

President, PM call to protect environment



ECC approves key technical supplementary grants



Mohsin Naqvi calls for collective action on border security at SCO meeting

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Pakistan launches fixed tax scheme for small retailers

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to widen the tax net, Pakistan government introduced on Friday a fixed tax scheme for small retailers, under which a 1% tax will be imposed on annual retail sales worth up to Rs200 million.

The development was disclosed by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, flanked by Minister of State Bilal Azhar Kayani, in a press conference.

"Our tax system needs to become more transparent and move on a sustainable footing," said Aurangzeb.

"We need to reduce the tax rate," the finance minister said, admitting that several sectors, including the documented corporate sector and the salaried class, are facing a "disproportionate tax burden".

He said that today's measure targets small retailers, which make up around 3-4

million shopkeepers. "It is an important milestone in terms of expanding our tax net," he said.

The finance minister said that despite tensions in the Middle East, the country's economy remained stable. "We overcome our challenges via our own resources, and didn't take assistance from anyone," he shared. Explaining the tax scheme, Kayani said that the scheme would be applicable to retailers having an annual turnover of Rs200 million or less. Under the scheme, a 1% tax would be imposed on the retailer's annual turnover.

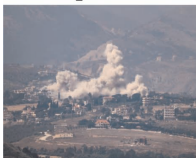
"With Holding Tax (WHT), which is already deducted, will be adjusted in this tax," said the state minister. "However, at the time of form submission, the retailer will have to pay at least Rs25,000," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb (centre) speaks during a joint press conference with Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani.

Israeli army warns residents of 3 Lebanese towns to evacuate despite renewed ceasefire

PEAK POINT



LEBANON: The Israeli army on Friday issued an urgent evacuation warning to residents in the Lebanese towns and villages of Arnaya, also known as Arnaba, Anqoun, and Kfar Fila,

despite the renewed ceasefire. The army told residents to evacuate their homes immediately and move at least 1,000 meters away from the towns and villages to open areas.

The warning came despite a fragile ceasefire in place since April 17, which Washington extended until early July, and amid continued diplomatic efforts to preserve it and prevent its collapse. Israel killed four people and wounded at least 14 others Friday in a dozen attacks on Lebanon, despite efforts to shore up a ceasefire, according to an Anadolu tally based on statements from Lebanon's state-run National News Agency. The tally covered attacks reported as of 1:12pm PKT. In the Nabatieh province, one person was killed and another wounded when an Israeli strike targeted a building near a police station in the town of Doueir, destroying it. Three more people were killed in another Israeli strike on the same town raising the death toll there to four, the agency reported.

Pakistan hails Syria-OPCW cooperation on chemical weapons elimination

PEAK POINT



UNITED NATIONS: While hailing the recent progress made by the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the new Syrian authorities, Pakistan has said that such cooperation would accelerate the elimination of former

President Bashar al-Assad's chemical weapons programme. "The OPCW Technical Secretariat must continue to be enabled to carry out its independent verification to eliminate suspected chemical weapons in Syria and any risks of proliferation, Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, told the UN Security Council on Thursday. The 15-member Council was discussing the latest international efforts to implement resolution 2118 (2013), which called for the complete elimination of Syria's chemical weapons programme. In his remarks, Ambassador Jadoon reiterates Pakistan's firm opposition to the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances.

"(The) Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) remains a cornerstone of global disarmament framework, and we support all efforts for its universalization as well as its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation."

In this regard, the Pakistani envoy underscored the need for enhancing capacities and extend cooperation to Syrian authorities.

6 terrorists killed in intelligence-based operation in Balochistan's Panjgur: ISPR

PEAK POINT



RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed six terrorists in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Balochistan's Panjgur district, the military's media

affairs wing said on Friday. In a statement, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that on the night of June 3/4, security forces conducted an IBO on the reported presence of terrorists belonging to Indian proxy, Fitna al Hindustan.

The state has designated Balochistan-based terrorist groups as Fitna al Hindustan to highlight India's alleged role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan.

