



Cabinet Committee on SOEs approves key board appointments, reviews governance matters



Pakistan to fully shift to e-passports: Mohsin Naqvi



Around 3.5 mln shopkeepers to be brought into tax net: Bilal Kayani

Founded By:
(Late) Rehmat Khan

ABC CERTIFIED

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

Executive Group Editor
Aarif Mehmood Khan



Saturday 20 June 2026

Muharram 04, 1448

A.H VOI No: 06

Issue No. 123

Pages 4 Rs. 20

Pakistan, Iran to enter new era of prosperity after Islamabad MoU: PM

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed confidence that Pakistan and Iran would enter a new era of prosperity, economic cooperation and stronger bilateral relations following the signing of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Iran and the United States. Addressing the National Assembly, Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan had earned global recognition for its role in facilitating the peace agreement, calling it a moment of pride for the nation. "Pakistan is being acknowledged around the world for helping bring about this peace deal," the prime minister said, adding that the achievement reflected the country's growing diplomatic stature. The prime minister

thanked Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for playing a key role in efforts to establish peace in the region. He also acknowledged the contributions of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi. He also called on opposition parties to join the government in projecting a message of national unity, saying the success belonged to the entire nation.

The prime minister informed that yesterday, he received a telephone call from Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, who thanked Pakistan and its people for supporting Iran during a difficult period. PM Shehbaz Sharif said he invited the Iranian president to visit Pakistan and told him that the entire nation will warmly welcome him upon his arrival in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses budget session of National Assembly.

FY2026-27: KP CM presents Rs2.17tr budget, with estimated fiscal deficit of Rs48bn

PEAK POINT



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohai Afridi is presenting the provincial budget for the fiscal year 2026-27 in the KP Assembly.

The budget outlay is Rs2.17 trillion, with an estimated fiscal deficit of Rs48 billion, according to the budget documents.

At the outset of his budget speech, he said all parliamentarians of the PTI from the provincial assembly had "unanimously decided" to present the budget.

Earlier, the presentation of the budget remained doubtful as the provincial government reportedly linked it to a meeting with incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan.

In his speech, Afridi also announced that the budget he was presenting had a deficit of Rs48bn. "The KP government will not seek a loan of Rs48bn from anyone," he said, adding that "we will provide this amount to the people of KP from our own resources". Moreover, he said the budget would be in accordance with the Federal Board of Revenue's tax collection target of Rs15.2 trillion.

"There will be no grants for the Centre in this budget," he asserted.

US-Iran peace talks in Geneva postponed

PEAK POINT



SWITZERLAND: Switzerland said talks between the United States and Iran on a pact to end the Middle East conflict would not take place on Friday, as US Vice President JD Vance dropped plans to travel to Geneva.

The talks were set to take place under the 'Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding' signed between the US and Iran a day ago, after the two sides agreed on a 14-point accord on Monday. Under the deal, Washington and Tehran have agreed on a framework to end the war, reopen the Strait of Hormuz and negotiate on key issues within 60 days.

The talks, set for the mountaintop resort of Burgenstock, would not take place, Switzerland's foreign ministry confirmed, but gave no details. "The planned talks between the US, Iran, Qatar and Pakistan have been postponed," the Swiss foreign ministry said in a message to AFP. "Switzerland remains ready to facilitate these talks. The relevant preparatory work at Burgenstock is continuing," it added, without providing a new date for the talks. In Washington, a White House spokesperson said, "The logistics of these negotiations have never been simple or predictable. As of now, the vice president is not departing tonight." However, the official added, "We look forward to beginning technical talks as soon as possible." There was no immediate response from Iran, which had earlier said it was ready to begin technical talks after Thursday's 14-point accord extended a tenuous ceasefire by at least 60 days.

