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DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

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PM directs all ministries to ensure meaningful expert consultation for modern technologies' integration across economy

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed all ministries to ensure meaningful expert consultation for modern technologies' integration across various sectors of the economy.

Chairing a high-level review meeting on policy measures and reforms aimed at boosting investment and overall economic growth, the prime minister said that the promotion of industry and skilled trades, along with enhanced foreign investment, was indispensable for the country's economic progress.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif underscored the need for sectoral reforms, industrial growth and increased foreign investment to ensure sustainable economic development,

saying that long-term economic policies must remain focused on public welfare and national prosperity. He emphasized that effective policy interventions to increase domestic production and expand exports were among the government's key priorities. "Industrial products must contribute not only to increased local manufacturing but also to higher export volumes," he said. The prime minister directed that reforms across the industrial, commercial and economic sectors should be designed with a focus on long-term economic benefits and public welfare. He also highlighted the government's efforts to formulate a comprehensive strategy for meeting future energy requirements through alternative and renewable energy sources. Addressing the transportation.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs progress review meeting on sectoral reforms.

Pakistan demands urgent global action to halt Israel's Lebanon incursion

PEAK POINT

NEW YORK: Pakistan demands urgent global action to halt Israel's Lebanon incursion. Pakistan has urged the international community to "act with urgency" to stop Israel's "reckless" campaign in Lebanon and advance a diplomatic solution to the escalating conflict when the UN Security Council met in emergency following Israeli forces' deepest incursion into the Arab country. "Sustainable peace can only be achieved through dialogue and diplomacy," Ambassador Asim Ifikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the 15-member Security Council on Monday night.

"We also welcome the efforts of the United States in facilitating the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel, and we support their continuing engagement in this process," he added. The Council meeting was convened by France after Israel pushed farther into Lebanon, including Beaufort Castle, while Hezbollah expanded rocket, drone and missile attacks into Israel. Despite the ceasefire arrangement and direct talks between Israel and Lebanon, the Pakistani envoy said, the security.



PAKISTAN

Trump loses his temper with Netanyahu in expletive-laden call on Israel's escalation in Lebanon: report

MAHPARA ZAMAN

NEW YORK: United States President Donald Trump lashed out at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the latter's escalation in Lebanon in an expletive-laden phone call on Monday, according to American news outlet Axios.

The report cited two US officials and a third source briefed on the phone call. It said that Trump called Netanyahu "crazy" and accused him of ingratitude, according to two of the sources, and also halted Israel's plan to strike Beirut. On Monday, Trump said he had spoken to Netanyahu and through unnamed representatives with Hezbollah.

Netanyahu agreed to call off a military raid on Beirut while Hezbollah agreed "all shooting will stop," Trump said on his Truth Social platform.

Trump's comments came after Iran's news agency Tasnim reported Tehran had suspended dialogue with mediators in protest of Israel's expanding offensive in Lebanon against Hezbollah.

Initially, Trump said he was not aware whether Iran had suspended the talks. He then told CNBC that he did not care if the talks were over. But soon afterwards, he moved swiftly to allay Iranian concerns over the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

According to Axios, Trump told Netanyahu during the call that following through on his threats to bomb Beirut would further isolate.



MAHPARA ZAMAN

Iran urges UN Security Council to move beyond condemnation and punish Israel

PEAK POINT

IRAN: Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi urged the United Nations Security Council on Tuesday to "move beyond the stage of expressing concern" and "adopt punitive and binding decisions" against Israel. In a post on X, he stated that the Middle East crisis is "the product of the crimes and impunity of the Zionist regime, which violates the sovereignty of governments, renders ceasefires meaningless, and desecrates the sanctities of the Palestinians".

"International law is not upheld through low-cost and ineffective condemnations," he added. "In this regard, the US president's claim of having dissuaded Netanyahu from launching a major attack on Beirut is more than a sign of Washington's peace-seeking, it's confirmation of America's direct role in managing the Zionist regime's aggressions," said Gharibabadi. "If the decision to attack the capital of an independent state can be changed with a single phone call the main question is: why did months of ceasefire violations, aggression against Lebanon, the displacement of its people, and threats to this country's sovereignty.



