and the National School of Public Policy, he stressed the need for institutionalised cooperation between the two countries in parliamentary affairs,

civil service training, legislative research, digital governance, public policy, and leadership development.

He said the future of South Asia depends on constructive engagement, mutual respect, and stronger people-to-people ties.

Welcoming the Bangladeshi delegation, Gilani described the programme as an important initiative aimed at reviving institutional links and promoting mutual understanding between the two countries after more than five decades.

He said nations become stronger when institutions, professionals, and citizens remain connected through dialogue, cooperation, and shared learning.

The Chairman Senate appreciated the role of the Civil Services Academy and the National School of Public Policy in organising the programme and providing a platform for intellectual exchange and professional collaboration.

He said such initiatives help build trust, improve regional understanding, and create opportunities for long-

term cooperation.

Referring to his recent interaction with the delegation during their visit to the Senate of Pakistan, he said the engagement reflected warmth and a genuine desire on both sides to open a new chapter in bilateral relations.

Gilani also welcomed the positive message conveyed by the Speaker of the Bangladesh Parliament, particularly the proposal regarding the training of Bangladeshi parliamentary staff in Pakistan. He termed the proposal an encouraging step towards deeper parliamentary and institutional cooperation.

Highlighting his role as President of the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services and founding chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference, he reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening institutional partnerships and knowledge-sharing mechanisms with Bangladesh.

He said Pakistan and Bangladesh are linked through shared history, cultural ties, faith, and strong human connections.

Govt. to ensure timely payment of salaries to journalists: Dr Tariq Fazal

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Friday said that journalists belong to the working class and that the timely payment of salaries was their fundamental right.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said the government was making full efforts to ensure the timely disbursement of salaries to media workers and to address their concerns.

He added that the latest situation regarding non-payment of salaries to media workers would be reviewed in consultation with the information minister, and full support would be extended to resolve the issue in the interest of the media industry.

He said that during the recent media boycott, Minister for



Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar and Pakistan Peoples Party leader, Shazia Marri met with media representatives and assured them that their concerns would be addressed.

Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry further stated that he has been monitoring the matter indirectly, while Information Minister Attaullah Tarar was directly overseeing the process.

On the occasion, Member National Assembly, Shazia Marri highlighted that the Parliamentary Reporters Association (PRA).

Pakistan calls for climate justice, resilient housing at World Urban Forum

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Musadik Malik on Friday urged the international community to prioritise climate justice and resilient housing, warning that climate-vulnerable populations continued to suffer disproportionately despite contributing the least to global emissions. Speaking at the 13th session of the World Urban Forum 13 in Baku, the minister highlighted the growing challenges posed by climate change, urban inequality, poverty and housing injustice, particularly for marginalised communities.

Pakistan calls for climate justice, resilient housing at World Urban Forum The forum, being held under the theme "Housing the World: Safe and Resilient Cities and Communities", brought together global leaders and policymakers to discuss sustainable urban development and climate resilience. Delivering Pakistan's national ministerial statement, Malik said climate-resilient hous-

ing was fundamentally an issue of justice. He noted that while it could take generations for a family to escape poverty, a single natural disaster could push them back into deprivation and vulnerability. Addressing a session on "NDC 3.0: Urban Law and Multi-Level Governance to Enable Climate Commitments", the minister stressed upon the importance of strengthening urban governance frameworks and improving institutional coordination to enhance climate resilience.

During a high-level dialogue on "The Climate-Housing Nexus: Can We Scale Climate Resilient Housing Without Deepening Inequality or Displacement?", he underscored the close link between climate change, poverty and housing insecurity.

Malik also referred to the devastating impacts of floods and other climate-induced disasters in Pakistan, citing loss of lives, mass displacement and severe economic damage.

HEC-compliant BS programmes continued in colleges: Wajiha Qamar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Education and Professional Training, Wajiha Qamar on Friday informed the National Assembly that BS degree programmes introduced in the colleges of federal capital, affiliated with Quaid-i-Azam University were being run in line with regulations of the Higher Education Commission (HEC). Responding to a calling attention notice regarding difficulties faced by students enrolled in BS programmes in the colleges of federal capital, she said all academic and administrative arrangements comply with HEC guidelines and university standards. She said no rules were in place within the programme that violate HEC requirements or the standards set by Quaid-i-Azam University. The minister explained that a comprehensive institutional assessment was carried out under the HEC accreditation framework before granting affiliation.

