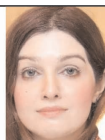




Pakistan, China eye new youth education partnership



Mushaal urges immediate end to AJK deadlock for restoration of essential supplies



Kohistani warns of stern action against anti-state elements, reaffirms support for armed forces

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'Peace requires give and take': Vance, Shehbaz & Al Thani address summit opening ceremony ahead of talks in Burgenstock

PEAK POINT

SWITZERLAND: As talks between the United States and Iran kicked off in Burgenstock, Switzerland, with Qatar and Pakistan participating in a mediatory role, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif hoped for an outcome that would ensure peace, progress and prosperity globally.

Addressing the opening ceremony ahead of the quadrilateral talks, PM Shehbaz said he was looking forward to productive talks, and expressed satisfaction that the joint efforts of everyone involved in the peace process had culminated in the meet in Burgenstock.

He also praised Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Asim Munir for his consistent efforts, perseverance and patience.

US Vice President JD Vance told the press that "peace requires give and take". "This is a historic meet. Never before have Iranian and American leadership met at such a high level outside of Islamabad," he said. Thanking US President Donald Trump "for empowering us to find a diplomatic solution", Vance said a great deal had "already been accomplished" and the team looked forward to seeing "how much more we can accomplish together". "Can we change relations in the Middle East, or do we go back to doing things the old way?" he said. "Where Iran and the Gulf have had an unfriendly relationship, or Iran has been a driver of regional instability, we see a future where everyone can work together to promote peace and prosperity for everyone."



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and COAS & CDF Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir meeting with Vice President of the United States J.D Vance and the US delegation on the sidelines of US-Iran technical level talks as a follow-up of Islamabad MoU being held in Burgenstock, Switzerland.

NA approves over Rs 661.27 bln demands for grants of energy sector

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Sunday approved six demands for grants related to the energy and power sectors for the next financial year worth Rs

661,265,815,000 (Rs 661.27 billion approx.), while rejecting 116 cut motions moved by opposition lawmakers.

The demands for grants were presented in the House by Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb.

The house approved allocations, Rs 578,837,216,000 were granted for the Power Division, while Rs 1,111,666,000 were approved for the Petroleum Division. An amount of Rs 1,201,001,000 was sanctioned for the Geological Survey of Pakistan.

For development expenditures, the House approved Rs 3,196,630,000 for the Development Expenditure of the Power Division. In addition, Rs 311,800,000 were allocated for capital outlay on the Petroleum Division.

The National Assembly also approved Rs 76,607,502,000 for External Development Loans.

Balochistan Assembly approves Rs1.089tr budget for 2026-27

PEAK POINT



BALOCHISTAN: The Balochistan Assembly on Sunday approved the provincial budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year, clearing expenditure proposals worth a total of Rs1.089 trillion. During the session, lawmakers approved 98 demands for grants presented by Provincial Minister Mir

Shoaib Noshervani. The budget was passed after the assembly endorsed both development and non-development spending allocations for the coming financial year.

According to the approved budget, Rs291 billion has been allocated for development projects through 45 demands for grants. Meanwhile, 53 demands for grants amounting to Rs797.88 billion were approved for non-development expenditures.

The proceedings moved swiftly, with the assembly approving the high-value budget within approximately one hour of debate and consideration. Notably, opposition members did not submit any cut motions seeking reductions in the proposed expenditures, allowing the demands for grants to pass without amendment. The approval marks a significant step in finalising the province's fiscal framework for the next financial year, with the government expected to focus on both development initiatives and the financing of routine administrative operations. The Balochistan government on Wednesday unveiled a Rs1.089 trillion surplus budget for fiscal year 2026-27.

Aurangzeb stoutly defends FY27 budget

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Rejecting opposition allegations of discrepancies in official economic data, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said the

country's GDP figures were calculated according to international standards and maintained that the federal budget for 2026-27 was a pro-growth package designed to broaden the tax base, boost exports and accelerate sustainable economic growth.