PEAK POINT

4 Pakistani farm workers murdered in Italy

PEAK POINT

ITALY: Italian police have arrested two Pakistani nationals for the murder of four Pakistani farm workers found dead in a burnt-out minivan in southern Italy, Corriere della Sera daily reported on Tuesday.

The burnt-out vehicle was found at a petrol station near the village of Amendolara in a vast farming area in the Calabria region. CCTV images from the petrol station showed two people blocking the van's doors from the outside and throwing liquid inside, Corriere della Sera reported citing law enforcement sources.

Govt proposes over Rs1.1tr federal development in Budget FY27

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has proposed a development budget of more than Rs1.1 trillion for the upcoming financial year 2026-27, according to budget documents detailing the sector-wise allocation of development spending.

The documents propose allocating Rs754.9 billion for the development budgets of federal ministries.

Among major allocations, Rs179 billion has been proposed for projects under the Ministry of Water Resources, while Rs72 billion has been earmarked under the Cabinet Division for development schemes of members of parliament.

The Ministry of Defence is proposed to receive Rs11 billion for development projects, while Rs1.1 billion has been set aside for projects of the Ministry of Defence and Telecommunications. For education-related

The Finance Division has been allocated a proposed development budget of Rs1 billion, while Rs27.83 billion has been earmarked for railway projects. The documents also propose a development budget of Rs355 billion for corporations. Of this amount, Rs264 billion has been allocated for the National Highway Authority (NHA). Meanwhile, electricity projects under the Power Division are proposed to receive Rs91 billion in development funding. The National Assembly and Senate are set to meet in Islamabad on June 5 for proceedings related to the 2026-27 federal budget. The National Assembly session will begin at 5pm while the Senate will meet at 6pm the same day, read a statement issued by the President House.

The Board of Investment has been allocated a proposed development budget of Rs805 million. Development spending for the Ministry of Climate Change has been proposed at Rs2.78 billion. Moreover, the documents propose a development budget of Rs16 billion for the Ministry of Interior and Rs20 billion for the Ministry of Information Technology

spending, Rs36 billion has been proposed for the Federal Education Ministry, while the Ministry of Information is set to receive Rs4 billion.

A development budget of Rs251.68 billion has been proposed for provinces and special areas. The Higher Education Commission's development projects are proposed to receive Rs41.19 billion.



Security forces kill 17 terrorists in various districts of Balochistan: ISPR

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed 17 terrorists during intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in different districts of Balochistan following the suicide car bomb attack against a shuttle train in Quetta, said a statement released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Tuesday. At least 14 people were killed and 20 others were injured in the incident, which took place on May 24. The IBOs were conducted in the districts of Mastung, Nushki, Khuzdar and Kech. The military's media wing added that multiple terrorist locations were targeted by security personnel during these operations.



PEAK POINT



SPORTS



Inglis, Green power Australia to 231/9 against Pakistan in 2nd ODI



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Australia posted a 232-run target against Pakistan, powered by Josh Inglis and Cameron Green's fifties, in the second ODI at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium on Tuesday.

Pakistan captain Shaheen Shah Afridi's decision to field first paid dividends as the visitors could accumulate 231/9 in their 50 overs despite half-centuries from Josh Inglis and Cameron Green.

Australia got off to a dismal start to their innings as Pakistan captain Shaheen cleaned up their left-handed opener Alex Carey Labuschagne (five), which brought their total down to 51/3.

Carrey's dismissal on the first delivery of the innings paved the way for fellow wicketkeeper batter and captain Inglis to walk out and bat at No.3.

Inglis launched a decent recovery for Australia as he put together 46 runs for the second wicket with Matthew Short, who made a cautious 15 off 24 deliveries, before falling victim to Abrar Ahmed in the eighth over.

Australia suffered another setback to their innings as Arafat Minhas dismissed Marnus Peake, 8 Nathan Ellis, for 32, becoming the first Pakistani bowler to haul on debut in the format.

