



First Lady Asifa Bhutto Zardari briefed on Benazir Income Support Programme



Finance committee presents report on Finance Bill to NA



Azam Tarar urges opposition to actively participate in legislative process

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Pakistan will continue to play 'honest, sincere role' in advancing dialogue, says PM after US-Iran talks in Switzerland

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday expressed Pakistan's continued commitment to play an "honest and sincere" role in advancing dialogue in what were his first remarks after the conclusion of a high-level meeting between the United States and Iran under the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding aimed at ending the Middle East conflict.

In a post on X, PM Shehbaz expressed satisfaction at the "successful conclusion" of the meeting held in Switzerland's Burgenstock.

The premier stated that the discussions were held in a "positive and constructive atmosphere and yielded encouraging

progress," which included a roadmap towards the final deal within 60 days, the establishment of a high-level committee for political oversight and the commencement of further technical talks.

PM Shehbaz commended the leadership of both the US and Iran for "continued commitment to constructive engagement". He also expressed thanks for "all brotherly and friendly countries for their valuable support in advancing this historic process," particularly Qatar. The premier thanked Qatar for its "critical support" in creating the necessary conditions for the negotiations to move forward. "A word of thanks to the Swiss Government for their facilitation in hosting these talks," PM Shehbaz said.



ZURICH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif leaves for Pakistan after participating in the Islamabad MoU, high level discussions, in Burgenstock, Switzerland.

Iran President Pezeshkian to visit Islamabad on today

PEAK POINT



IRAN: Iranian President Dr Masoud Pezeshkian will arrive in Pakistan on Tuesday for talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, a day after Iranian and US officials held mediated negotiations in Switzerland aimed at ending the Middle East conflict.

The visit was officially confirmed by the Director General of the Presidential Press Office in Tehran.

During the visit, Pezeshkian is expected to hold key meetings with Prime Minister Shehbaz, with discussions focusing on bilateral relations, regional developments, economic cooperation and issues of mutual interest.

According to officials, the Iranian president will also thank the Pakistani leadership for its role in facilitating mediation efforts between Iran and the United States.

The two sides are expected to review progress on previously signed economic cooperation agreements and discuss ways to enhance high-level contacts between the neighbouring countries. The visit comes amid renewed diplomatic efforts between Tehran and Washington following talks held in Switzerland under a 60-day.

Trump warns of hitting Iran 'very hard again' amid peace talks

MAHPARA ZAMAN



NEW YORK: US President Donald Trump has warned of attacking Iran again if it does not stop what he calls its proxies in Lebanon, to stop "causing trouble" as Israel continued bombing Hezbollah locations despite a ceasefire.

"Iran must immediately stop their highly paid PROXIES in Lebanon from causing trouble," Trump said on his social platform, Truth Social.

While top Iranian and US leadership meet in Switzerland along with mediators Pakistan and Qatar, the Strait of Hormuz — a critical oil supply route and a major talking point in talks between the warring countries — remains closed as per the Iranian military due to ceasefire violations by Israel. Trump, in his post, added: "If they don't, we'll hit Iran very hard again, just like we did last week, only harder!!!" Iran's Tasnim news agency, citing a source close to the negotiating team, reported on Sunday that the Strait of Hormuz would not be reopened as long as a ceasefire in Lebanon was not respected.

The source said the waterway would also remain closed until waivers allowing the sale of Iranian oil were issued.

Meanwhile, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said in a statement that there was and is no restriction on Israeli soldiers to act to eliminate threats in Lebanon, with troops remaining in positions in the security zone.

PPP's Amjad Hussain elected as GB chief minister after members take oath

PEAK POINT



GILGIT: The Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly elected PPP's Advocate Amjad Hussain as the chief minister on Monday, just hours after the newly elected assembly members took oath.

This came after the PPP's Imran Nadeem Shigri and the PML-N's Malik Kifayatullah Rehman were elected as the assembly's speaker and deputy speaker, respectively.