Winding up the debate on the federal budget for 2026-27 in National Assembly, the minister said the government had received positive feedback from lawmakers and stakeholders regarding the budget's overall direction.

"We have gotten very clear feedback from within and outside the House that this is overall a positive and pro-growth budget, which sets the foundation to accelerate the sustainable growth witnessed over the last two years," he told the House. At the outset of his speech, he addressed concerns raised through a privilege motion moved by lawmakers Khawaja Sheraz Mehmood.

Man charged over suspected anti-Muslim attacks in UK's Edinburgh

PEAK POINT

LONDON: Scottish authorities said on Saturday they charged a man in connection with attacks in Edinburgh that wounded five people with UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer saying the suspect "appears to be motivated by anti-Muslim hatred". Police Scotland said officers had arrested a 36-year-old white Scottish man and there was "no further threat to the public". "A 36-year-old man has been charged in connection with a number of incidents which took place in Edinburgh on Friday, June 19, 2026," police said late on Saturday. "A report has been submitted.

R-4 Ministers reiterate cooperation for peaceful, stable and connected region



PEAK POINT

CAIRO: Foreign ministers of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Egypt met in Cairo on Sunday to discuss regional developments and implementation of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said.

In a post on social media platform X, Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said the meeting was held in a "restricted format" and focused on regional developments, the implementation of the Islamabad MoU, and priority areas of cooperation. He said the four countries

reaffirmed their commitment to dialogue, diplomacy and regional ownership of shared challenges.

"Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Egypt continue to deepen cooperation for a more peaceful, stable and connected region," Andrabi said. Separately, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said he participated in the fourth meeting of the Regional Four (R-4) Foreign Ministers in Cairo. In a statement, Dar said the ministers reviewed progress on the

Islamabad MoU, exchanged views on regional and global developments, and reaffirmed their commitment to diplomacy and collective efforts for peace, stability and prosperity. He said discussions also focused on strengthening coordination and advancing practical cooperation within the R-4 framework to address shared challenges. Dar also called on Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on the sidelines of the meeting, where they discussed bilateral and regional cooperation under the R-4 platform, according to the statement.

A joint statement was issued at the conclusion of the meeting, the Foreign Office said.

PPP gets IPP support for Chief Minister in Gilgit Baltistan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has got the support of Istehkam Pakistan Party (IPP) for the formation of the government in Gilgit Baltistan on Sunday as PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto has nominated Amjad Hussain Advocate for the Chief Minister. PPP Central General Secretary Syed Nayyar Hussain Bukhari, former PM Raja Pervez Ashraf and Qamar Zaman Kaira have thanked IPP for supporting PPP nominated Chief Minister Amjad Hussain Advocate thanked the leadership of the Stability Pakistan Party for their cooperation in government formation.

Talking to media along with IPP leadership outside parliament house in Islamabad, Raja Pervez Ashraf said that Pakistan People's Party budget proposals were accepted in the federal budget. He said that PPP tried its best to provide maximum relief to the masses in the budget. Raja Pervez Ashraf said that the most of the reservations of the PPP have been removed, all reservations are never completely removed.

He said that Pakistan's historical mediation role has made the country's name famous all over the world, Raja Pervez Ashraf.



SPORTS



Marsh powers Australia to 3-0 sweep over Bangladesh



PEAK POINT
CHATTOGRAM: Mitchell Marsh smashed 60 off 28 balls as Australia completed a 3-0 T20 series sweep over Bangladesh on Sunday, to win by seven wickets in Chattogram on Sunday.

Australia had already wrapped up the series after winning the first two matches -- and made light work of the hosts, chasing a modest target of 110 in just 11 overs. Openers Josh Inglis and Marsh attacked from the outset, punishing the Bangladesh quicks and setting the tone for a rapid pursuit.

