



Political divide vanished as nation united during Marka-e-Haq: Tarar



Maritime minister pledges investor boost to ignite blue economy



Marka-e-Haq proved Pakistan a respected and unshakable power: Danyal Ch

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Australia sanctions outlawed BLA for terror attacks in Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: The Australian government on Friday imposed counterterrorism financing sanctions on the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and its senior leaders "for their engagement in and support of terrorist attacks".

Announcing the sanctions, Australia's Foreign Affairs Minister Penny Wong said that BLA has conducted "violent terror attacks" across Pakistan, targeting civilians, critical infrastructure, and foreign nationals, as well as the Pakistani state.

The Australian government's commitment to countering terrorism and violent extremism is unwavering, she added.

According to Wong, sanctions help cut off the financial support of terrorists, making it harder for them to fund operations, recruit and spread their "harmful ideology".

"We remain committed to working with our international partners to confront and dismantle the networks that fuel threats to our security," she said.



PESHAWAR: Activists of JUI hold protest outside Peshawar Press Club.

Govt rejects reports of Pakistanis' deportation from UAE



ISLAMABAD: The government on Friday rejected reports of targeted deportations of Pakistani nationals from the United Arab Emirates, calling them "vicious propaganda" spread by vested interests. The interior ministry issued the clarification after reports surfaced on social media alleging the targeted deportation of Pakistani workers from the Gulf country in recent weeks. The speculation gained traction apparently after Pakistan repaid \$3.5 billion in debt to the UAE last month, increasing pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves.

In a post on X, the interior ministry said that it found all reporting "mala fide" after going through the details and data. "No country or sector specific deportations from any country including UAE are being carried out," it added.

The ministry clarified that deportations, if any, were a routine process in line with the host country's regulations and legal system, violations of their laws, overstays or illegal documentation. It said that Pakistani nationals, having fulfilled the host country's visa and work-based requirements.

What the US, China want from Trump's Beijing visit



NEW YORK: Amid growing geopolitical uncertainty spawned by the US-Israel war against Iran, US President Donald Trump is scheduled to visit China on May 14-15, where he is expected to meet President Xi Jinping. Ahead of the trip, Beijing expressed willingness to work with the United States to strengthen dialogue, enhance cooperation and stabilise bilateral ties, as senior Chinese leaders met a visiting bipartisan delegation of US senators in Beijing. Premier Li Qiang said China is ready to implement the "important consensus" reached between President Xi and his American counterpart during their phone conversation in February, which he described as providing strategic guidance for the development of bilateral relations. Meeting the delegation led by Senator Steve Daines, Li stressed the need to enhance communication, foster a conducive atmosphere for exchanges at all levels, and pursue tangible outcomes in cooperation across sectors. He said China remains committed to improving the well-being of both peoples while injecting "certainty and positive energy" into the global landscape, adding that past experience has shown mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation to be the correct path for major powers. Li also urged Washington to move in the same direction, prioritising dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation over confrontation and zero-sum competition, while maintaining stable and predictable economic and trade relations.

PM lauds security forces for successful operations against terrorists in Tank, DI Khan



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday paid tribute to the security forces for carrying out successful operations against Indian-backed Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists in Tank and Dera Ismail Khan districts.

The prime minister praised the security forces for eliminating five terrorists during the operations and termed the actions a major success in the ongoing fight against terrorism.

PM Shehbaz Sharif said that under the vision of Azm-e-Istehkam, the security forces were achieving significant victories against terrorist elements across the country.

He stated that the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces in the war against terrorism and reaffirmed the government's commitment to completely eradicate terrorism from Pakistan. "The whole nation is united against terrorism and we will not rest until every form of terrorism is eliminated from the country," the prime minister said.

Five militants killed in intelligence-based operations in KP: ISPR

RAWALPINDI: The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday that five militants belonging to the Indian-sponsored Fitna-Al-Khawarij were killed during two separate engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on May 7 and 8. According to the ISPR, an intelligence-based operation was conducted by security forces in Tank District after reports regarding the presence of Khawarij in the area. During the operation, security forces effectively engaged the militants and after an intense exchange of fire four Khawarij.

Pakistan seeks Singapore's support in repatriating nationals, Iranians aboard vessels seized by US

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Friday said that he had spoken with Singaporean Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan and requested the country's support in facilitating the "welfare and repatriation" of 11 Pakistanis and 20 Iranians aboard vessels seized by the United States.