Following the back-to-back dismissals, Inglis was joined by Green in the middle, and the duo batted sensibly to put together an important 51-run partnership, which saw the former bring up his fifth ODI half-century.

The Australian captain, however, was soon removed by Minhas and walked back after scoring a gritty 51 off 74 deliveries with the help of five fours.

Green, on the other hand, was then involved in another crucial partnership for Australia – a 65-run stand for the sixth wicket with Matt Renshaw – until eventually falling victim to Abrar in the 40th over.

The all-rounder remained the top-scorer for Australia with a 92-ball 53, comprising two sixes and a four.

Short followed suit 21 balls later as he was cleaned up by Haris Rauf after scoring a run-a-ball 43 with the help of three fours.

Shaheen inflicted another blow to Australia's batting expedition in the 47th over by casting Matthew Kuhnemann (five) and struck again in the penultimate over to get rid of Nathan Ellis.

Meanwhile, batting all-rounder Oliver Peake added valuable runs at the backend to Australia's total with a run-a-ball 31.

Pakistan football on right track: FIFA official



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The International Football Federation (FIFA) has backed the progress made by Pakistan football over the past year, describing it as being on the right track while calling for immediate constitutional reforms within the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF).

FIFA officials emphasized that modern governance structures and greater stakeholder empowerment are essential for accelerating the sport's development and bringing Pakistan in line with global football standards. Addressing a joint press conference here at a local hotel alongside PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani, Vice President Naveed Aslam and FIFA Head of Member Associations Governance Rolf Tanner said he had held extensive discussions with various football stakeholders during his two-day visit to Pakistan. Based on those consultations, he stressed that governance reforms within the PFF were both necessary and unavoidable. Tanner noted that Pakistan football has made positive progress over the last year, but improvements in governance structures are required to meet international standards. He expressed confidence that Pakistan would soon implement the necessary constitutional amendments to modernize the federation and strengthen stakeholder participation in decision-making processes.

Pakistan elect to bowl first in second Australia one-dayer



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan have again won the toss and elected to bowl first in the second one-day international against Australia being played at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Tuesday.

After winning the toss, captain Shaheen Shah Afridi said they were going in with an unchanged side while the Australians have made one change with Adam Zampa replacing Billy Stanlake.

dayer in Rawalpindi by five wickets.

TEAMS
Pakistan 1 (ODIs) at Qaddafi Stadium in Lahore today, reported 24NewsHD TV channel on Tuesday.

Pakistan, which is already one-up in the series after outclassing the visitors by five wickets in the opening match, which was played in Rawalpindi, is looking to seal the series.

The opener on May 30 belonged to Arafat Minhas, a 21-year-old left-arm spinner, who took 5 for 32, becoming the first Pakistani bowler to claim a five-wicket haul on debut in the format.

Pakistan will take on Australia in the

Ghazi Ghori lauds Babar's guidance, vows to build on promising start



PCB pays tribute to Chacha Cricket as iconic superfan prepares to retire

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday paid a heartfelt tribute to legendary cricket supporter Chaudhry Abdul Jalil, popularly known as Chacha Cricket, as the iconic superfan prepares to retire from active support following the final ODI against Australia at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium on Thursday. In recognition of his decades-long association with Pakistan cricket, the PCB shared a commemorative banner featuring Chacha Cricket alongside a collection of memorable photographs from his journey supporting the national team.

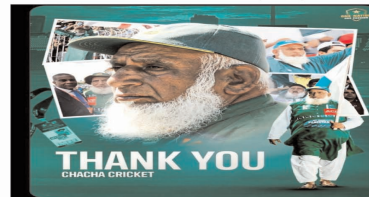
The board described him as more than just a fan, calling him a symbol of unwavering support and loyalty to Pakistan cricket.

"Thank you, Chacha Cricket, for a lifetime of passion, memories and loyalty," the PCB said in a social

media tribute, acknowledging his role as one of the most beloved figures in the country's sporting history.