Nadeem announced the election schedule for the leader of the House, gave until 7:40pm to file the nomination papers and withdrawals for the position of chief minister, and adjourned the proceedings. PPP's Hussain filed nomination papers, but no other candidate did so for the chief minister's position. Subsequently, Nadeem announced at 8pm that Hussain was elected as the GB CM unopposed.

Meanwhile, the GB speaker declared PML-N local president Hafeezur Rehman as the opposition leader in the house, saying the opposition members had submitted a requisition in this regard. The assembly hall was crowded with the guests of members, journalists, politicians, visitors and VIPs, with the press galleries.

13 dead, dozens injured after 'technical accident' at giant Qatar LNG site

PEAK POINT

QATAR: At least 13 people were killed, and dozens injured, after an explosion at Qatar's massive Ras Laffan liquefied natural gas (LNG) complex, which occurred as workers were restarting operations halted after an Iranian attack in March. Authorities said a "technical accident" occurred at the Barzan local gas supply facility on Sunday evening.

Qatar, which hosts a major US military base, has come under repeated Iranian missile and drone attacks during the Iran war, which trapped around 20 per cent of global LNG supply in the Gulf before some shipments.

UK PM Starmer announces resignation amid mounting pressure, says will give successor 'full, unequivocal support'

PEAK POINT

LONDON: Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Monday resigned from his position, paving the way for Britain's seventh leader in a decade.

Addressing the press outside 10 Downing Street, Starmer said he would accept his party's decision with "good grace", and would extend his unequivocal and full support to his successor. "Every decision I have taken has been about putting the country I love first, and that is why I will resign as leader of the Labour Party."

He added that he informed Britain's King Charles III of his decision in the morning.

Starmer said he had asked the Labour Party's National Executive Committee to set out a

timetable opening on July 9 and completed by the sum-



mer recess.

"In the case of a contest, this will ensure a new leader is in place before parliament returns in September," he said, stating that he will remain in post as prime minister "until a contest is complete". "I will do everything I can to ensure an orderly handover of power," he added.

Starmer's main rival,

Sworn in as a member of parliament on Monday after winning a crucial special election on Thursday, allowing him to return to parliament and clearing his path to run for party leader.

At the outset of his press briefing, Starmer said that being elected as a Labour PM two years ago was the "proudest moment" of his life. "A new Labour govern-

ment in 14 years, a page in our country's history turned after years of disappointment and despair, the chance to change the lives of millions of people for the better," he said, citing it as the reason he entered politics. "Six years ago, I inherited a Labour Party that was politically, financially and morally bankrupt," Starmer said, recalling that he was told, "time and time again that my party was finished". "That we were consigned to history and that the majority of the general election, let alone a landslide majority, was not possible," he said; however, he stressed that the critics were proved wrong as the party went through a transformation. "We changed our party, ripping out anti-semitism, restoring trust in the economy.

Quetta ATC finds BYC's Mahrang, another leader guilty in 2024 case

PEAK POINT



QUETTA: An anti-terrorism court in Quetta has found Mahrang Baloch, chief organiser of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee, and another group leader guilty in a case involving the death of a security personnel during a protest in Gwadar in 2024 that turned violent.

ATC Quetta-1 Judge Muhammad Ali Mobeen heard the case pertaining to the death of a Frontier Corps (FC) personnel who died as a result of injuries received from a mob pelting stones. BYC's Mahrang, Sibghatullah Shahji and others were nominated in the case.

After completing the hearing, the court announced the verdict on Monday, handing life sentences to Mahrang and Sibghatullah, the former's lawyer Israr Jattak.