In a post on the social media platform X, he said that the vessels were currently near Singaporean waters. He said that he also spoke with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi "as we remain in close coordination on the matter".

"Pakistan also stands

ready to facilitate the safe repatriation of Iranian nationals to Iran via Pakistan," he said. Meanwhile, regarding continued efforts towards peace and development in the region and beyond.



the phone call between Dar and the Singaporean foreign minister, the Foreign Office (FO) said on Thursday that the latter appreciated the former's efforts and Pakistan's role in promoting peace and stability in the region through facilitating dialogue between the US and Iran.

It said that DPM Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's

continued efforts towards peace and development in the region and beyond. "The two sides discussed matters related to maritime affairs and recent incidents in international waters. They agreed to closely coordinate between the relevant authorities of the two countries," it said. "The two leaders also discussed bilateral relations and underscored the importance of high-level exchanges. They agreed to remain in touch," the FO said. The development comes days after Pakistan facilitated the return of crew members from a US-seized Iranian vessel, with at least 15 sailors having reached the neighbouring country on Monday.

High-profile terrorist killed in Bannu was Afghan special forces member

BANNU: A high-profile terrorist who was killed in a recent operation by security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bannu district was a member of the Afghan Taliban regime's special forces, security sources said on Friday. Security sources said the terrorist, Fatehullah alias Mudassar, was an active member of Yarmook 60 Special Forces Battalion. The unit operates under the Taliban regime's Ministry of Interior Affairs. They added that Fatehullah belonged to the Zamat district of Afghanistan's Paktia province and was actively involved in terrorist activities in Pakistan alongside the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Reports further suggest that he was also involved in facilitating cross-border terrorist networks and planning various militant operations, the security sources elaborated. Security sources said that Fatehullah was killed along with his accomplices during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted near Bannu's Baka Khel Airport on April 9.





SPORTS



First Test: Bangladesh dominate as Pakistan bowlers struggle on opening day



PEAK POINT

DHAKA: A century from skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and a half-century by Mominul Haque put Bangladesh in command as they frustrated Pakistan's bowling on the opening day of the first Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Dhaka on Friday.

After being asked to bat first, Bangladesh ended the day at 301-4 in 85 overs with Mushfiqur Rahim unbeaten on 48 runs coming off 104 deliveries featuring six fours while Litton Das scored eight off 35 balls.

Left-arm pacer Shaheen Afridi struck early to give Pakistan their

first breakthrough as opener Mahmudul Hasan Joy was dis-

Babar out injured as Pakistan eye Test redemption against Bangladesh

missed for eight off 19 deliveries, including two boundaries.

Shadman Islam was the second batter to depart early, which put pressure on Bangladesh after being dismissed by Hasan Ali for 13 off 30 deliveries after hitting

two fours, leaving the team at 31-2 in 10.1 overs.

Mominul Haque and skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto joined hands to stabilise the innings, helping the team's total sail past the 100-run mark as the lunch break arrived with Bangladesh sitting at 101-2 in 26 overs.

Shanto piled on runs with vital support from Haque, which helped him raise his bat for his sixth Test fifty, while Mominul joined his partner in bringing up their 100-run stand.

Both batters forged a 100-run stand, with Mominul raising his

bat for his 26th Test fifty. The hosts dented Pakistan's bowling attack with runs flowing freely, with the skipper leading from the front and raising his bat for his ninth Test century, helping the team's total cross the 200-run mark as well.

However, Mohammad Abbas got the crucial breakthrough and broke the 170-run stand as Shanto was dismissed after playing an exceptional knock of 101 off 130 deliveries, including 12 fours and two sixes, concluding the second session as tea arrived with Bangladesh dominating at 201-3 in 52.2 overs.

Shaheen Afridi achieves landmark feat during opening Test against Bangladesh



PEAK POINT

DHAKA: Shaheen Shah Afridi achieved a major World Test Championship milestone on the opening day of the first Test against Bangladesh at Dhaka's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium on Friday.

The left-arm fast bowler etched his name into the record books by becoming the first Pakistani bowler to complete 100 wickets in ICC World Test Championship history.

Afridi reached the landmark after dismissing Bangladesh opener Mahmudul Hasan Joy during the opening day's play.

With this achievement, the 26-year-old also became only the 19th bowler overall to claim 100 wickets in the World Test Championship (WTC), further cementing his position as Pakistan's leading wicket-taker in the competition.