For nearly four decades, Chacha Cricket has been a familiar and colourful presence in stadiums around the

and his popularity among fans steadily grew. In 1996, he formally became associated with the PCB as an official mascot of Pakistan cricket. Born on October 8, 1949, in Sialkot, Chaudhry Abdul Jalil is instantly recognisable for



world, cheering for Pakistan through victories and defeats alike.

His dedication earned him recognition as one of the most iconic supporters in international cricket.

His association with the game began in the 1980s in Sharjah, where Pakistan frequently played home series,

his trademark appearance, a bright green kurta, flowing white beard and distinctive white cap decorated with a sparkling star and crescent.

Over the years, Chacha Cricket has become an enduring symbol of passion, resilience and patriotism within Pakistan's cricket culture.

Iran World Cup squad to head for Mexico via Spain



PEAK POINT

IRAN: Iran's football team will leave for Spain this weekend en route to their World Cup base in Mexico despite still awaiting visas, the head of the country's football federation said.

The 2026 World Cup is being hosted jointly by the United States, Mexico and Canada. Neither the United States, where Iran will play their three group stage matches, nor Mexico, where the team will be based throughout the tournament, have yet issued visas for the players.

Seattle on June 26. Taj said that the outbreak of the Middle East war on February 28, when the United States and Israel attacked Iran, "changed everything" for Team Melli.

"The situation in the country, and especially the war, has upended all our plans," Taj said. "We had arranged good warm-up matches, including one against Spain, which was cancelled" in February. The Iranians relocated their World Cup base, which initially was planned to be in Tucson in the US state of Arizona.



Pakistan-Japan collaboration gains momentum as Hinza Asif champions investment and startup growth

BY RAJA MOHSIN IJAZ

ISLAMABAD: In a significant step towards strengthening economic cooperation between Pakistan and Japan, Ms. Hinza Asif, President of Asia Web3 Alliance Japan (AWAJ), held a high-level meeting with Mr. Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman of ZLK Group, in Islamabad to explore new avenues for foreign investment, startup development, and capital market expansion in Pakistan. The meeting underscored Ms. Hinza Asif's growing role as a key advocate for fostering business linkages between Pakistan and Japan and creating opportunities for interna-

tional investors to engage with Pakistan's emerging entrepreneurial ecosystem. Also present at the meeting was Ms. Sadaf Abbas of Oak Business Consultant, who attended as Financial Consultant to AWAJ. Leading the discussions, Ms. Hinza Asif highlighted the importance of building stronger investment bridges between Pakistan and global markets, particularly in the areas of technology, innovation, and startup financing. She emphasized that Pakistan possesses immense untapped potential and that greater international engagement can help accelerate economic growth, entrepreneurship, and job cre-



ation. The participants exchanged views on practical strategies to attract foreign investors to Pakistan and support local startups in scaling their businesses and transitioning toward Initial Public Offerings (IPOs). Special attention was given to creating a supportive environment through improved financial access, regulatory facilitation, and institutional backing for emerging enterprises. Ms. Hinza Asif noted that startups are among the strongest drivers of innovation and economic transformation world-

wide. She stressed the importance of connecting Pakistani entrepreneurs with international investors, industry experts, and global business networks to help them compete successfully in regional and international markets. The discussion also focused on expanding foreign participation in the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) and enhancing awareness among international investors regarding opportunities available in Pakistan's capital markets. Participants explored mechanisms that could facilitate greater foreign investment in Pakistani companies and strengthen investor confidence. In addition, the meeting examined prospects

for promoting Islamic startups and advancing Shariah-compliant investment models, including Islamic capital market initiatives, aimed at attracting a broader base of ethical and faith-based investors. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Zahid Latif Khan acknowledged the valuable contribution of Ms. Hinza Asif in promoting international business cooperation and investment connectivity between Pakistan and Japan. He reiterated that Pakistan offers substantial opportunities for foreign investors and noted that recent reforms and investor-friendly policies have further improved the country's business environment.