Info ministry refutes Afghan Taliban's claim of strikes in border areas

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The information ministry on Friday refuted Afghanistan's claims of targeting alleged terrorist camps in the border areas of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. In a statement on its fact check account, the ministry said, "The Afghan Taliban regime, through their various propaganda mouthpieces and official statements, is claiming to have targeted some alleged ISKP camps in border areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan using rudimentary drones. "The claims are false as usual," it declared. The ministry added that terrorist camps, including "those of Daesh and more than two dozen other terrorist organisations are factually located, run and patronised from inside the territories under control of [the] Afghan Taliban regime". According to the statement, one rudimentary drone of the Taliban regime intruded into Pakistan's airspace near Shinko, Khyber and was "immediately identified and neutralised by the alert air defence system of the Pakistan Air Force". The ministry also shared a picture of the aforementioned drone.

Egypt to host Pakistan, Saudi, Turkey FMs Sunday

PEAK POINT

EGYPT: Egypt's foreign minister will host his counterparts from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey in the Mediterranean city of Alamein on Sunday, Cairo's foreign ministry said. Badr Abdelatty "will hold a quadrilateral meeting on Sunday with Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, Turkey's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, followed by an expanded session of talks and a joint press conference", the ministry said in a statement late Thursday.

Dar writes to UNSC president, highlights India's 'brazen violations' of Indus Waters Treaty

PEAK POINT

UNITED NATIONS: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has urged the UN Security Council (UNSC) to take notice of India's "brazen violations" of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), warning that New Delhi's actions threaten Pakistan's water security, regional stability and international peace.

Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad delivered a letter from DPM Dar to the president of the UNSC, Ambassador Leonor Zalabata Torres of Colombia, drawing attention to India's violations of the IWT. In a post on the social media platform X, the ambassador said the letter "draws urgent attention of the UNSC to two illegal

Indian infrastructure projects linked to Chenab



River system aimed at water diversion, which reveal India's intention to illegally alter the treaty-governed flow and use of the Western rivers, weaponising water with dangerous implications for Pakistan's water, food, and economic security as well as regional stability and international peace and security". He said that the UNSC was urged to take

and hold India accountable for its brazen violations". "I also briefed the president of the UNSC on the overall situation in South Asia and India's continued non-compliance with its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute," he said.

Dar had also written a similar letter to the UNSC president in April, to draw the council's attention to the matter "one year after India's illegal decision to hold the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance" and highlighted the move's "grave peace and security, and humanitarian consequences".

On Thursday, DPM Dar had stated that at least 17 projects by India on waterways part of the Indus River System would give New Delhi the "tools for hydro-hegemony".

The IWT remains a contentious issue between India and Pakistan, following New Delhi's unilateral abeyance of the accord last year — a move that followed a brief military conflict between the two sides in May 2025. More recently, Indian Water Minister CR Patil said his country was working to ensure "not a single drop of water".

PM Shehbaz announces reduction in prices of petrol by Rs74, diesel by Rs67

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday announced a Rs74 reduction in petrol prices and a Rs67 cut in high-speed diesel (HSD) prices as the government seeks to pass on the benefit of declining international oil prices. The official notification for the new petroleum prices is yet to be issued. Once notified, the price of petrol will stand at Rs299.78 and high-speed diesel (HSD) at Rs311.78, down from Rs373.78 and Rs378.78 per litre, respectively. Sources: OGRA / Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) official notifications; Dawn.com reporting. Pre-crisis prices: petrol Rs266.17, diesel Rs280.86 (effective Feb 28, 2026). Jun 19 prices as announced by PM Shehbaz Sharif: formal OGRA notification pending at time of publication.

In a statement from his office, the premier said the government was passing on the benefit of an improved regional economic situation and declining oil prices. "We are now fulfilling the promise we made to the nation," the premier said in the statement.



SPORTS



Renshaw stars in Bangladesh T20 as Australia seal the series



PEAK POINT
DUBAI: Matt Renshaw's all-round show with an unbeaten 89 and a wicket helped Australia win a seven-run victory over Bangladesh in the second T20 in Chattogram on Friday to seal the three-match series.