SPORTS



Pakistan Weightlifting Federation cleared for international return after one-year ban ends



PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's weightlifting has received a major boost as the international suspension imposed on the Pakistan Weightlifting Federation (PWL) has officially expired, paving the way for the country's return to regional and global competitions. The one-year sanction imposed by the International Weightlifting Federation's (IWF) Independent Member Federations Sanctioning Panel (IMFSP) ended on June 20, 2026, allowing the federation to resume full engagement with international

weightlifting bodies. The suspension was handed down on June 20, 2025, after the IMFSP found that the PWLF had violated Article 12.3.2 of the IWF Anti-Doping Rules and provisions of the Olympic Qualification System for the Paris 2024 Games. The violations occurred during the federation's previous administration between 2021 and 2025, resulting in a one-year ban from international participation. Despite the suspension, PWLF officials said significant efforts were made to reform the sport and strengthen anti-doping compliance across the country.

In an official communiqué signed by General Secretary Sidra Gul, the federation highlighted the implementation of a nationwide Anti-Doping Education and Awareness Programme aimed at athletes, coaches, officials, and support personnel. According to the federation, the initiative focused on education, testing, and guidance to promote clean sport and restore confidence in Pakistan's weightlifting system. The PWLF has now announced plans to further intensify its anti-doping campaign from August 2026, with greater emphasis on athlete education, regular testing and strict enforcement measures. Federation leaders have called on regional associations, departments, coaches and athletes to fully support a zero-tolerance policy against the use of prohibited substances and methods. Under the leadership of President Jabran Bin Salman and General Secretary Sidra Gul, the federation has pledged to introduce stronger monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with international anti-doping standards while promoting sustainable athlete development.

Pakistan hockey team arrives in London for FIH Pro League fourth leg



PEAK POINT
LONDON: The Pakistan national hockey team has arrived in London to participate in the fourth leg of the FIH Pro League, where it will face England and arch-rivals India in crucial upcoming matches. The development came after national team head coach Manzoor-ul-Hasan was granted a British visa, enabling him to travel with the squad. He has now joined the team in London ahead of the highly anticipated fixtures. During the fourth phase of the tournament, Pakistan will play two matches each against England men's national field hockey team and India men's national field hockey team.

Messi sets World Cup scoring record with 17th goal

PEAK POINT
LONDON: Lionel Messi became the leading scorer in World Cup history when the Argentina captain netted against Austria on Monday to take his total to 17 goals. Messi had equalled Miroslav Klose's all-time mark of 16 World Cup goals when hitting a hat-trick in a 3-0 win over Algeria to open his country's title defence in North America last week.

Governor Kundi, Shaheen Afridi discusses promotion of sports, KP Champion League



PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday held meeting with Pakistan's renowned fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi to discuss the promotion of sports and measures to nurture young talent in the province. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Champion League, Sohail Kundi, was also present during the meeting.

The two sides exchanged views on promoting sports activities across the province and creating opportunities

for young athletes to showcase their talent. They also reviewed various proposals regarding the establishment of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Champion League. Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was home to immense sporting talent and stressed the need to provide greater opportunities for the province's youth to excel. He said the promotion of sports not only guided young people towards positive activities but also projected a positive image of the province.

Faisal Karim Kundi expressed confidence that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Champion League would help identify local talent and enable promising players to prove their abilities at national and international levels. Shaheen Shah Afridi appreciated the Governor's keen interest in promoting cricket and other sports in the province, saying that the provision of quality facilities and competitive platforms for young players would help Pakistani produce outstanding athletes in the future.

Astana (KAZ) set to host ISU Figure Skating four continents Championships 2027

MUHAMMAD HARIS
ISLAMABAD: Astana Kazakhstan has been selected to host the ISU Figure Skating Four Continents Championships 2027 marking the first time the prestigious event will be held in the country. The championships are scheduled for February 9-14, 2027. The event will bring together top figure skaters from Asia, the Americas, Africa, and Oceania. The decision follows the growing popularity



of figure skating in Kazakhstan boosted by Mikhail Shaidorov's historic men's singles gold medal at the 2026 Winter Olympics. ISU President Jae Youl Kim