Provincial representation in SOE boards questioned as committee criticizes federal neglect

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Sub Committee on Devolution has raised sharp concerns over the Federal Government's failure to fully implement Article 38(g) of the Constitution, highlighting significant delays and alleged neglect in ensuring equitable provincial representation in federal services and state-owned enterprises (SOEs). Chaired by Senator Zamir Hussain Ghumro, the committee criticized the absence of the Federal Minister and Federal Secretary of the Establishment Division,

describing it as a breach of accountability to Parliament and the people of Pakistan. Senator Ghumro warned that inadequate implementation of the 18th Constitutional Amendment undermines the spirit of federalism and fosters resentment among the federating units. He observed that the federal government is constitutionally obligated to ensure equitable provincial representation in federal services and to rectify past omissions, particularly concerning the All Pakistan Services and senior federal appoint-

ments. The committee was briefed on measures taken to improve provincial representation through the Special CSS Examination, which filled carry forward vacant posts, primarily from Balochistan and Sindh. However, members questioned the formula used for allocating provincial shares, including whether it is based on population or other considerations, and specifically sought clarification on Sindh's division into urban and rural shares. The Convener directed the Establishment Division to

submit comprehensive details within two weeks regarding provincial representation across all federal ministries, divisions, and departments, along with the criteria for determining shares and proposals to correct historical omissions in line with Article 38(g). The Petroleum Division briefed the committee on the composition of Boards of Directors of oil and gas companies under the State Owned Enterprises Act. While officials claimed that provincial representation is constitutionally mandated, commit-

tee members expressed concerns regarding the nomination process, emphasizing the need for meaningful consultation with provincial governments to ensure legal and constitutional validity of appointments. The committee specifically requested profiles of board members from Balochistan and instructed the Petroleum Division to conduct ex-post facto consultations for existing boards, with assurances from the Special Secretary of Petroleum that provincial engagement would be strengthened. Members reit-

erated that the Constitution is the supreme law of the land and should prevail over conflicting legislation, and emphasized that shared governance and federal provincial harmony must be institutionalized through proper adherence to Articles 38(g) and 172(3). The committee's deliberations signal mounting parliamentary pressure on the federal administration to address long standing disparities in representation and ensure full compliance with constitutional provisions in federal services and SOE governance.

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Back to the people

Arifa Noor
POLITICS in Pakistan appears to be dead. However, this is only because of the beating it has taken. Like whack-a-mole, it pops up when least expected. The moment headlines about international events no longer take up all the oxygen in the room, the fractious world of Pakistani politics begins to draw attention to itself. It was no different this time around. Once the US-Iran saga settled into 'deal is a-comin'', commentary here focused on how the foreign policy successes had not translated into any relief for inflation-afflicted Pakistanis. By now, questions have multiplied about the mess that is the economy. These questions will simply grow as budget time draws closer and summer power bills multiply. That's not all. The impending elections in Gilgit-Baltistan and beyond have highlighted the same issues that the government and others have been at pains to ignore. Elections in GB are scheduled to be held this month, after a delay of around four months due to 'bad weather'. Elections for around 24 directly elected seats will take place in the first week of June. Keeping precedent in mind, the electoral trend favours the party in power in Islamabad. But those on the ground are not so sure. According to them, voters tend to see the government and hence expect a similar mish-mash in poll results

— some form of a PML-N-PPP combine. And because the Isteekam-i-Pakistan Party (of the Aleem Khan fame) is also campaigning hard there, the guess is that it may also have been promised something. It is difficult for a couch potato to tell how much of the result will come from the voting and how much from the powers who cannot be named. Let's not forget the rumours regarding the need to remind the PPP of its place in the system. However, many people have worked hard to ensure that there will be questions about the election's credibility. One party is — as expected — without an election symbol. And its leadership has been stopped from campaigning freely; Junaid Akbar was stopped while Asad Qaiser claims he was prevented from boarding a flight to the region. Such hand-headed tactics are hard to understand in a region which has rarely ever gone against Islamabad but they have strengthened the perception that the PTI is popular there. This is not to say politics is limited to the crackdown on the PTI. Essentially, and beyond political parties, the real issue is about a state unwilling to grant space to ordinary people. Consider Azad Kashmir. Elections in the area will be held around July but the government is already worried. The disconcert there is no secret, though reporting on it remains limited. The protests last year were controlled or subdued