Most wickets for Pakistan in ICC World Test Championship

Shaheen Afridi – 100. Noman Ali – 89. Sajid Khan – 63. Naseem Shah – 60. Abrar Ahmed – 46. Yasir Shah – 41. Hasan Ali – 35. Mohammad Abbas – 34. Meanwhile, a century from skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and a half-century by Mominul Haque put Bangladesh in control on the opening day of the first Test.

Noor Zaman through to PSA World Championships round two



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Noor Zaman made a confident start to the CIB Palm Hills PSA World Championships 2026, grinding out a hard-fought five-game victory over Egypt's Adam Hawal in the first round to advance to the last 32 in Cairo

on Friday. The World No. 28 Pakistani showed tremendous grit and resilience on the Egyptian courts, edging a closely contested 55-minute battle 11-9, 5-11, 11-7, 9-11, 11-8 to claim a memorable win.

Despite Hawal pushing him to five games, Zaman kept his composure in the deciding set to seal a commanding 3-2 triumph and secure his place in the second round. Zaman will next face either Muhammad Zakaria or Marwan Mahmoud Assal of Egypt in the second round, in what promises to be another stern test on home soil for both Egyptian challengers.

Meanwhile, fellow Pakistani Asim Khan found the going tough against one of the tournament's leading contenders. The World No. 69 put up a brave fight against fifth seed Joel Makin of Wales but ultimately fell in straight games 11-1, 11-3, 11-2 in just 23 minutes, as the top-ranked Welshman demonstrated clinical dominance from start to finish.

All eyes will now turn to Muhammad Ashab Irfan, who is set to open his campaign in the first round against Switzerland's Nicolas Mueller, ranked World No. 29, in what is expected to be a highly competitive encounter.

Pakistan Women gear up in Karachi ahead of final ODI against Zimbabwe



Lahore to host "Strongest Women" Raw Powerlifting Championship on May 10

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: The "Punjab Strongest Women Raw Powerlifting Championship 2026" is scheduled to be held on May 10 (Sunday) in Lahore.

The event is being organised by the Punjab Raw Powerlifting Association and will feature women athletes from across the province competing in raw powerlifting categories.

According to organisers, the championship will aim to promote women's strength sports and provide a platform for emerging athletes in powerlifting.

International strengthlifter Chaudhary Ashraf will attend the event as chief guest, while national powerlifter Mudassar Butt will serve as organising secretary.

The event will take place at Pak Arab Society B Block, Forest Cafe, Lahore. Competition will begin at

9:00 am.

According to organisers, the championship will feature three main categories: junior, senior, and master.

Lifting Association and an international powerlifter, while Waqas Zafar, Deputy Director of RUDA, is serving as organising secretary.



LAHORE: A view of Karate on second day of Marake Haq Games 2026 organising by Sports & Youth Affairs Deptt Punjab here on Friday

6x8 Ft Qty 1

PUNJAB STRONGEST WOMEN RAW POWERLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIP LAHORE 2026

DATE : 10 MAY (SUNDAY) 2026

★ WELCOME ★ TO ALL POWERLIFTING FAMILY

CHIEF GUEST
MR CHAUDHARY ASHRAF
INTERNATIONAL STRENGTHLIFTER

ORGANISING SECRETARY
MR. MUDASSAR BUTT
NATIONAL POWERLIFTER

PUNJAB RAW POWERLIFTING ASSOCIATION

Participation in the event has been kept free to encourage wider involvement of women athletes.

The event is being led by Aqeel Javed Butt, President of the Punjab Raw Power

Promotional material highlights the theme "Strength is Power," with organisers aiming to promote fitness, strength sports, and competitive opportunities for women in Pakistan.