Left-arm spinner Nasum Ahmed made the first breakthrough, dismissing Inglis for 17 after the opener had shared a 54-run stand with Marsh. Marsh, the captain, continued the assault, bringing up his 14th T20 half-century off just 23 balls, before Shoriful Islam removed him for 60.

Cooper Connolly then fell for 15 before Matt Renshaw and Tim David wrapped up the chase inside 11 overs. Renshaw remained unbeaten on six, while David smashed 12

off three balls. Nasum, Shoriful and Rishad Hossain claimed one wicket each for Bangladesh. Earlier, stand-in captain Towhid Hridoy struck an unbeaten 61 off 51 balls to rescue Bangladesh after the hosts, playing only for pride, slumped to an early collapse.

Only Hridoy and Hossain reached double figures. Man-of-the-match Marsh said Australia's bowlers had laid the platform for victory and suggested Spencer Johnson, who returned

figures of 2-6 from four overs, was equally deserving of the award. "I thought we were fantastic with the ball today," Marsh said. Bangladesh coach Phil Simmons admitted the series had exposed deep cracks in his side's batting. "I think in the last game, even though we lost, I was still happy with the attitude both on the field and when we chased," he said. "But... the first game and this game, the batting especially, we haven't given anything to our bowlers to work with."

Peshawar players' success in Asian Junior Squash Championship sparks celebrations



PEAK POINT
PESHAWAR: A wave of joy has swept through squash circles in Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and across Pakistan following the remarkable success of two young players from Peshawar in the Asian Junior Squash Championship. After a long gap, Pakistan has achieved major victories in the Under-15 and Under-17 categories of the Asian Junior Squash Championship. According to details, in the final of the Under-15 category at the Asian Junior Squash Championship held in China, Pakistan's young player Ahmad Rayan Khalil, who belongs to Peshawar, defeated Malaysia's Vedoran Rotheran by 3-0 to claim the prestigious title of Asian Under-15 Champion. In the Under-17 category, Pakistan's Nauman Khan defeated India's Shiven Agarwal by 3-0 to secure the valuable honour of becoming the Asian Under-17 Champion. Pakistan won two gold medals in the individual competitions. Meanwhile, former world champion Qamar Zaman and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Squash Association President Dawood Khan expressed their delight over the outstanding performance of the Peshawar-based players in the Asian Junior Squash Championship.

Henry the hero as New Zealand level England series in style



PEAK POINT
OVVAL: Matt Henry did the damage as New Zealand thrashed England by 253 runs in the second Test at the Oval on Sunday for a series-leveling victory after the hosts opened up the possibility of Ben Stokes returning to international cricket. Fast-medium bowler Henry's sensational spell of four wickets for no runs in 12 balls

saw England, 182-5 overnight, collapse to 192-9. Henry finished the match by bowling Jordan Cox as first-innings 5-80, gave England, chasing a record-breaking 463 to win, were dismissed for 209. New Zealand needed just 48 minutes play on Sunday's fifth day at the Oval to square the three-match series at 1-1 ahead of next week's

expect things to unfold like that today," said Henry, the player of the match: "With the ball, we talked about being relentless. We stuck at it and it was nice to get the rewards."

New Zealand captain Tom Latham added: "We thought hitting the top of off stump repeatedly was the way to go on this surface and Matt Henry is a good exponent of that. "He built pressure through dot balls and also wickets. He has been a spearhead for some time." Shortly before play started on Sunday, the England and Wales Cricket Board announced that both Stokes and Gus Atkinson had been withdrawn from county action with Durham and Surrey respectively. "I probably didn't



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Sports Faisal Ayub Kokar and CM's Advisor Ali Dar pose a group photo with team, participating in Asia Pacific Pedal Cup here on Sunday.

Japan rout Tunisia 4-0 as Ueda shines in World Cup's 1,000th match

PEAK POINT
JAPAN: Japan marked the 1,000th match in World Cup history with a commanding 4-0 win over Tunisia in Group F on Saturday, as Ayase Ueda scored twice to send the North Africans out.