Renshaw's career-best score after Australia won the toss and decided to bat first helped the visitors reach 196-5, which they defended in a last-over thriller, with Bangladesh only managing 189-6.

Chasing 197, Bangladesh made a blistering start through Saif in a 53-run stand to keep openers Tanzid Hasan and Saif Bangladesh on course.

Hassan, who put on 48 in just 3.4 overs to raise hopes of a series-leveling win.

Tanzid smashed 30 off 15 balls with four fours and a six before Renshaw made the breakthrough, taking a sharp return catch off his own bowling.

Soumya Sarkar kept up the momentum as Bangladesh raced to 72-1 at the end of the powerplay, but Adam Zampa removed him for 15 to slow the charge.

Parvez Hossain Emon then counter-attacked, hammering 36 off 22 balls and combining with Saif in a 53-run stand to keep openers Tanzid Hasan and Saif Bangladesh on course.

But Australia came back in the game when Aaron Hardie dismissed Emon, with captain Mitchell Marsh taking a running catch at cover, before Joel Davies removed the set Saif for 42.

Bangladesh needed 63 runs off the last 40 balls, with captain Towhid Hridoy holding the line.

Hridoy fought till the end with a brisk 35 off 22 balls, sharing a 36-run stand with Abdul Gaffar Saqlain, but was caught on the boundary with Bangladesh needing eight off the last ball of the chase. "We were moving according to plan," Emon said after the game.

"I felt the biggest damage was my wicket and Saif's wicket falling back-to-back," he added. "We fell a bit behind there; it was looking very good."

Australia's Hardie took two wickets, while Nathan Ellis, Renshaw, Zampa, and Davies claimed one each.

Earlier, Renshaw's innings lifted the visitors after they stumbled to 44-3 inside the powerplay. Josh Inglis and Marsh gave the tourists a brisk start before Nasum Ahmed dismissed Inglis for 11 and Nahid Rana removed the in-form Cooper Connolly for one.

South Africa Women's U19 team to tour Pakistan in July



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: South Africa Women's U19 team will embark on their maiden tour to Pakistan to play a five-match T20 series, the PCB announced on Friday. The five-match T20 series will be staged at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi from 14 to 24 July. Match timings will be announced in due course. South Africa Women's U19 team will arrive in Karachi on 10 July and undergo training sessions at the National Bank Stadium from 11 to 13 July before taking on the hosts in the first T20 scheduled for Tuesday, 14 July. Pakistan Women's U19 last featured in a bilateral T20 series in Bangladesh, where they won the five-match series 3-2. The forthcoming T20 series will provide an opportunity for the hosts to prepare for the ACC Women's U19 T20 Asia Cup, scheduled to take place later this year and the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup, scheduled to take place early next year. The PCB Women's Cricket Department recently hosted a series of camps for U19 cricketers in Karachi to prepare them for the forthcoming events. According to schedule, South Africa team will arrive in Karachi on July 10 and on 11-13 July, there will be Pakistan and South Africa teams training sessions at National Bank Stadium.

Abu Bakr likely to lead Pakistan in England Leg as Imad's participation in doubt



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's campaign in the FIH Pro League has suffered a setback after national team captain Imad Shakeel Butt was reportedly denied a UK visa.

According to sources, the visa application was rejected by UK authorities due to incomplete travel documentation.

As a result, Imad's travel to England is now uncertain, creating a leadership challenge for the national side ahead of crucial fixtures against England.

Sources said that if the visa issue remained unresolved, Imad Shakeel Butt would return to Pakistan from Belgium and miss the England phase of the competition. A final decision regarding Imad's replacement and the team leadership is expected to be made by the selection committee, with an official announcement to be issued by the Pakistan Hockey Federation.

Pakistan are scheduled to face both England and India in the second stage of the FIH Pro League, making the captain's possible absence a significant concern for the team management. In light of the situation, sources indicated that Abu Bakr is the leading candidate to take over the captaincy for the England leg.