"During the conduct of [the] operation, own forces effectively engaged multiple terrorist locations, and after intense fire exchanges, six Indian sponsored terrorists were sent to hell," it said. "Weapons, ammunition, improvised explosive devices and [a] vehicle have also been recovered from the killed Indian-sponsored terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area," it said. "Sanitisation operations are being conducted to eliminate."

China's Xi to visit NK as Beijing seeks deeper Pyongyang ties

PEAK POINT

CHINA: Chinese President Xi Jinping will visit North Korea from June 8 to 9, state news agency Xinhua said on Friday, his first trip in nearly seven years as Beijing looks to reassert ties with Pyongyang. The announcement follows separate summits Xi hosted in Beijing for US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin last month. Trump, who met North Korean leader Kim Jong Un three times in his first term, previously said he would be open to meeting the North Korean leader again. Xi would be visiting on an invitation from Kim, North Korean state media.

Election schedule for AJK announced, polls to be held on July 27

PEAK POINT

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission announced on Friday that general elections in the region would be held on July 27. The notification, a copy of which is available with Dawn, said that candidates could file their nomination papers with returning officers from June 9 to 4pm on June 19. It said that the scrutiny of nomination papers would be carried out from June 20, while the list of the eligible candidates would be submitted on the same day. It stated that the candidates will have between June 21 and June 24 to file appeals against rejection/acceptance of nomination papers, and the appeals will be heard on June 26 and 27 between 9am and 4pm. According to the notification, the last date

for decisions on appeals will be June 28 to June 29. Commissioner retired Justice Ghulam Mustafa



and candidates can withdraw their nomination papers until June 30 before 2pm. The list of contesting candidates will be published on July 1, and symbols will be allotted along with the final list the next day on July 2. July 27 was notified as the polling day, with voting to begin at 8am and end at 5pm. Speaking at a press conference held to announce the election schedule, Chief Election

Mughal, flanked by constitutional member Syed Nazeerul Hassan Gillani, Secretary Raja Shakeel Khan and other officials, said the elections would be held under the supervision of the army, paramilitary and civil armed forces. "Let me reiterate that the elections will be free, fair and transparent. We will make every effort to ensure that voters can exercise their right to vote freely," he said.

Referring to concerns raised in some quarters about the commission's ability to hold the elections, he said the commission had remained ready from day one to fulfil its constitutional responsibility.

"Holding elections is our constitutional obligation, and we have been fully prepared to discharge that responsibility in letter and spirit," he said.

Justice Mughal said error-free electoral rolls were the cornerstone of free, fair, impartial and credible elections.

He acknowledged that the introduction of a computerised voters' list system had initially led to complaints about errors, including the transfer of votes from one constituency to another. "While errors in the preliminary rolls could not be ruled out, the tireless efforts."

Bilawal says PPP will restore ownership rights in GB

PEAK POINT



GILGIT: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that PPP, if elected to power, will restore legal and ownership rights to the people of Gilgit and Baltistan. Bilawal said PPP will work for enhancing trade potential between China and Gilgit-Baltistan, adding that President Zardari was making all out efforts in this regard. Addressing an election campaign in Gilgit on Friday, Bilawal said that PPP will took radical measures to enhance connectivity in the each village and district of GB. He said that if fiber optic link was not possible with China then PPP would try to bring Starlink internet for the region. He urged the people of GB to give the PPP a heavy mandate, so the party could continue its struggle.



SPORTS



Pakistan team arrive in England ahead of ICC Women's T20 World Cup



PEAK POINT June 12. Led by captain Fatima Sana, the squad reached England ahead of its final phase of preparations for the global tournament. According to the team's schedule, the players will spend Friday resting in Nottingham before resuming cricket activities.

England: The Pakistan women's cricket team has arrived in England from Ireland to continue its preparations for the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, which is scheduled to begin on June 7. The ICC Women's T20 World Cup will get underway on Saturday, June 12, with leading teams from around the world competing for the title. Pakistan will be aiming to make a strong impression at the event and build on its recent performances in international cricket.