She said the evaluation covered faculty strength, academic governance, classroom facilities, and quality assurance systems. She added that a prescribed checklist.

Governor administers oath to minister Qadri; discuss wheat crisis, CNG closure with CM

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday administered oath to newly-appointed provincial minister Muhammad Adnan Qadri at a ceremony held at Governor House Peshawar.

Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, members of the provincial cabinet and senior government officials attended the oath-taking ceremony.

Earlier, Chief Minister Sohail Afridi called on Governor Faisal Karim Kundi. Former federal minister for religious affairs Pir Noor-ul-Haq Qadri, newly-appointed provincial minister Adnan Qadri and Inspector General of Police Zulfiqar Hameed were also present during



the meeting. During the meeting, the participants discussed the wheat supply suspension and issues relating to closure of CNG stations in the province, and agreed on a joint struggle for safeguarding the rights of the province.

The Governor and chief minister termed the wheat supply suspension a violation of the Constitution and paid tribute to political parties for demonstrating unity on issues concerning provincial rights.

Pakistan, Indonesia agree to deepen cooperation in healthcare sector

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services and Regulations, Syed Mustafa Kamal met Indonesian Health Minister on the sidelines of the World Health Assembly in Geneva, where the two leaders discussed bilateral cooperation and agreed to enhance collaboration in the health sector.

According to Ministry officials here on Friday, during the meeting, Mustafa Kamal briefed the Indonesian minister regarding the ongoing reforms in Pakistan's healthcare system, particularly efforts aimed at strengthening vaccine produc-



tion and disease prevention. He said Pakistan currently provided free vaccines against 13 diseases to children under the national immunization programme, which were imported with the support of international organizations.

The minister said a significant share of vaccine financing was presently being covered.



BAKU, AZERBAIJAN: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr Musadik Malik, participated in the Thirteenth Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF-13) being held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Crackdown on human smuggling networks intensified under zero-tolerance policy: Talal Ch

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior & Narcotics Control Talal Chaudhry told the National Assembly on Friday that, under the Prime Minister's zero-tolerance policy on illegal immigration, strict action is being taken against human smuggling networks operating in and outside the country.

Responding to a calling attention notice about Pakistani citizens detained in Cambodia in connection with alleged cybercrime and scam-related cases after

being trapped in fraudulent job schemes, he said that since June 2023, around 3,158 agents involved in illegal immigration facilitation have been arrested.

He said assets worth millions of rupees belonging to these agents have been seized, while bank accounts holding large amounts of money have been frozen.

He added that accountability action has also been taken within the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), where some officials were found to be involved in assisting such networks. In



several cases, entire shifts were removed after investigations.

According to him, more than 100 FIA officials have faced disciplinary action, including criminal cases and convictions, over their alleged role in human smuggling.

Pakistan, US discuss railways cooperation, investment opportunities

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways, Muhammad Hanif Abbasi on Friday met with United States Ambassador to Pakistan, Natalie A. Baker and discussed Pakistan-US relations and bilateral cooperation in the railway sector, with a special focus on foreign investment and modernization of Pakistan Railways.

During the meeting, the two sides agreed to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan Railways' infrastructure and modern technology sectors, said a news

release. The United States (US) ambassador assured support for encouraging American companies and investors to participate in railway development projects in Pakistan. The discussions focused on potential American investment in locomotives, railway wagons, freight operations and advanced railway technologies. Both sides also agreed to further expand the decades-long cooperation between Pakistan Railways and American company Wabtec. Speaking on the occasion, Hanif Abbasi said



that the presence of 254 American-made locomotives in Pakistan Railways' fleet reflected the strong and long-standing partnership between the two countries in the railway sector. The minister said Pakistan Railways was introducing a new Track Access Policy aimed at facilitating