Hajime Moriyasu's side, who drew 2-2 with the Netherlands in their opener, went ahead after four minutes when a sweeping attack ended with Keito Nakamura cutting the ball back for Daichi Kamada to score. Tunisia, beaten 5-1 by Sweden in their first match and playing under new coach Herve Renard, struggled to cope with Japan's pressing and movement from the outset.

Japan almost doubled their advantage in the 11th minute with an attack down the right flank, with Tunisia's Dylan Bronn turning a low cross away from Kamada. From the resulting corner,

Tunisia goalkeeper Aymen Dahmen produced a fine save, with goal-line technology confirming the ball had not crossed the line. Moriyasu's team continued to dominate possession, their front line harrying

Ueda completed the rout response, and Japan put the result beyond doubt in the 69th minute, Kamada's pass opening up the Tunisian defence and Junya Ito racing clear to finish low past Dahmen.



Tunisia's defence and preventing Renard's side from establishing any rhythm in the Monterrey heat. The second goal arrived in the 31st minute when Ueda advanced towards the edge of the area, and with the Tunisia defence backing off, he drove a low shot into the far corner. Tunisia offered little in

six minutes from time, meeting Kaishu Sano's clipped far-post delivery and guiding a superb header into the top corner as Japan became the first Asian team to score four goals in a World Cup match. With the win, Japan join the Netherlands on four points after the Dutch thrashed Sweden 5-1.

Lahore Qalanaders' talent hunt draws massive participation Pindi cricketers





Benazir Bhutto's legacy still challenges Pakistan to give women equal space in politics, WPC Says

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Women's Parliamentary Caucus paid rich tribute to former Prime Minister Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto on her 73rd birth anniversary, saying her struggle for democracy, women's empowerment and social justice still stands as a powerful message for Pakistan's political system and younger generation. The strongest message from the tribute was that Benazir Bhutto did not only become a political leader; she broke a major barrier for women in Pakistan and the Muslim world. As the first

woman Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Muslim world, she opened the door for more women to enter politics, public life and national decision making. Dr. Shahida Rehmani, Member Secretary of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, said Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was a visionary leader whose courage, patience and commitment to democratic values continue to inspire generations of Pakistanis. She said Benazir Bhutto faced difficult political challenges but remained committed to democracy, human rights and social justice. Dr. Shahida

Rehmani said her leadership became a symbol of hope, progress and empowerment for women across Pakistan and beyond. According to Dr. Shahida Rehmani, Benazir Bhutto's struggle was not limited to politics. She said the former Prime Minister worked for an inclusive society where women, poor people and marginalized communities could have better opportunities. She said Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto supported policies aimed at improving education, healthcare and economic opportunities for women and weaker sections of society. Her work, she added,

continues to guide efforts for gender equality and democratic strengthening in Pakistan. Dr. Shahida Rehmani said Benazir Bhutto's political journey showed young women that leadership is not only for men. She said her life proved that women can lead governments, shape national policy and stand at the front of democratic movements. The Women's Parliamentary Caucus said Benazir Bhutto's contribution to Pakistan's democracy remains historic. The caucus said her sacrifices and leadership still remind the country that democracy must be

protected through courage, tolerance and public service. Dr. Shahida Rehmani said the Women's Parliamentary Caucus remains committed to carrying forward Benazir Bhutto's vision of a democratic, tolerant and equal Pakistan. She said women must be given equal chances to contribute to national development. She also urged the younger generation, especially young women, to learn from Benazir Bhutto's determination and dedication to public service. She said the former Prime Minister's life gives a clear lesson that courage, educa-

tion and commitment can help women break barriers. The tribute highlighted that Benazir Bhutto's legacy is still relevant for Pakistan today. Her message of democracy, women's participation, human rights and social justice continues to guide those working for a more inclusive and progressive country. Dr. Shahida Rehmani said Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto will always be remembered as a leader who gave hope to millions and showed that women can play a central role in Pakistan's political and national life.