IRS, IIS Sign MoU to deepen Pakistan-China academic cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Islamabad, Pakistan and the Institute of International Studies (IIS), Shandong University, China, held a joint session on marking the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at strengthening academic cooperation, policy dialogue, and collaborative research between Pakistan and China. The event was moderated by Ms. Nabila Jaffer, Research



Analyst & Head China Program at the IRS, and Dr. Jamal Khan, Associate Professor at the IIS. Prof. Li Yuan, Executive Dean of the IIS, and Dr. Rizwan Naseer, Senior Research Fellow and Director of CCTVES of the

IRS, introduced their respective institutions, participants, and their research areas. The MoU was signed by Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President of the IRS, and Professor Zhang Yunling, Dean of IIS, during a hybrid

ceremony attended by senior scholars and researchers from both institutions. The agreement established a framework for joint conferences, collaborative publications, scholar exchanges, particularly among young researchers and

postdoctoral fellows, research programmes on regional and global issues, with particular emphasis on cooperation in focused research on South-South cooperation, regional connectivity, and development.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Saleem characterized the partnership as a meaningful addition to the longstanding intellectual and strategic relationship between Pakistan and China, referring to the two countries as 'iron friends' and 'iron brothers.' He emphasized the importance of academic diplomacy, international research partnerships, and people-to-people cooperation in addressing evolving regional and global challenges.

Foreign Investment recovers after economic shocks, Senate Told

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign investment in Pakistan fell sharply during a difficult economic period marked by floods, inflation, exchange rate instability and balance of payments pressure, but official figures placed before the Senate show that investment later recovered strongly. The Senate was informed that net Foreign Direct Investment rose from \$1.627 billion to \$2.489 billion over three financial years, showing that investor confidence improved after macroeconomic conditions became more stable. The details were

shared in the Senate during the question answer session in response to Question No. 7 asked by Senator Haji Hidayatullah Khan. He asked the Minister Incharge of the Prime Minister's Office whether it was a fact that foreign investment had declined in Pakistan and, if so, what were the details and reasons for the decline during the last three years. In the official reply, the Minister Incharge of the Prime Minister's Office stated that Foreign Direct Investment figures, as reported by the State Bank of Pakistan, showed a decline in one year but improvement in

the following years. The data showed that net FDI stood at \$1.627 billion in FY 2022-23, after inflows of \$2.568 billion and outflows of \$941 million. This reflected a negative change of 16 percent. The government told the Senate that the decline in foreign investment during FY 2022-23 was mainly caused by major economic and external shocks. These included devastating floods, global supply disruptions, pressure on Pakistan's balance of payments, exchange rate volatility and very high inflation. Inflation reached 38 percent, which badly

affected investor confidence and made foreign investors more cautious about bringing money into Pakistan. However, the situation improved in FY 2023-24. According to the figures placed before the Senate, foreign investment inflows increased to \$3.166 billion, while outflows stood at \$818.9 million. Net FDI rose to \$2.347 billion, showing a 44.3 percent increase compared with the previous year. The reply said this recovery was linked to signs of economic stability. GDP growth was recorded at 2.38 percent, inflation fell to 11.8

percent, and the current account deficit narrowed to only \$0.2 billion. These improvements helped restore some confidence among foreign investors. The recovery continued in FY 2024-25 as well. The Senate was informed that FDI inflows reached \$4.280 billion, while outflows stood at \$1.790 billion. Net FDI increased further to \$2.489 billion, showing a 6.1 percent rise. The government said better economic indicators supported this improvement. GDP growth increased to 2.68 percent, the current account moved into a surplus of \$1.9

billion, and foreign exchange reserves reached \$16.64 billion. These factors helped create a more stable environment for foreign investment. The official figures show that Pakistan's foreign investment problem was not limited to one reason. The decline was linked to floods, inflation, currency pressure, weak investor confidence and global economic challenges. But the later improvement suggests that foreign investors responded positively when inflation came down, growth improved and external accounts became stronger.

Opinion & Editorial



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Myth of merit and inclusion

Faisal Bari
A GIRL from rural Balochistan who gets approximately 700 marks in her FSc pre-medical and wants to become a doctor and go back and provide medical services in her underserved region will not get admission in any good public sector medical college as her marks would not be high enough. But the boy from a rich household who went to an excellent high-fee private school in Karachi for his A-Levels will make it — all the boy wants is to complete his medical degree and leave Pakistan to make a life for himself in the US or UK. The notion of 'merit' that we work with in Pakistan means that the boy will get admission on merit and the girl will be denied the opportunity.

'I have just won a gold medal at a track and field event in the Olympics. I have passed all my exams but my grades aren't as good as they could have been because of the time I had to spend preparing for the Olympics'. A leading private sector university in the country would reject this young person's application for admission as its notion of merit for admissions is based solely on performance in the Matric/O-Level and Intermediate/A-Level examinations and the undergraduate admission test. Though public sector institutions have a two per cent quota for persons with disabilities (some 10pc of the population reportedly face challenges), private sector

institutions don't generally have such quotas and only 'welcome' a PWD if he/she qualifies on the same parameters as another student. Yet, if you look at the vision statements of any private or public educational institution, they proclaim that they value the principle of inclusion, do not discriminate, and admit students purely on the basis of 'merit'.