India defeat Pakistan to reach Under-18 Hockey Asia Cup final



PEAK POINT KAKAMIGAHARA: India booked its place in the final of the Under-18 Hockey Asia Cup after defeating Pakistan 5-3 in a thrilling semi-final in Japan. Both teams displayed attacking hockey throughout the match, producing an entertaining contest for spectators. However, the Indian side capitalized more effectively on key scoring opportunities and secured victory by a two-goal margin. Pakistan fought hard and managed to score three goals, but India maintained its advantage and finished the match with a 5-3 win at the final whistle. With the victory, the India men's national under-18 field hockey team advanced to the tournament final, while the Pakistan men's national under-18 field hockey team saw its hopes of reaching the championship match come to an end. Despite the defeat, Pakistan's young players impressed during the tournament and remain in contention for a podium finish.

Karachi and Abbottabad set for National T20 final clash in Lahore on Sunday



PEAK POINT KARACHI: Whites booked their place in the final with a victory over Sialkot Region. The second semi-final between Abbottabad and Lahore Region Whites was abandoned due to rain after the completion of the first innings. Abbottabad advanced to the final on the basis of a superior position in the group-stage standings, earning the right to compete for the championship. With both sides having displayed impressive form throughout the tournament, an exciting contest is expected as Karachi Whites and Abbottabad battle for the National T20 Cup title in Lahore. The title-deciding match will begin at 8pm, with fans expected to turn out in large numbers to witness the culmination of the domestic tournament. Mohsin Naqvi will attend the final as the chief guest. Both teams secured their places in the final after strong performances during the group stage, which was held between 7 March and 16 March. Karachi Whites and Abbottabad each finished at the top of their respective groups, underlining their consistency throughout the competition. In the semi-finals played on 17 March, Karachi Whites and Abbottabad each finished at the top of their respective groups, underlining their consistency throughout the competition. In the semi-finals played on 17 March, Karachi Whites and Abbottabad each finished at the top of their respective groups, underlining their consistency throughout the competition. In the semi-finals played on 17 March, Karachi Whites and Abbottabad each finished at the top of their respective groups, underlining their consistency throughout the competition.



PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sports Taj Muhammad Khan distributes prizes to the winners of the junior squash championship.

Shooter Mohsin Nawaz dedicates Tamgha-e-Imtiaz to PLRA Patron Field Marshal Asim Munir

PEAK POINT LAHORE: Tamgha-e-Imtiaz recipient shooter Mohsin Nawaz has dedicated the national honor to the Patron-in-Chief of the Pakistan Long Range Rifle Association (PLRA) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir. In an interview here on Friday, the decorated shooter hailed Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for facilitating development of infrastructure and support systems essential for the growth of the sport. "Field Marshal Asim Munir provided much-needed facilitation for the development of shooting sports facilities," Nawaz said. "With the official recognition of the Pakistan Sports Board and the government's support, Pakistani shooters now have an internationally recognized structure through which they can compete globally under national flag," he responded. Nawaz has won 10 individual international medals and represented Pakistan in prestigious competitions across the United Kingdom, the United States and South Africa. Drawing upon more than two decades of competitive experience, he believes Pakistan possesses immense untapped potential in shooting sports. To a query, he said the establishment of the PLRA under this broader framework of institutional support has proven to be a significant milestone for the sport. The PLRA successfully secured affiliation with the International Confederation of Fullbore Rifle Associations (ICFRA), giving Pakistan for- mal representation in long-range rifle shooting at the international level for the first time. "The sport is progressing under a more structured system, and I can clearly see the difference," he said. "We are still in the early stages of development, but our ambition is to compete with world champions. The world has advanced significantly in this discipline, yet Pakistan has the talent and capability to compete at the highest level. We simply need to continue moving in the right direction."

Pakistan women's netball trials set for June 7 in Karachi

PAKISTAN NETBALL FEDERATION

OPEN TRIALS

FOR **PAKISTAN WOMEN NETBALL TEAM**

FOR **ASIAN WOMEN'S NETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2026 HONG KONG 2026**

DATE: 7TH JUNE 2026 SUNDAY

TIME: 5.00 PM TO 9.00 PM

VENUE: PSB COACHING CENTER KARACHI

BE PART OF THE JOURNEY REPRESENT PAKISTAN!