Pakistan targets 400,000 trained workers for FIFA World Cup 2024

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is targeting the training and deployment of 300,000 to 400,000 workers for projects linked to the FIFA World Cup 2024 as part of a broader strategy to expand overseas employment opportunities and strengthen the

country's position in international labour markets. According to official documents available with Wealth Pakistan, workforce planning is being aligned with anticipated demand arising from the FIFA World Cup 2024, with trained Pakistani workers expected to support infrastructure development, aviation, tourism and related service sectors between 2026 and 2034. The initiative forms part of the government's wider efforts to boost manpower exports and enhance the skills profile of Pakistani workers for overseas employment.

Pakistan Target Ball federation delegation meets Pakistan Sports Board officials to discuss affiliation and promotion of Sport



PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Pakistan Target Ball Federation (PTBF) held an important meeting with senior officials of the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) to discuss matters related to the federation's affiliation and the promotion of Target Ball in Pakistan. The delegation met with the Pakistan Sports Board Director General Yawer Hussain, Deputy Director General (Facilities) Shahid Islam, and Director and

Coordinator PSB Shabana Khattak. The Pakistan Target Ball Federation was represented by its President, Arif Mehmood, and Secretary General, Muhammad Nizam-ul-Haq. Provincial representatives from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Abdul Hafiz Qureshi, Haroon Khan and Ijaz Ullah Khan, were also present on the occasion. During the meeting, the federation delegation briefed PSB officials on the development, structure and activities of Target Ball across the country. They highlighted the growing popularity of the sport and discussed the federation's efforts to organize competitions, identify emerging talent and expand participation at the grassroots level. The delegation requested the Pakistan Sports Board to consider and facilitate the affiliation process of the Pakistan Target Ball Federation, emphasizing that official recognition would help promote the sport nationwide and provide greater opportunities for athletes. PSB officials appreciated the federation's efforts in promoting sports

and assured the delegation that the relevant procedures and requirements regarding affiliation would be reviewed in accordance with PSB rules and regulations. The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to work for the development of sports in Pakistan and to provide young athletes with more opportunities to participate in healthy and competitive sporting activities. Both sides expressed hope that Target Ball would continue to grow and contribute positively to the country's sporting landscape.



Pakistan Budget must focus on people, not just numbers, Parliamentary forum says

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A parliamentary discussion on the federal budget warned that Pakistan cannot achieve long term economic stability only through financial control and revenue targets unless the government gives stronger priority to education, health-care, social protection, climate resilience and human development. The most important concern raised in the discussion was that Pakistan's budget must not ignore people while focusing on numbers. Participants said economic stability is important, but it will not last if children remain out of school, hospitals remain under pressure, poor families remain unsupported and climate disasters continue to damage lives, crops and infrastructure. The discussion was organized under the sponsorship of Member National Assembly Shaista Pervaiz and focused on reviewing the federal budget

through the lens of the Sustainable Development Goals, also known as SDGs. Members of Parliament, policy experts and development practitioners attended the session. Lawmakers from both treasury and opposition benches took part in the discussion, showing that human development and sustainable development are national issues beyond party politics. Participants said the budget is not only a financial document. They said it also shows the country's priorities and future direction. If public money is not spent on people's basic needs, the country's development will remain weak. The forum noted that Pakistan's population is growing rapidly and may reach nearly 400 million by 2050. Participants warned that if this population growth is not matched with better schools, hospitals, jobs, housing and public services, the pressure on the state will become much harder to manage. The discussion highlight-

ed that overcrowded classrooms, weak healthcare facilities, poor housing, water insecurity and limited employment opportunities are already serious problems in the country. Members said these challenges need long term planning and targeted investment. Participants said education must be treated as a national priority because a strong economy needs skilled and educated citizens. They said quality education can help young people find better jobs, support families and contribute to the national economy. Healthcare was also described as a major area needing more attention. Participants said investment in health is not a burden on the economy but a way to protect people and increase productivity. The discussion especially stressed the need for better maternal and reproductive health services. Members said improving healthcare for women and mothers can save lives, reduce poverty and improve