But the question that is not looked at in detail is how 'merit' is constructed. Usually merit is just the weighted average of performance on some examinations. But we know that exam results don't always align with 'success' in life. There are multiple types of intelligence, talents and strengths which can't be measured by exams and tests, and definitely not simpler exams like A-Levels/FSc and/or aptitude tests. Interviews, performances, portfolios and a lot more are needed to assess merit. However, the 'merit' most academic institutions swear to uphold is usually just a narrow concern about exam marks. If you have seen Michael Jordan in his prime moved on the basketball court, you would immediately know that intelligence is not just about test results! A narrow construction of merit is not merely a denial of inclusion; it is a denial of merit itself. So, a narrow construction of merit is not merely a denial of inclusion; it is a denial of merit itself. The construction

has to be broad enough to cover all dimensions of merit. If the definition does not cover these aspects, we are denying people an opportunity to demonstrate their merit. This is tantamount to a denial of merit itself. There are deeper problems. If inclusion is one of the pillars of admission policies, which most institutions claim, then how can a narrow construction of merit be justified? Inclusion as a concept leans on equity and equality. Merit leans a bit more on equality and much less on equity. It reminds me of a cartoon sketch on social media where a teacher tells his students, who comprise all sorts of animals, that whoever gets to the top of the nearest tree first will get the maximum marks. Should a snake, lion, monkey, elephant and a crocodile be judged on their ability to climb trees? Is that notion of merit fair? It is certainly 'equal' as it sets the same task for everyone. But it is not fair or based on equity. And it is definitely not inclusive. In a society where 30pc of the people are poor, where vulnerability is at more than 50pc, where 40pc of children are malnourished, where socioeconomic inequality is on the rise and where the state hardly provides even basic amenities, such as food, education and healthcare, to its people, a narrow version of merit can only be exclusionary and a way of reinforcing existing inequalities.

Courtesy Dawn

Pakistan: tea, charity and ceasefire

Yumna Zahid Ali

When people think of Pakistan, humanity and hospitality are rarely the first things that come to mind. Perhaps now, after watching this country step onto one of the biggest diplomatic stages in recent history, the story of Pakistan's open hand could finally reach the right ears.

In early 2026, as the conflict between the United States and Iran pushed the world to the verge of a multi-front global confrontation, it was Pakistan that patiently opened back channels. While other regional powers were either under fire or sidelined, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir worked through the night, carrying messages between Washington and Tehran. When Donald Trump announced a ceasefire pause, he had just spoken with Sharif. Relief poured across time zones. Pakistan had done something that surprised almost everyone except those who already knew this country well.

Because honestly, generosity at that scale is never disconnected from history. It gets passed down. In the tea offered to a stranger, in the gate left open, in the hand extended across a table between two countries that stopped talking years ago. Few figures capture it better than Abdul Sattar Edhi, a man who owned barely two pairs of clothes yet built the world's largest ambulance network, recognised by the Guinness World Records. His foundation ran free shelters, orphanages and rehabilitation centres, serving people of every faith. He turned personal poverty into a legacy so vast that it still runs ambulances, cradles orphans and shelters strangers decades after his passing. What made Edhi rare was not his generosity. What made him rare was the scale of it. The generosity itself was never unusual in Pakistan. Despite battling inflation and widespread poverty, Pakistan donates more than one per cent of its GDP to charity annually, sitting alongside far wealthier nations like the United Kingdom and Canada.

Courtesy Tribune

Pragmatic hypocrisy

The Government of India has spoken, and its message is a glaring admission that its national pride is only for show. The country's federal sports ministry has declared that Pakistani athletes may compete in multilateral events hosted on Indian soil, but any bilateral contact between the two nations remains strictly forbidden. This is because India refuses to allow athletes from a country that it accuses of funding terrorism that has killed hundreds of Indian soldiers and civilians, as it would dishonour those victims. But the same Indian government would happily allow cheerleaders to dance on the graves of those victims if it came with an Olympics, a World Cup, or even a sizeable broadcasting rights contract. For context, India is desperate to land Olympic hosting rights in 2036, and has already been slapped down by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for refusing visas to Pakistani athletes. Mind you, unlike the International Cricket Council, India does not own the IOC. India's rejection of Pakistan just makes its athletes seem sportsmanlike, and its political leaders seem incompetent. Only the latter can be considered objectively true. If they hate Pakistan so much, they should ban us outright. Refuse to share a field, a dressing room, or a stadium with any Pakistani athletes.