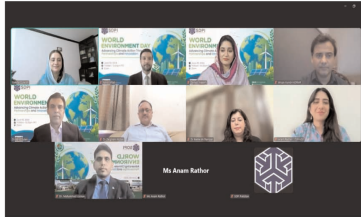
Call to integrate climate action into planning and budgeting, manage crisis through evidence-based policymaking

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Experts on Friday called for integrating climate action into development planning and budgeting, expanding innovative financing mechanisms, strengthening disaster preparedness systems, and fostering stronger public-private partnerships to help Pakistan build resilience against escalating climate risks.

The demands were made during a webinar, titled: Advancing Climate Action through Partnerships and

Innovation, on World Environment Day, organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Friday.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), said that Pakistan's climate challenges could only be addressed through evidence-based policymaking, innovative financing, and strong institutional partnerships. He further said



climate resilience must become a central pillar of the country's development agenda, having greater alignment between national policies, budgetary priorities and local-level implementation.

Dr. Suleri emphasized that climate adaptation should be viewed not only as

an environmental necessity but also as an economic investment that safeguards livelihoods, infrastructure and future growth. He also called for scaling up climate finance, strengthening coordination among federal and provincial institutions, and ensuring that vulnerable communities remain at the center of climate action initiatives. Highlighting the role of research and policy institutions, Dr Suleri said informed decision-making and multi-stakeholder collaboration would be critical to

transforming Pakistan's climate vulnerabilities into opportunities for sustainable and inclusive development.

Delivering remarks as chief guest, Syed Abrar Hussein, Director General, Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA), said collaborative initiatives on plastic waste management had transformed confiscated single-use plastics into useful products such as benches, planters and waste bins for educational institutions and public spaces.

Parliament raises alarm over regulatory hurdles in Pakistan's Islamic Banking and B2B Barter Trade

NADEEM TANOLI
ISLAMABAD: During a National Assembly session, Mr. Tahir Iqbal, MNA, questioned the Minister for Finance and Revenue on the persistent obstacles facing Pakistan's Islamic banking sector and the controversial B2B Barter Trade Mechanism with Afghanistan, Iran, and Russia. Lawmakers expressed concerns that regulatory gaps, limited Shariah-compliant instruments, and inadequate oversight could hamper the growth of interest free banking and enable misuse in barter trade worth billions of rupees. The National Assembly examined Starred Question No. 97, moved by Mr. Tahir Iqbal, MNA, on June 4, 2026,

addressing two interlinked areas: the growth and regulation of Islamic banking and the operational framework of the Business to Business (B2B) Barter Trade Mechanism. Islamic banking in Pakistan has grown consistently over the last two decades, representing 23 percent of banking assets and 28 percent of deposits as of December 2025. Its share in total financing reached 38 percent, with six full-fledged Islamic banks and 15 conventional banks offering Islamic banking services across 7,562 branches and 2,932 Islamic windows nationwide. Two digital banks also provide Islamic financial products, signaling consumer demand and deepening integration into the financial

sector. Despite this growth, the Ministry highlighted persistent obstacles preventing full conversion to interest-free operations. Major challenges include the limited availability of Shariah compliant government securities and a shortage of qualified Islamic finance professionals, both critical for sustainable sector development. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has attempted to address these issues through multiple initiatives: the introduction of a dedicated chapter on Islamic banking in the Banking Companies Ordinance 1962, an updated Shariah Governance Framework in 2024, and issuance of conversion guidelines for conventional banks. Hybrid Sukuk structures (Ijarah