A final decision regarding Imad's replacement and the team leadership is expected to be made by the selection committee, with an official announcement to be issued by the Pakistan Hockey Federation.

Shoab, Muzammil national stage. This reward is a token of appreciation for their outstanding performances and a reflection of PTF's commitment to supporting and motivating our athletes. For the first time, the Federation has distributed Rs. 4 million in performance-based rewards, demonstrating our determination to create a professional and rewarding environment for tennis players in Pakistan.

We believe that recognizing excellence is essential for inspiring the next generation of players and strengthening the future of Pakistani tennis. To acknowledge these achievements, PTF President Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi presented cash rewards to the following players and officials: Aqeel Khan, Muhammad

Pakistan team reaches Asian Doubles Squash Championships semis



Ton-up Nicholls turns the screw for New Zealand against England

PEAK POINT

NEW ZEALAND: Henry Nicholls's superb unbeaten century saw New Zealand into an utterly dominant position against England in the second Test at the Oval on Friday.

New Zealand were 252-3 in their second innings at stumps on the third day in south London -- a huge overall lead of 352 runs -- with Nicholls 119 not out.

The Black Caps, looking to level this three-match series after a 115-run defeat in the first Test at Lord's, had been faltering at 28-2 on Friday when Nicholls was joined in the middle by Rachin Ravindra.

But the two left-handers restored New Zealand's grip on the game with an excellent third-wicket partnership of 161 in 33 overs that only ended when Ravindra was lbw for 76 to Jacob Bethell deep into the final session.

New Zealand led by exactly 100 runs on first innings after Matt Henry



took five wickets as England were dismissed for 291 earlier on Friday.

The Black Caps, looking to level this three-match series after a 115-run defeat in the first Test at Lord's, had been faltering at 28-2 on Friday when Nicholls was joined in the middle by Rachin Ravindra.

But the two left-handers restored New Zealand's grip on the game with an excellent third-wicket partnership of 161 in 33 overs that only ended when Ravindra was lbw for 76 to Jacob Bethell deep into the final session.

New Zealand led by exactly 100 runs on first innings after Matt Henry

after arguably New Zealand's greatest batsman of all time shocked the cricket world by retiring from international duty following the first Test rather than waiting until the end of the series.

But the 34-year-old Nicholls, out for just 24 in the first innings, demonstrated plenty of grit and concentration second time around, while still scoring briskly.

The elegant Ravindra, following his reprieve by Rew, was largely untroubled by England's quicks repeatedly bowling bouncers on a good pitch during a 79-ball fifty featuring 11 fours.

Zahra Wadood Fatemi calls for stronger ction on Population, Health, Women Empowerment and Public Awareness

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: Member of the National Assembly Zahra Wadood Fatemi praised the government's foreign policy efforts and the federal budget measures on contraceptives, while calling for stronger national action on population control, women empowerment, health spending, disease prevention, drug abuse in educational institutions and public awareness. Speaking during the budget debate in the National Assembly, Zahra Wadood Fatemi thanked the Chair for giving her the opportunity to speak. She began her speech by congratulating Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Asim Munir and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar for their hard work, sacrifices, political wisdom and diplomacy. She said Pakistan has achieved a level of respect and international recognition not seen before. According to her, the world is now looking towards Pakistan, and the country has shown that it is a responsible and aware nation. Zahra



Wadood Fatemi said Pakistan is not only important for itself but has also become an example for the wider world. She said world leaders, including presidents and prime ministers, are contacting Pakistan and appreciating its role. She gave credit to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his team for diplomatic efforts between Iran and the United States. She said the government's efforts helped Pakistan gain respect at the international level. She also referred to Operation Sindoor and said India had tried to test Pakistan, but Pakistan gave a strong response. She said Pakistan's armed forces and air force are always alert and know how to defend the country. After speaking on foreign policy and national security, Zahra Wadood Fatemi said