by eventually holding negotiations with protesters led by the Joint Awami Action Committee, which enjoys widespread and cross-party support. These included a change in government — a coalition government led by dissident PTI wallahs was replaced by the PPP. Many of the demands of the protesters were agreed to while implementation and negotiations continued. The real issue is about a state unwilling to grant space to ordinary people. However, the issue of refugee seats outside Kashmir continues to hang fire. Elections are held on these seats outside AJK, though the victors are part of the AJK legislature. The committee wants the seats abolished because the perception is that these seats are won through manipulation and that these legislators are used to make and break governments at others' behest. But unlike many of the other issues, it has been hard to reach an agreement on the matter. It was one of the key demands of the committee but the government was not very keen to address it. With elections approaching, the problem is becoming urgent. Over the weekend, the two sides had carried out lengthy negotiations which ended without resolution and so far the committee's call for a protest in the first week of June remains on the table. Whether or not there can be a breakthrough before that is unclear.

Serious conversations

Muhammad Hamid Zaman
Earlier this month, Pope Leo XIV issued a 42,000-word encyclical on AI and the challenges it poses to humanity. I believe it is a wonderful thing that faith leaders are sharing their perspective. The Pope, who has an undergraduate degree in mathematics, has spoken about AI before, and the encyclical is an important and timely document. It is rich in detail and offers us an opportunity to reflect about our present and the future. As we engage with generative aspects of AI, there are important questions we too must ask ourselves to have a morally and intellectually consistent framework of our lives. For example, how do those — who care deeply about the environment and often express their frustration at how policies of the rich countries are causing global harm disproportionately affecting the poor countries — square the environmental impact of data centres at the core of AI growth? Are those who feel strongly about protection of intellectual property, especially of artists and writers and from low- and middle-income countries, okay with widespread copyright infringement and acquisition of creative works without consent by large AI companies? There are others who have deep concerns about the overreach of global powers and the diminishing rights of the weak. But as tech companies start to dominate global capital, influence policy and bypass regulations, how do they feel about full-scale indulgence in these products? I also wonder about teachers who choose the noble profession not because of high salaries but the deep and lasting satisfaction of training the next generation, of helping people become more sophisticated in their original writing, analysis and thought — encouraging their students to look for a quick answer all in the name of efficiency. Courtesy Tribune

Rare case of death

Pakistan's healthcare system seems to have made a fatal error in administering vaccines for a disease that is virtually cent per cent preventable and poses a near-zero per cent mortality risk to vaccinated individuals. About three months ago, a boy, 13, was brought to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital in Karachi after suffering a dog bite and received what was thought to be a complete vaccination course for rabies. The reason the teenager's death raises serious questions about public healthcare practices in the country — in fact in none other than its most modern city — is that rabies, if treated within an appropriate time period via vaccine, is entirely curable. The only factors that can hinder the vaccine's efficacy are related to either delays or improper administration. There is a possibility that the child was subject to delayed care perhaps because he was not immediately rushed to a hospital. But if that was not the case, this preventable death exposes critical flaws in hospital protocols. For severe dog bites, especially on the face or neck, it is essential for a hospital to promptly administer rabies immunoglobulin (RIG) alongside routine vaccination for localised immunity. But public sector hospitals in Pakistan are notorious for RIG shortages, which is how a "full dose" of immunisation might still lead to death. Instances of vaccine failures have also been linked to improper wound washing.

Political bigwigs attempt to sway Gilgit-Baltistan as electioneering heats up ahead of June 7 polls



PEAK POINT

GILGIT: Political bigwigs on Tuesday sought to garner public support in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) as PML-N President Nawaz Sharif and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari addressed rallies ahead of the June 7 elections. General elections in GB are scheduled for Sunday, after a four-month delay attributed to harsh winter weather. Addressing a public gathering in Skardu, where First Lady

Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari was also present, Bilawal called for greater rights for the people of GB.