um Murabaha) were launched in April 2026 to enable liquidity management and facilitate conversion of conventional domestic debt into Islamic instruments. The Committee also scrutinized Pakistan's B2B Barter Trade Mechanism, formalized through S.R.O. 642(I)/2023 and amended under S.R.O. 1989(I)/2025. This controversial framework allows Pakistani state-owned and private enterprises to conduct import-export transactions with Afghanistan, Iran, and Russia without involving currency transfer, using a barter system. Senators expressed concern over potential misuse, noting that high-value commodities including petroleum products, fertilizers, metals, and machin-

ery could bypass conventional financial oversight. The amended mechanism includes new provisions defining consortia of private entities, joint liability, and restrictions on sanctioned entities, aligning trade with UN and international sanctions notifications. Entities must submit verified contracts through the WebOC system, tag approvals in the Pakistan Single Window (PSW) system, and adhere to quarterly reconciliation rules. Violations, including exceeding the 20 percent tolerance on import or export values, may lead to cancellation of authorization, penalties, or blacklisting of firms. Officials informed the National Assembly that while the mechanism aims to facilitate trade for state-owned

and private enterprises, lawmakers demanded comprehensive reporting on utilization, monitoring mechanisms, and enforcement, stressing that lack of accountability could result in financial mismanagement. In addition, the Minister for Finance provided data on Pakistan's external debt interest payments and foreign investment repatriation. Total interest on external debt ranged from \$1.192 billion to \$1.390 billion per quarter, while repatriation of profits and dividends on foreign investment reached \$756 million for the period ending December 2025. These figures underscore the stakes involved in both financial regulation and international trade facilitation.

Opinion & Editorial

Kafeel Drama (review)

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Prioritising climate

World Environment Day, observed annually on June 5, arrives this year with a message that is both timely and urgent. Under the theme, "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future" and the global campaign slogan #NowForClimate, the international community is being reminded that the window for meaningful climate action is narrowing rapidly. Hosted in Baku, Azerbaijan, in partnership with the UN Environment Programme, the World Environment Day 2026 is a call to action at a moment when the consequences of climate inaction are becoming impossible to ignore. The planet is sending unmistakable signals. Record-breaking temperatures, devastating floods, prolonged droughts, shrinking glaciers and increasingly frequent heatwaves are becoming the new normal. The significance of this year's theme lies in its recognition that nature itself is one of humanity's strongest allies in the fight against climate change. Healthy forests absorb carbon dioxide, wetlands reduce flood risks, mangroves protect coastlines and biodiversity strengthens ecosystem resilience. Nature is not a luxury but the foundation upon which climate security and human prosperity depend. Encouragingly, there are signs that the world is beginning to respond and countries are increasingly recognising the economic opportunities presented by a green transition. But much more needs to be done.

Amina shahzadi
Recently, one of the famous dramas, Kafeel, aired on ARY Digital. It is written by the prominent writer Umera Ahmed, who always chooses societal issues deeply rooted in our society. The drama begins with a determined girl who is passionate about education and dreams of becoming an independent woman. Suddenly, her parents receive a marriage proposal for her. Her mother becomes very enthusiastic, while her father initially refuses because he wants his daughter to complete her education. However, his decision changes when the mother shows him a handkerchief containing a contact number that allegedly belongs to their daughter. Without asking her anything or investigating the matter, they immediately marry her off to a so-called respectable man because his family lives abroad. They do not properly check whether he is truly suitable for her or not. After Zeba's marriage, she faces many difficulties. Whenever she tries to explain her situation with her husband, her family members tell her that everything will become fine with time and that she should not worry. They do not understand her pain and expect her to stay silent and adjust. One of the main themes of the drama is the role and responsibility of a husband in marriage. The drama shows that a man should not only be a financial provider but also a protector and supporter of his wife and family. According to Islamic teachings in Surah An-Nisa, men are responsible for taking care of women because of the responsibilities given to them and their financial contribution. Islam also emphasizes kindness and good treatment between husband and wife. Even the Prophet (PBUH) helped in household work, which shows the importance of mutual support. However, in our society, many