COMSTech establishes coordination office in Indonesia to strengthen scientific cooperation across OIC states

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTech) has established a coordination office at Indonesia's Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR) in collaboration with the World University Association for Community Development (WUACD) to promote scientific, academic and research cooperation among universities across OIC member states. The COMSTech-WUACD Coordination Office was inaugurated at the WUACD

Secretariat in Surabaya on Sunday which will serve as a regional platform to support joint research, academic exchanges, institutional partnerships and capacity-building programmes in the fields of science, technology, higher education, innovation, health and agriculture. Addressing the inaugural ceremony, COMSTech Coordinator General, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary said that the office would facilitate research mobility, academic networking, knowledge sharing and institutional cooperation among universities in OIC countries. He said that special



emphasis would be placed on creating educational opportunities and professional training programmes for students and researchers from across the Muslim world. Future collab-

oration, he added, will focus on water resource management, climate resilience, health sciences, emerging technologies and youth skills development. Rector of Universitas

Airlangga and President of World University Association for Community Development, Prof. Dr. Mohammad Madyan described the establishment of the coordination office as a strategic step towards expanding international academic cooperation and addressing common development challenges through science, technology and innovation. He said that the initiative would promote collaborative research projects, joint publications, faculty and student exchanges, while supporting the COMSTech Consortium of Excellence aimed at strengthening cooperation among lead-

ing universities and research institutions across OIC member states. Pakistan's Ambassador to Indonesia, Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri welcomed the establishment of the office, saying that it would significantly strengthen scientific cooperation and research partnerships across the Muslim world. He stressed the importance of building stronger research ecosystems and enhancing scientific collaboration to address emerging global challenges, including climate change, food security, public health and technological transformation.

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Parliamentary budget office

Ahmed Bilal Mehboob

WHILE the budget session in the federal and provincial assemblies is in progress, some members of the two Houses of parliament have again raised the need for an independent office within parliament to provide an unbiased analysis of the annual budget to the legislators.

The argument is that if members of parliament have to debate various aspects of the budget as informed legislators and exercise oversight on the executive's produced budget, they need support from an entity which is outside the control of the executive so that the numbers produced by the Ministry of Finance for the budget and by the Ministry of Planning and Development for the Public Sector Development Programme can be scrutinised and independently verified before the parliamentarians provide their feedback and input during the budget debate.

In fact, a member of the National Assembly had introduced a private member's bill titled the "Parliamentary Budget Office Bill, 2025", in the Assembly last year. The bill was referred to the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance which asked its sub-committee chaired by Dr Nafisa Shah to examine the proposal in depth. As one can gather from media reports, the bill was strongly opposed by the representatives of the finance ministry who complained to the

sub-committee that the bill granted excessive powers to the proposed budget office. The ministry also objected to the suggested direct reporting relationship of the proposed office to parliament without taking the ministry into confidence.

While the bill was not passed in its original form, it was agreed that the ministry's finance and revenue divisions would come up with an amended draft for consideration of the sub-committee and the full committee. As the debate on the 2026-27 budget commences, there is no sign that such a draft has been placed before the committee or that the committee has taken that into consideration.

A parliamentary budget office is not a novel idea; a number of countries around the world have established such offices to support the independent character of their respective parliaments but most of them are mature democracies in the developed world. Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, South Korea and US are among those with independent budget offices within their respective parliaments. Some developing or mid-level countries like Kenya also have a parliamentary budget office.

The only exception seems to be Afghanistan during the pre-Taliban period when USAID and development agencies from many developed democracies were working hard to transform Afghanistan into a democracy. USAID supported the estab-

lishment of a parliamentary budget office in Afghanistan in 2007, which continued to function right up to the Taliban takeover in 2021. In keeping with the overall democracy project in Afghanistan, there is no evidence that the Afghan parliamentary budget office reported any meaningful success.