"I have to struggle along with GB's new generation [...] If we have to implement the manifesto of roti, kapra, makaan in its true sense, then we will have to work on three rules — we will have to attain the right to haq-i-hakimiyat (right to govern), haq-i-malkiyat (right to ownership), and haq-i-rozgaar (right to employ-

ment)," Bilawal said.

He further said, "The struggle of PPP's new generation will be to get you your right to govern, and that will happen when GB will get the protections, facilities and powers provided in the 18th Amendment." "After the right to govern, we need the right to ownership. All this land from the mountains to the river [...] are the resources of the people of GB. Until Islamabad agrees, neither GB nor Islamabad will progress. They will have to accept that this land, resources, and minerals are yours," Bilawal asserted.

Highlighting that the Sindh government had offered people a share in the Thar coal project, but they had insisted on getting money, he told the public in GB to seek a share in any such future projects. The PPP chairman contended that once GB's right to ownership would be acknowledged, it would result in not only the region's development, but also that of Pakistan.

Aleem Khan greenlights 172km motorway linking Mansehra to Kaghan, Chilas

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Aleem Khan on Tuesday approved the construction of a new, state-of-the-art motorway via Mansehra, Kaghan, Naran, Jhal Khand, and Chilas (MNJC) to provide a safe alternative route to the Karakoram Highway (KKH). The decision was taken in a meeting of the National Highway Authority (NHA) held under the chairmanship of the minister, where key decisions were approved to modernise the country's transport infrastructure. The secretary of communications and NHA Chairman Capt (ret'd) Asadullah Khan were also present. During the meeting, the federal minister was briefed on ongoing and new projects. Officials told the meeting that the MNJC motorway would be 172km in length, and that the route would reduce travel distance on the KKH by up to 120 kilometres. The project will be completed in two phases, the minister said. In the first phase, the motorway will be built from Mansehra to Kaghan, Naran, and

Babusar Top, while the second phase will cover the section from Babusar Top to Chilas. A major highlight of the project is the construction of the 13.5km-long Babusar Tunnel, which will be the longest tunnel in Pakistan. Designed with future demand in mind, the four-lane motorway will have the capacity to expand to six lanes. Modern rest areas will be built every 25-30km for motorists, and freight terminals will be established at both ends of the motorway. Highlighting the economic significance of the project, the minister said that traditionally, trade from the Arabian Sea to China via existing routes was time-consuming and resulted in significant financial costs. The new motorway would directly link western China to the ports of Karachi and Gwadar, the minister added. He said the network would serve as the fastest, shortest, and most cost-effective route from the Arabian Sea to western China, drastically reducing transit times and costs while proving to be a "real game-changer" for the sustainable development of Gwadar Port.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communication Abdul Aleem Khan chairing an important meeting regarding Mansehra-Naran-Jhalkand-Chilas Motorway (MNJC), a key NHA project.

President Zardari felicitates Italian leadership on Republic Day

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday extended felicitations to the President of the Italian Republic Sergio Mattarella, and the people of Italy on Republic Day, annually observed on June 2. The president, in a statement, said that Pakistan deeply valued its long-standing and friendly relations with Italy, which were marked by mutual trust, cooperation and a shared commitment to peace and prosperity. He expressed confidence that bilateral ties between the two nations would continue to grow in strength and substance in the years ahead.

President Zardari said that Pakistan attached great importance to its engagement with the European Union (EU) and highly valued Italy's constructive role within the EU in promoting cooperation, dialogue and international peace and stability.

He also reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening Pakistan-EU relations in areas of mutual interest.

Digital Youth Hub tops 800,000 users as PMYP, UNICEF deepen partnership

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan on Tuesday met Kevin Frey, Chief Executive Officer of Generation Unlimited, and Pernille Ironside, UNICEF Country Representative in Pakistan, at the Prime Minister's Office to strengthen collaboration on youth development, digital inclusion, skills training and employment generation.