women are not aware of their rights. They consider suffering as their fate and spend their whole lives in silence for the sake of their children. In this drama, Zeba represents many ordinary women who are deprived of education, awareness, and freedom because of social pressure. Life becomes more difficult for Zeba when she becomes the mother of four children. Even then, she has to hear painful words like, "You are living in my house." This shows how women are emotionally pressured and disrespected in many households. On the other hand, the drama also shows that marriage is not only the responsibility of a husband. It is a shared responsibility where both partners must fulfill their duties. If one person fails to act responsibly, the relationship becomes weak. The drama highlights that an unsuccessful marriage is not always caused by one person alone. The way Umera Ahmed depicts the characters of Warda and Saif reflects another reality of society. Through their relationship, she shows that some spouses are not ready to accept the changes and challenges that come with married life. Marriage is not just a vow of a husband's responsibility; it is also a commitment to a wife's loyalty, support, and understanding. When two people get married, they promise to protect and support each other in every situation. At the same time, a husband's duty is not only to earn money but also to become the shelter of the home. He should be a source of security and comfort for his family, standing like a shield against difficulties and protecting his children from life's challenges. The drama also reflects how the mindset of Generation Z has changed. Many young people today do not accept abusive or toxic relationships and prefer to take a stand for their rights. The support of children for their mother in the drama is also very emotional and meaning-

ful. Zeba's mother appears as one of the negative influences in the story because she forces her daughter into marriage and even after many years of suffering, she does not support her decision for divorce. This shows that in our society, people often care more about "what others will say" than about their daughter's happiness. The drama also teaches the importance of women supporting each other. Zeba's friend continuously advises her that life is not only about compromise and pleasing others. Society often stays silent during someone's suffering, but when a person tries to take a step for change, everyone suddenly starts giving opinions. When Zeba wanted to get a divorce through the court, many people tried to stop her with different arguments. However, she replied to all of them calmly and reasonably. Her conversation was very sensible. She said that a father is supposed to be the protector of the home, but her children's father failed to fulfill this role. Instead of earning for his family, he stole the money of his own children. He neither respected his wife nor cared for his children. Rather than accepting responsibility, he continuously ran away from it. Through this dialogue, the writer highlights that being a husband and father is not merely a title; it requires responsibility, sacrifice, and genuine care for one's family. The drama also highlights that life is very short. If we keep living only for society's approval, we can never become truly happy or successful. Another important message of the drama is that a husband is not always the only reason behind an unsuccessful marriage. The writer also shows how irresponsible behavior, emotional distance, and lack of understanding from both sides can destroy a relationship. The drama also highlights the issue of second marriage and emotional happiness. It suggests

that women deserve companionship and happiness even after separation or divorce. It also shows that children can understand their mother's emotions and support her decisions when they are mature enough. Another important idea presented in the drama is that wealth is not the foundation of a successful marriage. Responsibility, respect, and understanding are more important than financial status. The character Zubair's journey shows that emotional trauma and lack of confidence can also affect relationships deeply. Daneen 'Father cleared that we cannot decide the mismatch marriages on the basis of status and profession. The interaction between Zeba and Farhana also shows how some women discourage other women by creating fear of loneliness. However, Zeba rejects this mindset and shows strong self-respect by saying she would rather live alone than stay in an unhappy relationship. In conclusion, Kafeel is a powerful social drama by Umera Ahmed that reflects the realities of our society. It highlights issues such as forced marriage, lack of awareness, women's rights, social pressure, and the responsibilities of both husbands and wives. The drama teaches that successful marriages are built on mutual understanding, respect, responsibility, and support. Through this drama, Umera Ahmed encourages society to rethink outdated beliefs and recognize the importance of dignity, justice, and personal happiness. In the end I would say that, the drama promotes a balanced approach. Because warda reconciled with saif but zeba took a divorce. These all indicate that divorce is not a final solution. firstly try to reconcile the situation.

Mohsin Naqvi calls for collective action on border security at SCO meeting



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi has underlined the importance of strengthening border security and regional cooperation to combat cross-border crime, saying that collective efforts are essential for building a more peaceful world.

Speaking at a meeting of interior ministers and public security officials

of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in China on Friday, Naqvi said effective border management remained a key element in preventing transnational crime and ensuring regional stability.