Pakistan must also pay serious attention to internal challenges. She said one of the most important issues facing the country is population growth. She said Pakistan has already declared population an emergency, and if timely steps are not taken, the country's population may double in the coming decades. She warned that if the population continues to rise without planning, the country's existing problems will become more difficult. Zahra Wadood Fatemi appreciated the Finance Minister for presenting a budget in which taxes on contraceptives have been removed. She said this was an important step because population management is a national emergency. However, she said removing tax on contraceptives alone will not solve the problem. She said Pakistan also needs awareness campaigns to educate people about family planning and responsible parenting. She said people must be guided to manage family size because more

children can create more problems for families that do not have enough resources. She said many parents are unable to provide proper education, healthcare and basic needs to all their children. She said population growth is directly linked with education and health. When families do not have enough financial resources, children may be sent to madrassas, put into small jobs, or handed over to non-governmental organizations for care. Zahra Wadood Fatemi said people should not leave every responsibility to the government. She said citizens must also take responsibility and work together to improve society. She said women empowerment is one of the most important solutions. According to her, if women are empowered, family planning, education, health and social conditions can improve. She said Bangladesh is an example where women empowerment helped bring positive change. She stressed that all citi-

zens must work together instead of depending only on the government. She said Pakistan cannot afford to ignore these issues any longer. Speaking on health, Zahra Wadood Fatemi said Pakistan is facing serious challenges in many diseases. She said the country ranks among the top affected countries in diabetes, hepatitis, cervical cancer, Human Immunodeficiency Virus, and other health problems. She said many of these diseases are either preventable or curable. For this reason, she urged the Finance Minister and the government to increase the health budget so these problems can be controlled more effectively. Zahra Wadood Fatemi also highlighted the problem of unsafe syringes, especially among drug users. She said drug addiction is unfortunately spreading in schools and colleges, which is a major concern for the future of young people. She said the government must work to control addiction among

students and youth. She added that unsafe medical practices also contribute to the spread of diseases. She also mentioned fake dentists, quacks and roadside service providers who work without proper hygiene. She said such people should either be punished or properly educated so they understand that they cannot work without cleanliness and safety measures. She said unhygienic practices can spread serious diseases. Therefore, the government and society must work together to create awareness and improve public health standards. Zahra Wadood Fatemi said no single person or institution can solve these problems alone. She appealed to the public to work together because national problems require collective action. She ended her speech by quoting Allama Iqbal's famous verse about raising one's self-worth and determination. She concluded with a message of national unity and said Pakistan Zindabad.

Opinion & Editorial

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

Another child dead

Karachi and Lahore are often pitted against each other as major urban cities with drastically different levels of development, be it in infrastructure, healthcare or security. While Karachi suffers from an ordained fate of broken roads and broken administrative promises, Lahore seems to be progressing full speed ahead. Although, there is at least one grave negligence tragically shared by both cities - open manholes that have swallowed one too many innocent children. From the spine-chilling case of three-year-old Ibrahim who lost his life by falling in an open manhole in Karachi, another five-year-old child named Hassan Amir has succumbed to his injuries from a similar case in Lahore. To imagine a parent having to bear through the news of losing their child from such cruel negligence is almost unbearable. Yet, it happens over and over. In Lahore, at least one child fell victim to open manholes each month between December and February. Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz has, in preceding months, outlined a plan of action to prevent fatalities caused by open manholes as well as the incessant theft of their covers. A project that commenced from Gujranwala planned to cover 30,000 manholes with safety nets and covers stamped with the Punjab Government logo to impede theft.

Not made for defeat

Amin Valliani
EVERY human being wants to be successful in their life but success or failure is in the hands of Allah. However, whoever dedicates their life to the pursuit of excellence, innovation and research is sure to be successful. Success or failure in their own ways are a blessing from the Almighty. Islam guides us not to be despondent at any point in life from Allah's blessings.