Political divide vanished as nation united during Marka-e-Haq: Tarar



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Friday said the entire nation stood united alongside the armed forces during Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos and "Marka-e-Haq", adding that Pakistan achieved success on military, diplomatic and narrative fronts through national cohesion, responsible media conduct and the bravery of the armed forces.

Addressing a ceremony organized by the Press Association of Supreme Court on completion of one year of the victory in Marka-e-Haq, the minister said the operation had become a symbol of national unity, resilience

and collective national spirit where every segment of society played its role.

He thanked the organizers, including senior journalists and the entire Supreme Court Reporters Association, for inviting him to the ceremony and said his relationship with journalists was not linked to power or the current government tenure, but had evolved during years of interaction in the corridors of courts and politics, particularly during the opposition days.

The minister said the ceremony itself reflected the unity demonstrated by the nation during Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos, adding that the entire country stood shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces.

He recalled that during his speech in parliament he had said there was neither opposition nor government when it came to defending the country, as the entire political divide disappeared in the face of external aggression.

"Success only comes when a

nation is united," he remarked. Tarar referred to iconic images from the conflict, particularly one showing a civilian standing alongside a soldier at the border carrying a rifle and targeting enemy drones, saying such images had become part of history and reflected unprecedented national solidarity.

He said the Pakistani nation achieved distinction on every front, whether narrative, diplomatic or military, due to the blessings of Allah Almighty.

The minister said the downing of Rafale fighter jets by the Pakistan Air Force shattered not only the aircraft but also India's arrogance and narrative.

He said Pakistan Air Force and the country's air defence system had earned global recognition and respect for their professional capabilities.

Referring to Pakistan's military response, Tarar said the enemy, which had been issuing threats and provocations for four days, was forced to kneel and seek a ceasefire.

Mohsin Naqvi pays respects at grave of former Bangladeshi PM Khaleda Zia in Dhaka



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday visited the grave of former Prime Minister of Bangladesh, the late Khaleda Zia, to offer prayers and pay tribute to her services.

During his visit, the interior minister laid floral wreaths on the grave of the former Bangladeshi leader and offered Fataha for the eternal peace of her soul. He prayed for divine blessings and

expressed heartfelt condolences.

Mohsin Naqvi paid rich tribute to Begum Khaleda Zia's contributions to Bangladesh's political and public life, stating that her services for the country and its people will always be remembered with respect.

He noted that Khaleda Zia played a significant role in the political landscape of Bangladesh, and her dedication to public service left a lasting legacy.

Maritime minister pledges investor boost to ignite blue economy

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry has emphasised facilitating investors as a key strategy to attract new investment and promote the blue economy. The minister shared these views during a meeting with a six-member delegation of leading terminal operators, headed by Egan Ali Khan, CEO of FAP Terminal, at his office, said a press release here on Friday. He assured the group that the government would take all possible measures to ensure the sustainability and growth of their businesses. The delegation urged the minister to play his role to rationalise taxes into a single-digit regime and declare port services an industry akin to telecommunications to foster a more conducive regulatory and investment environment. Junaid Chaudhry acknowledged the critical role of policy consistency and investor confidence in strengthening the maritime sector.

He reaffirmed the government's commitment to resolving structural issues and eas-

ing business operations at ports. Looking ahead, the minister revealed plans for an "Energy City" project, featuring bonded storage facilities for multiple energy forms.

He noted that different potential locations would be identified based on feasibility and suitability for energy storage and related infrastructure. He invited terminal operators to form a consortium and invest in the Energy City, while encouraging them to develop a participation mechanism and contribute to establishing a multipurpose terminal at Port Qasim. Junaid Chaudhry highlighted the recent removal of decades-old containers and pallets, some dating back 50 years, from Karachi Port Trust (KPT) premises to reduce congestion.

He described the clearance as part of broader efforts to enhance port efficiency and streamline cargo handling.