the future of families. Girls' education was also identified as one of the most important tools for national progress. Participants said when girls are educated, families become healthier, incomes improve and communities become stronger. The forum also discussed the importance of community level service delivery. Members said public services must reach people at the local level because many citizens, especially in poor and remote areas, cannot benefit from policies that remain limited to offices and documents. Climate resilience was another major focus of the discussion. Participants said Pakistan is among the countries most affected by climate change, even though it contributes very little to global emissions. Members said floods, droughts, heatwaves and changing weather patterns are damaging livelihoods, agriculture, infrastructure and public health. They said the budget must

include stronger spending on climate adaptation, disaster preparedness, water management and resilient infrastructure. The discussion also referred to Pakistan's commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals. Participants said the country must align its budget with goals related to good health, quality education, reduced inequalities and climate action. They said SDG 3 on good health and well being, SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities and SDG 13 on climate action need serious and sustained public investment. Participants made it clear that spending on education, health and climate resilience should not be seen as separate from fiscal responsibility. They said countries that invest in people usually achieve stronger economies, better social stability and more sustainable public finances. The forum concluded that Pakistan's future depends on whether

budget decisions are linked with the real needs of the people. Members said the federal budget should support inclusive growth, reduce inequality and improve the quality of life for both present and future generations. The Parliamentary SDGs Taskforce reaffirmed its commitment to supporting evidence based parliamentary dialogue on sustainable development. It also stressed the need for stronger legislative engagement to help Pakistan move closer to its Sustainable Development Goal commitments. Participants agreed that Pakistan must place human development at the centre of budget planning. They said real national progress will come when every child can study, every citizen can access healthcare, every family has better protection and every community is prepared for climate challenges.

Shahida calls for Global Tree Plantation Day to celebrate peace, restore environment

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Shahida Kausar Farooq, a renowned environmentalist and Chairperson of Subh-e-Nau, an organization working for environmental protection and public health, has welcomed

the recent understanding and ceasefire between the United States and Iran, describing it as a triumph of diplomacy over conflict and an opportunity to advance global environmental stewardship. In a statement on Monday, Mrs. Farooq appealed to Prime

Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir to take the lead in proposing a Global Tree Plantation Day for Peace and the Environment, to be observed annually by nations around

the world in commemoration of the spirit of dialogue, understanding, and peaceful conflict resolution. She said that armed conflicts inflict immense damage on the global environment through destruction of forests, contamination of water

resources, loss of biodiversity, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and long-term public health consequences. While wars leave scars on landscapes and communities, peace creates opportunities for ecological restoration and sustainable development.

"The recent ceasefire demonstrates that dialogue can prevail over confrontation," she said. "The world should seize this moment to send a powerful message that every step toward peace must also be a step toward healing our planet."

Opinion & Editorial



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Bigger than Iran-US deal

Kamran Yousaf
Last week, a development many considered impossible just months ago became reality. After months of war, covert diplomacy, military escalation and intense backchannel talks, Iran and the United States signed what is now being called the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding.

The 14-point agreement is not a final peace treaty, but an interim arrangement meant to end hostilities and open a path towards a broader Middle East settlement. It commits both sides to an immediate halt in military confrontation, lays out a framework for sanctions relief, sets up a verification mechanism for Iran's nuclear activities and creates direct communication channels between Washington and Tehran. Notably, it also aims to end the conflict involving Lebanon and launch a broader regional dialogue.

What surprised many observers was how much the agreement appeared to favour Iran. For years, US administrations had demanded Tehran dismantle much of its nuclear infrastructure and curb its regional influence before receiving meaningful sanctions relief. Critics in Washington and Tel Aviv argue that President Trump accepted terms that would have been unthinkable before the war. His administration counters that Iran will never get a nuclear weapon and that the deal is already calming

markets and easing energy prices.