Success or failure hinges on struggle, it consists of efforts that are needed for achieving life-related objectives. If there is no struggle, there is no success. Success or failure cannot occur without confronting challenges, just as crops cannot grow without ploughing the land. For the Holy Quran says "That man can have nothing but what he strives for" (53:39). Thus, the struggle prepares us for success and forces us out of our comfort zones, fostering self-discovery, empathy and wisdom.

Struggle is considered a fundamental aspect of life. It is not merely a negative experience to be avoided, but rather a catalyst for personal growth and achieving meaningful goals. While struggle brings pain, it also brings purpose. Struggle takes many shapes. Even those pursuing illicit goals - thieves, thugs and criminals - struggle to achieve their nefarious objectives. If there is no struggle, there is no success.

Therefore, struggle needs to be ethical and legitimate; it

should not seek to achieve any evil or malevolent objective. One must strive for betterment day in and day out. In other words, today must be better and tomorrow must be even more so. The stories of struggle of many individuals clearly prove that struggle with a focused mind and willpower leads a person to success and development.

It is also necessary to understand the requirements of the post-success period. Sometimes, success brings short-lived happiness, or even nightmares which ruin life. If a person becomes proud, arrogant or boastful because of their success, they ruin their life. Therefore, one must be humble, offering gratitude to Allah and sharing the benefits of success with others.

Similarly, failure is also a part of life. Sometimes, it is perceived as the end of the road, but it is far from that. Instead, it should be viewed as an opportunity - a chance to learn from our mistakes and correct course. No matter how many times we fail, the key to success lies in taking that next step forward. Each mistake provides valuable lessons, and self-assessment is the bridge to improving and achieving better results. While failure is always a possibility, it should not be accepted as an inevitable outcome or a justification for poor performance, but rather viewed as a learning opportunity. This is amply explained in the story of Taimur Lang (Tamerlane), a 14th-century

conqueror, who overcame severe physical disability - a crippled leg and hand from youth - to build a vast empire through sheer iron will, strategic brilliance and unmatched ruthlessness. His will to continue war was famously tested during a campaign when he was cornered, losing most of his army and taking refuge in a ruin.

A turning point came in his life while hiding. Saddened by his failures, he observed an ant attempting to carry a grain of corn up a high wall. The ant failed 69 times but continued, finally succeeding on the 70th attempt.

It also implies that man, being the crown of creation, is not made for defeat; he can be saddened, upset temporarily and embrace failure but he cannot be defeated. It signifies that while a person can be physically ruined, broken or destroyed by circumstances, his spirit, dignity and will to fight remain undefeated.

Presently, we are facing many challenges, particularly in the education sector. We put unnecessary pressure on children to stand first in their examinations, thus success becomes the only option. This is not right and needs to be curbed.

It is time to change the narrative and start teaching our children to accept failure, to take it as an opportunity for growth and not as a sign of weakness.

Courtesy Dawn

US and Iran-after the deal

Inam Ul Haque

Ultimately the US and Iran electronically signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), thanks to Pakistan-led mediation efforts also involving Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Oman and Qatar, and supported by China and Russia. The MoU will be formally signed on June 19, 2026, in Geneva, Switzerland. Pakistan is hosting the event. Though the draft of MoU is not known, expectations are that it would lead to an over-arching 'Agreement', covering issues like Iran's nuclear programme, missile capability, its proxies and a durable peace - from the US standpoint; and unfreezing of Iranian assets, lifting of sanctions, war reparations, ending war in Lebanon, UN guarantees, etc - from the Iranian perspective. President Trump was cajoled into this war by PM Netanyahu, and the US Jewish lobbies, as a nuclear Iran is perceived as an existential threat to Tel Aviv. Throughout the process, there were repeated attempts by Israel, through overt and covert machinations, to scuttle the deal, including strong opinion/media manipulation internationally and within Pakistan. President Trump - realising Iranian tenacity, America's own military limitations, the catastrophic economic effects of Hormuz closure, the onset of mid-term elections and growing domestic unpopularity, and the futility of military conflict - badly wanted an off-ramp from the Israeli cobweb. American deep state and saner elements within the Jewish caucus realised Israel under BB was taking them down with it. Trump's profanity-laced characterisation of PM Netanyahu is testament to his frustration with Tel Aviv. A prolonged conflict is also likely to create more cracks in the US-Israeli alliance. Despite the growing unpopularity of the clerical regime in Iran, there is a strong sentiment to face off the US-Israeli combine, conflagrate the conflict regionally and punish Israel. Hardliners within the Iranian politics and IRGC/Pasdaran are reportedly rejecting the deal.