The meeting ended with a commitment to keep close coordination between the ministry and private stakeholders, aiming to unlock the maritime sector's full potential and accelerate blue economy initiatives.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry speaks with a delegation of leading terminal operators during a meeting.

GB polls: IPP, ITP begin negotiations for electoral cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: In the upcoming elections of Gilgit-Baltistan,

Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) and Islami Tehreek Pakistan (ITP) have reached to an understanding for different constituencies of GB. In this regard, a meeting was held between Quaid-e-Millat-e-Jafaria Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi and Central President Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party Abdul Aleem Khan. The central and provincial leaders from both parties were also present during the meeting, said a press release issued on Friday. Both sides agreed to continue consultations through future meetings in order to further strengthen mutual understanding and cooperation in Gilgit-Baltistan. Quaid-e-Millat-e-Jafaria Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi and IPP President Abdul Aleem Khan emphasized that politics based on unity and harmony is the need of the hour.

They also held detailed discussions on the current political landscape and the possible electoral situation in Gilgit-Baltistan, exchanging various proposals and suggestions. President IPP Abdul Aleem Khan stated that Gilgit-

Pakistan's restraint after Pahalgam exposed India's narrative: Altaf Wani

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Kashmir Institute of International Relations Altaf Hussain Wani said that India's handling of the Pahalgam incident last year, followed by military escalation against Pakistan and crackdowns in occupied Kashmir, exposed New Delhi's "false narrative" before the international community, while Pakistan emerged as a responsible regional peace actor through restraint, diplomacy and military preparedness.

In an interview to APP, on the first anniversary of Marka-e-Haq and Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos, Wani alleged that the attack in Pahalgam had occurred near an Indian elite force camp,



yet security personnel failed to respond for hours despite their close proximity.

He claimed that India blamed Pakistan and the Kashmiri resistance immediately after the incident without presenting credible evidence and subsequently launched widespread operations across occupied Kashmir.

"Several people were killed in different operations, but India failed to prove their involvement in the incident," he said.

Marka-e-Haq proved Pakistan a respected and unshakable power, Says Danyal Ch

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry said on Friday that Operation Banyan al-Marsoos and the victory in Marka-e-Haq established Pakistan as a formidable power on military, diplomatic and narrative fronts, while demonstrating the unity of the nation and the professional excellence of the armed forces. Addressing the first commemorative ceremony of Marka-e-Haq 2025 at the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Danyal Chaudhry said Pakistan had delivered a decisive response to



Indian aggression and state sponsored propaganda.

He alleged that India, under the pretext of targeting militant hideouts, attacked innocent civilians, including women and children, in violation of Pakistan's sovereignty. Marka-e-Haq proved Pakistan a respected and unshakable power, Says Danyal Chaudhry "In response, Pakistan successfully targeted enemy.

Pakistan, Uzbekistan to deepen city-level cooperation as Babar Park project advances

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Sohail Ashraf and Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Alisher Tukhtayev on Friday discussed measures to further strengthen bilateral relations and expand cooperation at the city level.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, including beautification projects and enhanced collaboration between Islamabad and Uzbek cities,

came under discussion.

Chairman CDA said Pakistan highly valued its brotherly relations with Uzbekistan and desired to further enhance cooperation in various sectors, particularly urban development and beautification of Islamabad.

The Uzbek ambassador said Pakistan and Uzbekistan shared long-standing cultural, historical and brotherly ties, while appreciating the beauty and greenery of the federal capital.

The ambassador



informed the meeting that formal work had begun on the establishment of Babar Park on Faisal Avenue, describing it as a gift from the Government of

Uzbekistan to the people of Pakistan.

He expressed confidence that the park would become one of the finest recreational facilities in Islamabad.

Chairman CDA appreciated the design concept of the Babar Park project and said he would soon visit the project site along with the Uzbek ambassador.

The two sides also discussed the proposed signing of an MoU to declare Islamabad and Tashkent as sister cities.

The Uzbek ambassador also expressed interest in establishing sister-city relations between Islamabad and Fergana, describing it as one of Uzbekistan's historic cities.

During the meeting, pos-

sibilities regarding relocation of the Uzbek embassy to the Diplomatic Enclave were also discussed. Chairman CDA assured full cooperation in this regard.

Sohail Ashraf said Islamabad sought to benefit from Uzbekistan's expertise and experience in urban beauty and development initiatives.

The meeting reaffirmed the commitment of both sides to further strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual interest and promote closer ties at the municipal level.