A typical office of this kind requires highly skilled and professional staff ranging from 15 to 45 members — depending on the scope of work. The cost of establishing a typical parliamentary budget office ranges from \$3 million to \$10m with an annual operational cost ranging from \$5m to \$10m for a country like Pakistan. In comparison, America's Congressional Budget Office employs hundreds of professional staff and its operational cost is in the vicinity of \$65m. The Netherlands spends around \$8m to \$10m per year.

Many countries have parliamentary budget offices to support parliament's independence. It is normal to expect that there will be some level of tension or even confrontation between the parliamentary budget office and government. For example, Canada's parliamentary budget officer recently released the highly scrutinised Economic and Fiscal Outlook — June 2026 that revealed that the federal deficit had essentially doubled to 72 billion Canadian dollars in the last fiscal year, putting the government's fiscal targets in jeopardy.

Courtesy Dawn

After the MoU

Fahd Husain

THE sun burns bright in Lucerne. Prospects of talks here have also brightened in the last few hours. Where do things go from here?

This Swiss city by the lake is brimming with tourists this time of the year. Men and women of all ages clad in shorts, shades and hats crowd neat streets and throng expensive eateries (there are few cheap ones). Lush green mountains surrounding the city beckon hikers. Those preferring less active holiday opt for a lazy cruise on Lake Lucerne. Very few are aware that only a few kilometres from here, the fate of the largest war of our times is being decided.

The much-hyped signing ceremony on Friday did not take place because one or both parties to the conflict were unsure of the optics it would generate. We know that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was all set to fly down here as the host of the event. Advance teams from the United States, Iran and Pakistan had already arrived a few days earlier. The mountain-top resort of Burgenstock was all ready and decked up for the guests. And yet, last minute hiccup persisted.

It was when I landed in Doha Thursday morning en route to Zurich that I first heard about complications in the plan. A very senior government person messaged me to say that Pakistan was trying to iron out these last-minute wrinkles. Things could go either way. By the time our flight took off from Doha a few hours later, it was becoming apparent that a resolution of the issue was not imminent. The Prime Minister's aircraft stood ready on the runway. As it happened, it never took off. The ceremony at Burgenstock did not take place, but diplomacy never stopped. A day later, the same official messaged to say that Pakistan was now working feverishly to get the Iranians and Americans together for the second round of talks. He clearly knew what he was talking about.

Courtesy Tribune

CDA, Bangladesh agree to enhance cooperation at the municipal level



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Bangladesh have agreed to enhance cooperation at the municipal level, with both sides also moving forward on a proposal to establish sister-city relations between Islamabad and Dhaka.

The understanding was reached during a meeting between CDA Chairman and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Sohail Ashraf and Bangladesh High Commissioner

Muhammad Iqbal Hussain at the CDA headquarters. According to a press release, the two sides discussed matters of mutual interest and explored avenues for expanding cooperation between the federal capital and the Bangladeshi capital.

During the meeting, the Bangladeshi envoy praised Islamabad's beauty and greenery and thanked the CDA for facilitating the construction of the Bangladesh High Commission complex in the Diplomatic Enclave.

He said the project was nearing

completion and appreciated the authority's support throughout the process.

The high commissioner said Pakistan and Bangladesh were working to strengthen people-to-people contacts and expand cooperation in trade and other sectors.

He added that ties between the two countries had witnessed positive momentum in recent months. A key focus of the discussion was a proposal to declare Islamabad and Dhaka sister cities. Hussain said a draft memorandum of understanding for the initiative had already been prepared and forwarded to the relevant authorities for approval, expressing hope that it would be signed soon.

Chairman CDA Sohail Ashraf said the civic authority would extend all possible support for the completion of the Bangladesh High Commission complex and other diplomatic projects in the Diplomatic Enclave. He also informed the envoy that plans were under way to upgrade infrastructure.