Courtesy Tribune

Finmin to discuss extension of Fata tax exemptions with IMF, says Sanaullah after PTI-govt meeting



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government on Friday assured the PTI that it would discuss with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) the extension of tax exemptions for the merged districts of the erstwhile Fata and Pata regions, according to federal minister Rana Sanaullah.

Sanaullah, who also serves as the prime minister's adviser on political affairs, made the remarks after key leaders from the government and the PTI met at Parliament House.

"The finance minister has promised [the opposition] that he will

seek to extend these exemptions after speaking with the IMF, and God-willing, will make efforts for it," Sanaullah told reporters after the meeting.

The meeting was held in the chamber of Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb. Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam also attended from the government side, while Asad Qaiser, Junaid Akbar and PTI MNAs from the erstwhile Fata represented the opposition.

Sanaullah said the opposition had raised concerns with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the National Assembly earlier in the day over the expiry of tax exemptions for the erstwhile Fata and Pata regions on June 30.

He said that the premier subsequently directed him, Aurangzeb and Amir Muqam to meet the opposition. The PML-N leader noted that Muqam had already been making efforts on

the matter.

He expressed the hope that the tax waivers would be extended after taking the IMF into confidence.

The erstwhile Fata and Pata, which were merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018, are exempt from income tax on profits and gains from existing businesses operated by individuals. There are also other tax exemptions, such as sales tax exemptions for retailers.

Speaking during the budget debate in the NA on Tuesday, Muqam had called for the continuation of tax exemptions in former Fata and Pata, emphasising that the regions continue to face economic challenges due to years of conflict and displacement.

Earlier this month, the Fata Loya Jirga (FLJ) opposed the imposition of any taxes in the merged tribal districts, saying such a move would be unconstitutional and illegal as long as a case against the Fata-KP merger is pending with the Supreme Court.

Pakistan to fully shift to e-passports: Mohsin Naqvi

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to phase out machine-readable passports and switch fully to e-passports, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi announced on Friday, saying the move will offer advanced security, global compatibility and a seamless airport experience. Chairing a special meeting at the Passport and Immigration Headquarters, Naqvi said the complete transition would eliminate fraud and forgery.

"The complete transition to e-passports will end fraud and forgery related to passports," he said.

Director General Passports and Immigration Muhammad Ali Randhawa briefed the minister on the reforms. The meeting approved in principle to shift to e-passports, though no cutoff date



for phasing out old passports was set.

An e-Passport is a highly secure travel document with an electronic chip embedded in one of its pages. The contactless NFC chip securely stores biometric data, facial details, biographical information, a unique identification number and a digital signature. The chip allows border control and smart devices to read data wirelessly.

Pakistan's e-passports are compliant with the International Civil Aviation Organisation's standards, Pakistani e-passport.

Cabinet Committee on SOEs approves key board appointments, reviews governance matters

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Committee on State-Owned Enterprises (CCSOEs), chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, on Friday reviewed a range of governance matters and approved key appointments and policy measures concerning state-owned entities.

The meeting, held at the Finance Division, was attended by Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, Federal Minister for Science and Technology Khalid Hussain Magji and Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, along with federal secretaries and senior officials from the relevant ministries, divisions, regulatory bodies and state-owned enterprises, a news release said.