But even before the ink dried, obstacles emerged. Follow-up talks set for Switzerland were delayed after Iran refused to send a delegation while Israeli operations in Lebanon continued. Tehran argued that diplomacy couldn't proceed with a major front of the conflict still active.

Yet the biggest threat to the memorandum may not come from Tehran or Beirut, but from Washington.

Trump is facing growing political backlash over the deal. Several cabinet ministers have attacked the deal as abandoning long-standing Israeli security concerns. The criticism became so intense that Vice President JD Vance issued an unusually strong public warning to Israeli leaders against undermining a diplomatic process that Washington sees as essential to regional stability.

And that brings us to what may be the biggest story emerging from this entire episode: growing tensions between the US and Israel. Since Israel's founding in 1948, Washington has been its chief diplomatic, military and economic supporter, even through disputes over settlements, peace talks or military operations.

Now, an agreement with Iran is testing that relationship in ways rarely seen before. Israeli leaders have long viewed Iran as the most serious strategic threat to their country's security.

Successive governments argued that sustained pressure, rather than negotiation, offered the best path forward.

The Trump administration has clearly concluded otherwise. After months of conflict and escalating costs, Washington seems to have decided that diplomatic engagement with Iran is necessary to stabilise the region and protect broader American interests. That divergence is creating tensions unlike anything seen during President Trump's political career.

So where does all this lead? Can the Islamabad Memorandum become a lasting accord?

Much depends on good-faith implementation, progress on Lebanon and other regional flashpoints and whether domestic opposition in both Iran and the US can be managed.

History suggests caution. Previous efforts at reconciliation between Iran and the US have often collapsed under the weight of mistrust and political opposition. Yet transformative agreements frequently begin as fragile interim arrangements.

For now, the Islamabad Memorandum has achieved something few thought possible. It has stopped a war, opened a diplomatic channel between bitter adversaries and reshaped the political conversation across the Middle East. Whether it becomes a lasting peace or merely a pause before another crisis is unclear.

Courtesy Tribune

New challenges

Huma Yusuf

PLAUDITS regarding Pakistan's role in brokering the US-Iran ceasefire agreement keep pouring in, with US President Donald Trump again acknowledging Islamabad's key role in brokering the negotiation framework. Fresh from the signing of the 'Islamabad MoU', Pakistan participated in a quadrilateral meet along with the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Turkey. Our country's standing as a Middle Eastern player is growing. But does this position align with its priorities?

Pakistan has certainly done well to broaden and diversify its relationships across the Middle East, and to have anticipated the need for flexibility in the face of intra-GCC tensions. Islamabad succeeded as a go-between because it had already invested in stronger ties with Doha, Ankara, Cairo and others, largely with an eye to pursuing trade and investment.

But each bilateral relationship and regional bloc will pull Pakistan in different directions. For example, the defence deal signed with Saudi Arabia last September will define Pakistan's foreign policy, particularly in relation to other integral regional allies such as the UAE and Iran. This alliance has already paid off with the \$3 billion backstop provided by Riyadh in April this year after Abu Dhabi called in a payment.

The scope of the agreement will become increasingly relevant in a context where Iran is likely to continue pursuing a nuclear programme. Many perceive the agreement as the first example of an 'extended deterrence' arrangement, whereby a nuclear-armed country provides cover for a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The balancing act has been hard enough. As long as the Tehran-Riyadh relationship remains complex, the question of whether Saudi Arabia will be looking to Pakistan to balance the nuclear dynamics of the region along sectarian lines will remain open.

Courtesy Dawn

NA approves 135 demands for grants, rejects 587 cut motions



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Monday approved 135 demands for grants relating to various ministries, divisions and departments for the financial year 2026-27, while rejecting 587 cut motions moved by opposition members.