The interior minister stressed that practical measures were necessary to enhance border security and address emerging challenges faced by countries across the region.

The federal interior minister reassured the globe that Pakistan was fully committed to contributing constructively to international peace and security efforts.

Mohsin Naqvi reaffirmed that Pakistan respects the sovereignty of all nations and remains determined to play a positive role on the global stage. He added that member states should learn from one another's experiences and work together to address common security concerns.

Describing the SCO as an important platform for cooperation, he said the organisation provided member countries with an effective mechanism for strengthening border security and promoting coordinated action against shared threats.

The minister emphasised that collective efforts through the SCO framework were essential for improving regional security and achieving long-term peace and stability.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, established in 2001 by China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, has grown into one of the world's largest regional political, economic and security organisations, covering a vast area of Eurasia and representing a significant proportion of the global population.

Sherry urges collective action against climate change

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Vice President Senator Sherry Rehman Friday called for urgent and collective action to address the growing environmental challenges facing Pakistan, warning that climate change is no longer a future threat but a present and serious reality affecting the country's economy, food security and water resources. In her message on World Environment Day, Sherry Rehman said Pakistan has suffered an estimated economic loss of nearly \$59 billion due to climate-related disasters over the past three decades. She said that the devastating floods of 2022 and 2025 exposed the country's vulnerability to extreme weather events and underscored the need for stronger climate resilience measures.



Highlighting the worsening water crisis, she said the per capita water availability in Pakistan has declined from around 5,000 cubic meters to below 1,000 cubic meters, placing the country under severe water stress. She also expressed concern over the growing threats to glaciers and freshwater reserves, which are vital for Pakistan's long-term water security. The PPP leader said Pakistan generates approximately 50.79 million tonnes of solid waste annually, including nearly 3 million tonnes of plastic waste.

Gilani, Ethiopian envoy discuss strengthening bilateral, parliamentary cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to Pakistan, Dr Oumer Hussein Oba, called on Chairman of the Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Friday and discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral relations and parliamentary cooperation between the two countries. Welcoming the ambassador, the Chairman Senate conveyed warm sentiments of goodwill and friendship to the leadership and people of Ethiopia and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening its longstanding and cordial relations with Ethiopia based on mutual respect, shared interests, and a common vision for peace, prosperity, and sustainable development, according to a news release issued by the Senate Secretariat. Recalling the historical foundations of bilateral ties, Gilani said that Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto played a pioneering role in strengthening Pakistan-Ethiopia relations through his historic visit to Ethiopia in 1973 and the inauguration of Pakistan's Embassy in Addis Ababa, laying the groundwork for enduring diplomatic engagement between the two countries.

The Chairman of the Senate welcomed the

growing momentum in bilateral relations and said the forthcoming Bilateral Political Consultation Agreement would further institutionalize diplomatic engagement and expand cooperation on regional and international issues. Highlighting the importance of parliamentary diplomacy, Gilani referred to the establishment of the Pakistan-Ethiopia Friendship Group in the Senate of Pakistan and expressed confidence that it would promote sustained dialogue and stronger parliamentary engagement between the two countries.

He also emphasized enhanced cooperation in multilateral parliamentary forums, including the United Nations (UN), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), and the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA).

Gilani highlighted his role as the founding chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC), describing parliamentary diplomacy as an effective instrument for promoting global peace, cooperation, and inclusive development. He invited Ethiopian parliamentary counterparts to actively engage.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Dr Oumer Hussein Oba, Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to Pakistan called on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, at his residence.

President, PM call to protect environment

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif have called for strengthening resolve to protect the environment, use natural resources responsibly and leave a safer and more resilient Pakistan for future generations.

In their separate messages on the World Environment Day being observed on Friday, the president and the prime minister said Pakistan remains committed to international cooperation on climate and environmental issues.

President Asif Ali Zardari said that we will continue to support efforts aimed at ecosystem restoration, renewable energy, disaster preparedness and climate-resilient development.