Pakistan, China eye new youth education partnership

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan met Li Jin Song, founder of Tang Chinese Education, at the institution's headquarters in Beijing on Sunday to discuss expanding Pakistan-China cooperation in education, language learning, skills development and youth empowerment, as both sides explored new avenues to equip Pakistani youth with globally competitive skills and create greater academic opportunities.

The meeting focused on strengthening collaboration in Chinese language education, vocational training and capacity building initiatives aimed at preparing young Pakistanis for emerging opportunities in an increasingly interconnected global economy.

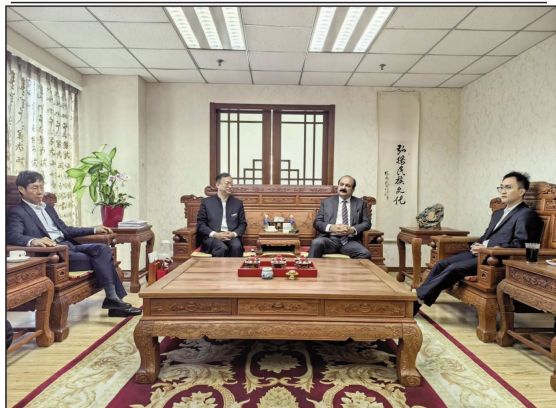
Rana Mashood said investing in youth through quality education, international partnerships and market oriented skills development is essential for Pakistan's future.

He highlighted the PMYP's efforts to provide young people with access to world class educational opportunities, language learning programmes and professional training.

He said Pakistan's youth remained the country's greatest asset and stressed that stronger educational and cultural linkages with China would open new avenues for learning, innovation and career growth.

Li Jin Song reaffirmed Tang Chinese Education's commitment to supporting initiatives that promote language proficiency, academic excellence and cultural understanding among Pakistani students. He expressed confidence that deeper educational cooperation would further strengthen the longstanding friendship between Pakistan and China. The two sides also discussed youth exchange programmes and agreed to explore additional collaborative initiatives designed to create meaningful pathways for students and young professionals under the broader framework of Pakistan China cooperation. The meeting concluded with both sides.

reaffirming their commitment to expanding bilateral cooperation in education, skills development and youth engagement, reflecting a shared vision of empowering the next generation through knowledge, innovation and people-to-people connectivity.



CHINA: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan in a meeting with founder of Tang Chinese Education.

Sherry Rehman Pays Tribute to Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto on her 73rd Birth Anniversary

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: On the 73rd birth anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Vice President of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Senator Sherry Rehman paid a heartfelt tribute to the life, struggle, and towering legacy of Pakistan's first female Prime Minister, twice elected and a global icon of democracy and women's empowerment.

"On her 73rd birthday, we honour one of Pakistan's finest leaders," said Senator Rehman. "Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's

courage, vision, and sacrifices continue to inspire not only Pakistanis but millions around the world. She was a beacon of hope for the marginalized, the women, the voiceless, and the oppressed—and her fight was always for them."

Speaking about the threats Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto faced, Senator Rehman recalled the dangerous political landscape in which she led from the front. "We walked into one of the largest terrorist attacks Pakistan had ever seen. She knew the risks, yet she per-

sisted because she was waiting for us, not for herself, but for Pakistan's women, so they would not be left behind," said Senator Rehman. "Till her last day, she was committed to the empowerment of women. She could have chosen an easier life, but she chose to fight for Pakistan."

Senator Rehman emphasized that SMBB's political journey was not one of privilege, but of purposeful resistance. "When offered her freedom in exchange for abandoning her political career, she refused. She

Dialogue and democratic process only solution to AJK issues: Amir Muqam

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Engineer Amir Muqam said that the ongoing protests, sit-ins and disruption of normal life in Azad Jammu and Kashmir can only be resolved through dialogue and the democratic process.

Speaking on the situation in AJK, he said the government had made it clear to the action committee that their demands relate to matters falling within the jurisdiction of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Parliament.