The committee considered a summary submitted by the Maritime Affairs Division regarding the appointment of Independent Directors on the Board of Directors of the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation

(PNSC), Karachi. After detailed deliberations, it approved the proposed appointments in accordance with the provisions of the State-Owned Enterprises (Governance and Operations) Act, 2023, and the applicable governance framework.

The committee also reviewed and approved a summary presented by the Power Division seeking approval of the Public Service Obligation (PSO) Agreement in respect of the WX-DISCOs for timely formalisation of the public service obligations in light of the agreed terms and conditions of the Government of Pakistan with international financial institutions.

A summary submitted by the Science and Technology Division regarding the appointment of Directors on the Board of the Indigenous Research and Development Agency (IRADA) was also considered and approved. IRADA was set up in January this year to lead quality research in the fields of defence, industry and academia.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on State-Owned Enterprises (CCSOEs) at the Finance Division.

Pervaiz Ashraf hails Pakistan diplomatic successes

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister and Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPP) senior leader Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Friday hailed Pakistan's diplomatic successes, calling them a source of pride for the entire nation.

Participating in the budget debate in the National Assembly, Pervaiz Ashraf said members of parliament and the people of Pakistan had rightly celebrated the country's diplomatic achievements, particularly its role in promoting peace and stability in the region.

Referring to tensions between Iran and the United States, he said the situation had posed a serious threat to regional and global peace and created fears of widespread destruction and economic disruption.

He said Pakistan's leadership, including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, President Asif Ali Zardari, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, worked with wisdom, patience,

Around 3.5 mln shopkeepers to be brought into tax net: Bilal Kayani

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Bilal Azhar Kayani on Friday said that around 3.5 million shopkeepers will be included in the tax net during fiscal year 2026-27.

Participating in the National Assembly debate on the federal budget 2026-27, he said the government's economic policy aims to strengthen the national economy and ensure inclusive growth.

He congratulated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and the finance team, saying their efforts had improved Pakistan's global standing.

He described the budget as a "people-friendly" document, saying it includes relief measures for



different sectors.

He said when the government took office in February 2024, the economy was in a difficult condition and there were doubts about stability. However, he added that under the Prime Minister's leadership, economic stability was achieved, inflation declined, foreign exchange reserves increased, and the IMF programme was successfully completed.

He said the government met all fiscal targets in the fiscal year 2025 without presenting.

Governor assures protection of minority rights, justice

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday reaffirmed the government's commitment to protecting the rights, lives, and dignity of minority communities.

A delegation of minority members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, led by Baba Gopal Singh, Bahari Lal, Suresh Kumar, and Askar Parvez, called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at the Governor House.

The delegation expressed gratitude to the Governor for his proactive role in the recent double murder incident at a gurdwara in Mardan's Babu Mohalla area,



where the caretaker of the gurdwara and his wife were killed. They described his efforts as supportive of minority rights. The delegation informed the Governor that the main accused in the case, a police officer, had been arrested and stressed the need to ensure that he is brought to justice without delay. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi.

Students of Deptt of Sports Science & Physical education complete M.phil degree



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Department of Sports Science & Physical education on the successful completion of your Final M.phil Defense, held,

under the esteemed supervision of Dr. Mehwish Manzoor (Postdoc). Your hard work, dedication, perseverance, and commitment to research have culminated in



this remarkable academic achievement. This milestone reflects not only your scholarly excellence but also your determination and passion for advancing knowledge in your

respective fields. We are honored by the presence of Dr. Bilal Khan (Registrar & Director BASAR), whose valuable insights, evaluation, and encouragement con-



tributed significantly to the success of the defense proceedings. May this achievement serve as a foundation for greater accomplishments in your academic and profes-

sional careers. Wishing all graduates continued success, growth, and excellence in their future endeavors. Congratulations on this well-deserved achievement.