The demands were moved by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and approved by the House. The approved allocations included, Rs 709,505,000 granted for the Cabinet, Rs 5,941,454,000 for the Cabinet Division and Rs

63,516,151,000 for Development Expenditure of the Cabinet Division. The House also approved Rs 1,796,674,000 for Emergency Relief and Repatriation, Rs 22,577,544,000 for Atomic Energy, and Rs 2,357,387,000 for the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority. In the public service and governance sector, Rs 142,694,000 was granted for Naya Pakistan Housing Development Authority, while Rs 895,499,000 and Rs 921,203,000 were approved for the Prime Minister's Office (Internal and Public) respectively. The National Disaster Management Authority received Rs 1,048,376,000, while the Board of Investment was allocated Rs 858,109,000.

The House approved Rs 199,842,000 for the Prime Minister's Inspection Commission, and Rs 952,481,000 for the Special Technology Zone Authority. The National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing Terrorism Authority received Rs 205,225,000,

while the Cannabis Control and Regulatory Authority was allocated Rs 250,225,000. For civil services and administrative institutions, Rs 10,177,181,000 was approved for the Establishment Division, Rs 1,473,723,000 for the Federal Public Service Commission, Rs 3,514,750,000 for the National School of Public Policy, Rs 488,768,000 for National Security Division and Rs 2,087,757,000 for the Civil Services Academy. In further approvals, the National Assembly granted Rs 117,902,000 for the Council of Common Interest (Secretariat), and Rs 354,365,000 for the Special Investment Facilitation Council Division (SIFCD). For security and governance, Rs 22,960,644,000 was approved for the Intelligence Bureau Division, while Rs 1,315,421,000 was allocated for the Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Division. In the commerce and infrastructure sectors, the House approved Rs 27,909,940,000.

First Lady Asifa Bhutto Zardari briefed on Benazir Income Support Programme

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Bibi Asifa Bhutto Zardari on Monday attended a briefing by Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid and Secretary BISP Amir Ali Ahmed at Parliament House, where she was given a comprehensive overview of the programme's progress, ongoing reforms and impact on deserving families across the country.

The first lady was informed that Rs 716 billion had been allocated for BISP during the financial year 2025-26, with a proposed budget of Rs 844 billion for 2026-27. She was informed that under the Benazir Kafalaat Programme, quarterly cash assistance of Rs 14,500 is currently being provided to 12 million households, with plans to increase the stipend to Rs 18,000 from January 2027, according to a press statement issued by the President House Media Wing. The briefing also highlighted that under the Benazir Taleemi Wazaif Programme, educational sup-

port is being extended to 12.4 million children linked to a minimum 70 per cent school attendance condition, while the Benazir Nashonuma Programme is providing assistance to approximately two million pregnant and lactating women and children under the age of two, with 52,000 adolescent girls additionally included under a pilot phase. She was informed that the Benazir Hunarmand Programme, launched by President Asif Ali Zardari and First Lady Bibi Asifa Bhutto Zardari, is providing free skills training to deserving individuals, with more than 7,000 already enrolled in the programme. On the digital front, more than 10 million beneficiaries are being connected to the formal financial system through Digital Social Protection Wallets under the Prime Minister's Cashless Economy initiative, with more than 8.5 million free SIMs distributed and linked to wallets, and over 410,000 beneficiaries having received digital and financial literacy training. The briefing further highlighted.



ISLAMABAD: First Lady Bibi Asifa Bhutto Zardari attends a briefing by Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid at Parliament House.

Over 15,000 personnel deployed for Muharram security in Islamabad: IGP Rizvi

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi on Sunday said more than 15,000 police officers and personnel had been deployed to secure 177 processions and 929 Majalis being held across the federal capital during Muharram-ul-Haram.

An official told APP that the IGP Rizvi visited Imambargah Asna Ashri, where he reviewed security

arrangements, inspected the route of the main procession and met with the Imambargah administration.

IGP Rizvi was briefed on security measures put in place for Muharram processions and Majalis and directed officers to ensure strict implementation of the security plan.