He urged stakeholders to participate in elections and seek a public mandate, adding that elected representatives have the authority to make decisions regarding the future of the people.

"The solution lies in elections and the will of the people. Dialogue remains the only way forward," the minister said.

Mushaal urges immediate end to AJK deadlock for restoration of essential supplies

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organization, Mushaal Hussein Mullick on Sunday called for urgent measures to resolve the ongoing situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), expressing concern over disruptions to daily life and shortages of essential supplies amid the prevailing political tensions. In a statement issued during the holy month of Muharram, she claimed that road closures in parts of AJK had severely affected the supply of food, ration items and other necessities, leaving many families facing difficulties. Appealing for immediate intervention by the country's leadership and security institutions, Mushaal Mullick emphasized the need to safeguard public welfare and prevent further hardship for residents of the



region. She reiterated her support for maintaining peace and stability in AJK and stressed the importance of resolving differences through dialogue. She urged for taking immediate steps to restore supply lines for food, medicines and other essential commodities in view of Muharram. She also appealed to protesters and members of the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) to end sit-ins peacefully and engage in constructive negotiations, saying that the protection of human lives and the well-being of children.

Kohistani warns of stern action against anti-state elements, reaffirms support for armed forces

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Religious Affairs Kheal Das Kohistani on Saturday warned that any party, committee or group found working against the state with credible evidence would face strict legal action.

Talking to the media outside the Parliament House, he said that any individual or organization involved in anti-state activities, refusing to respect the Constitution and the law, or taking up arms against Pakistan would be dealt with firmly in accordance with the law.

Responding to a question about the possible proscription of the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), Kohistani said that if the organisation was



declared banned, the government would have sufficient evidence to justify such a decision.

Referring to the situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K), he said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Azad Kashmir chapter had made its position clear, stressing that no one would be allowed to malign the Pakistan Armed Forces or national institutions. He reaffirmed the party's unwavering support for the armed forces, describing them as the country.

Governor Kundi highlights sacrifices of martyrs, calls for national cohesion

PEAK POINT

MANSEHRA: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday said that the real strength of Pakistan lies in its people and that national unity is the foundation of a strong and prosperous country.

Addressing the Shuhada-e-Islam and Istehkam-e-Pakistan Conference at Jamia Muhammadiyah Muddadiya in Chattar Plain, Mansehra, the Governor said Pakistan had rendered immense sacrifices in the war against terrorism and that the sacrifices of the martyrs would continue to inspire future generations.



He urged the youth to make education, research and hard work their guiding principles, stressing that the country's progress depended on an educated and responsible younger generation.

The conference was attended by Maulana Syed Chiraghuddin Shah, former provincial minister Syed Ahmad Shah, senior leaders of Pakistan Peoples Party Hazara Division.

steadfast, reassessed the scale of the challenge, and took another step forward for Pakistan's future. That is leadership." Remembering SMBB's pioneering work for women's rights, Senator Rehman noted, "She was the first female Prime Minister of a Muslim country, twice elected. She built pathways for other women to rise. From landmark pro-women legislation to visionary programs, she transformed intent into institutional reform."

Shedding light on the initiatives built under SMBB's

vision, Senator Rehman stated, "The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) was conceived under her leadership. Today, it remains the largest social safety net in the country, providing financial empowerment to millions of Pakistani women." She added, "Her Lady Health Worker program revolutionized healthcare access across rural Pakistan, improving maternal and child health, while creating livelihoods for thousands of women."

Senator Rehman also commended Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for

carrying forward his mother's mission. "Chairman Bilawal continues to walk in her footsteps. His commitment to BISP and women-centric welfare policies is a powerful testament to SMBB's enduring legacy. His advocacy for social justice and women's rights ensures that her voice and vision remain alive in our political fabric."

"As Pakistan stands at the crossroads of immense social, economic, and political challenges, we feel the absence of her leadership more than ever."