The President called on people to use water responsibly, reduce waste, protect forests, preserve biodiversity, and promote cleaner sources of energy. In his message, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said this year's theme, "Climate Action," serves as a powerful reminder that urgent and coordinated global action is indispensable for addressing the environmental.

Arabian Sea heatwave spurs urgent climate action for Pakistan: Junaid Anwar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry has warned of an underwater heat emergency in the Arabian Sea and urged urgent climate action to protect coastal communities, fisheries and maritime infrastructure. In a statement on Climate Day, he emphasized that nature provides countless sustainable solutions to the climate crisis, from ocean depths to mountain peaks. He called for urgent action to protect ecosystems and strengthen environmental resilience worldwide. The minister said sustained sea-surface temperatures in the northern Arabian Sea have exceeded the 90th percentile across more than 30 percent of the region in recent



weeks. Scientists, he added, describe the event as an unprecedented marine heatwave that is already intensifying climate risks along Pakistan's coast and altering forthcoming monsoon behaviour. "Warmer waters are a known factor in both cyclone formation and intensification," Junaid Chaudhry said, linking the marine heatwave to a potential rise in tropical cyclone activity in the North Arabian Sea. He warned that increased cyclone frequency and strength would place additional.

JICA team reviews modern baggage handling project at Multan Airport

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A delegation from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) visited Multan International Airport to assess plans for the installation of a modern Baggage Handling System (BHS) aimed at improving operational efficiency and passenger services.

During the visit, the delegation held a coordination meeting with officials of the Pakistan Airports Authority, including the airport's management team, to discuss the project's operational requirements, technical specifications, and overall feasibility.

The discussions focused on evaluating the airport's current



baggage management processes and identifying the infrastructure needed to support the proposed automated system. Officials reviewed key technical aspects of the project and explored ways to ensure smooth integration with existing airport operations.

Following the meeting, the JICA team conducted a detailed inspection of the proposed project sites within the airport.

ECC approves key technical supplementary grants

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Friday various supplementary grants and key policy measures worth billions of rupees for development, defence, security, infrastructure, telecommunications and public sector initiatives.

The meeting of the cabinet committee was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, according to press release issued by finance ministry here.

According to the details,

the committee approved Rs. 7,026.3 million through Technical Supplementary Grant (TSG) for the Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Programme (SAP).

The ECC also approved Rs. 10.15 billion for the Hangor Project of Pakistan Navy under the Rafale Aircraft and Force Development Package (RAFDP)-2030.

The Committee further approved seven summaries submitted by the Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control.

These included Rs. 692.9 million for security arrangements undertaken during the



Islamabad Peace Talks, Rs. 241 million for compensation-related expenditures arising from the suicide bomb blast at Imam Bargah Khadijah-tul-Kubra, Taralai, Islamabad, Rs. 528 million for operational requirements of the Pakistan Land Ports Authority (PLPA), Rs. 800

million for procurement of Fast Patrol Boats and associated infrastructure for Pakistan Coast Guards, Rs. 1,883.7 million for the "Expansion of Safe City, Islamabad" project, Rs. 150 million for operational requirements of the National Counter Terrorism Authority

(NACTA), and Rs. 413.9 million for security charges relating to the Reko Diq Project.

The ECC also approved release of Rs. 733 million in favour of Pakistan Television Corporation (PTVC) to meet salary requirements for June 2026 and Rs. 183.5 million in favour of the Special Communication Organization (SCO) for installation of telecom sites and telephone towers in District Shigar, Gilgit-Baltistan.

The ECC also approved a TSG of Rs. 119.9 million submitted by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to meet employee-related expendi-

tures arising from revised salaries and allowances of Parliamentary Secretaries during FY 2025-26.

The Committee approved two summaries submitted by the Ministry of Housing and Works regarding placement of development funds into the current account of Pakistan Infrastructure Development Company Limited (PIDCL), including Rs. 8,758.9 million relating to the Karachi and Hyderabad Urban Infrastructure Development Packages and Rs. 2,840 million under SAP for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The ECC further considered three summaries submitted.