Rizvi said foolproof security arrangements had been made for the central procession and all other religious gatherings being held across Islamabad.

He said 10 field vigilance teams, working under the supervision of senior police officers, had been tasked with monitoring and inspecting security arrangements throughout Muharram-ul-Haram.

The IGP said special checking points had been established in areas where processions and Majalis were being held, while dedicated patrolling units had been deployed across the district. Search operations were also continuing as part.

Justice Munib Akhtar takes oath as acting CJP

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Senior Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Justice Munib Akhtar, on Monday took oath as the Acting Chief Justice of Pakistan during the absence of Chief Justice Yahya Afridi, who is currently abroad.

According to a press release issued by the Supreme Court, the oath-taking ceremony was held at the Supreme Court Branch Registry in Karachi in a simple and dignified manner. The oath was administered by Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui.

Justice Munib Akhtar will perform the duties of the Chief Justice of Pakistan for the duration of Chief Justice Yahya Afridi's visit abroad. As the senior-most judge of the apex



court after the Chief Justice, Justice Munib Akhtar has assumed the responsibilities of the office in accordance with established constitutional and judicial practice. The ceremony was attended by judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan as well as judges of the Federal Constitutional Court. Senior judicial officers, court officials, and members of the Supreme Court staff were also present on the occasion. The Registrar of the Supreme Court conducted the proceedings of the oath-taking ceremony.

Finance committee presents report on Finance Bill to NA

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance, Syed Naveed Qamar, on Monday presented the committee's report on the Finance Bill in the House. Presenting the report, Qamar said the committee had finalized its recommendations on the Finance Bill after extensive deliberations and consultations with stakeholders, while assuring that issues raised by dissenting members would continue to be discussed after the budget process.

He said members holding differing views had submitted notes of dissent, which had been attached to the report and would be considered in future discus-



sions to ensure that all viewpoints were accommodated in subsequent legislative reviews.

Qamar regretted the absence of opposition members from committee proceedings, saying their participation could have further strengthened the report. He expressed hope that future meetings on crucial economic legislation would witness broader participation so that alternative perspectives could be debated and reflected in policymaking.

WUM student completes innovative research on sustainable wastewater treatment

PEAK POINT

MARDAN: The Department of Biotechnology, Women University Mardan, proudly announces the successful completion of a research project titled "Synergistic Effect of Microalgae and Bacteria for the Remediation of Domestic Wastewater" by Ms. Khadija under the supervision of Dr. Hina Jabben. The study investigated the combined role of microalgae and beneficial bacteria in treating domestic wastewater through an environmentally friendly and cost-effective biological process. The research demonstrated the potential of this synergistic system to remove pollutants and excess nutrients from



wastewater while generating valuable biomass with applications in agriculture and bioenergy. This innovative approach offers a sustainable alternative to conventional wastewater treatment methods, particularly for rural and resource-limited communities. The findings have significant implications for improving water quality, promoting water reuse,

Syedaal Khan, Sanaullah Baloch discuss political situation, development in Balochistan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan and National Party leader, former senator and former MNA Sanaullah Baloch on Monday discussed the political situation, development priorities and public welfare issues in Balochistan.

According to a news release, the two leaders exchanged views on the challenges facing the province and stressed the need for coordinated efforts to ensure

sustainable development, economic progress and political stability.

They also reviewed measures to improve governance, strengthen democratic institutions and address public concerns.

Speaking on the occasion, Syedaal Khan said the development and prosperity of Balochistan required collective efforts and a shared commitment from all stakeholders.

He said peace, political harmony and socio-economic

uplift were essential to realize the province's potential and improve living standards.

Sanaullah Baloch appreciated the role of the Deputy Chairman Senate in highlighting issues of Balochistan at parliamentary forums and emphasized continued dialogue and cooperation among political leaders to address public concerns and promote sustainable development.

Both leaders agreed that strengthening democratic values, promoting national cohesion,