The meeting focused on the ways government and international partners can expand opportunities for Pakistan's young population through innovative and technology driven initiatives.

Senior representatives from PMYP and UNICEF attended the meeting, which reviewed ongoing efforts to equip young people with market relevant skills and



connect them with education, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

A major highlight of the discussion was the rapid growth of the Digital Youth Hub, which has surpassed 800,000 registered users, reflecting increasing youth engagement with digital learning and career development platforms across the country.

Kevin Frey praised the progress made under the initiative, saying the platform's expanding reach demonstrates the ambition, talent and active participation of Pakistan's youth.

Pakistan needs smart taxation to promote nutrition, innovation and rural economy: Tanveer

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Tuesday said that Pakistan needed smart taxation in order to promote nutrition, innovation and rural economy. The minister was addressing a high-level consultation organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), where key stakeholders from government, academia, industry, and development partners gathered to deliberate on the rationalization of Federal Excise Duty (FED) on beverages and juice products in Pakistan.

The discussion centered on the economic, nutritional, industrial, and agricultural dimensions of the existing tax structure and



its broader implications for the country's food and beverage sector.

The minister underscored that taxation is not merely a fiscal instrument but also a policy tool that shapes consumption patterns, public health outcomes, and industrial development.

He observed that the current uniform FED regime does not adequately reflect the significant differences in sugar content, nutritional value, and economic contribution across.

Governor KP, Turkish Ambassador discuss strengthening bilateral economic cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi met with Turkey's Ambassador to Pakistan Dr. Irfan Neziroglu here on Tuesday, where both sides discussed Pakistan-Turkiye relations, mutual cooperation, and a range of bilateral issues. During the meeting, the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the longstanding fraternal ties between Pakistan and Turkiye. Discussions focused on expanding cooperation in trade, investment, education, and cultural exchanges, with special emphasis on enhancing economic linkages between Turkiye and



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Governor Kundi said that Turkiye had strongly supported Pakistan during past conflicts with India and stressed the importance of engaging the younger generation in promoting Pakistan-Turkiye friendship.

He proposed initiating visits of traders and students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Turkiye, alongside exchanges.

Arab-Islamic States FMs slam continued incursions of extremists Israelis into Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif

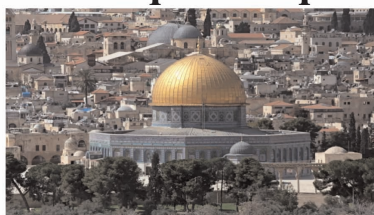
PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Ministers of eight Arab-Islamic states, Tuesday, condemned in the strongest terms the continued incursions by extremist Israeli settlers into Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif under the protection of the Israeli forces, as well as the raising of the Israeli flag within its courtyards. The foreign ministers held Israeli authorities responsible for halting these escalatory actions and warned that repeated Israeli violations "exacerbate tensions, fuel instability and

extremism, undermine international efforts to achieve peace, and constitute a clear breach of Israel's obligations under international law".

They called for an immediate cessation of all such Israeli illegal and provocative practices and reaffirmed the need to respect the historical and legal status quo at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif in its entirety.

In a joint statement, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Türkiye, the Republic of Indonesia, the Hashemite Kingdom of



Jordan, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, stressed that these provocative and unacceptable actions constituted a flagrant violation of international law, the relevant United Nations resolutions, and the historical and legal status quo at the holy sites in occupied east Jerusalem.

"The Foreign Ministers further condemn the contin-

ued and systematic violations and measures carried out by Israel, the occupying power, aimed at altering the historical, legal, and demographic character of occupied east Jerusalem and undermining the sanctity and status of its Islamic and Christian holy sites," the joint statement said. They reaffirmed their categorical rejection of any attempts to alter the historical and legal status quo in Jerusalem and its Islamic and Christian holy sites and stressed on its preservation while recognizing the special role of the historical

Hashemite custodianship in this regard. The ministers reiterated that the entire area of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, which amounted to 144 dunams, is a place of worship exclusively for Muslims, and that the Jerusalem Endowments and Al-Aqsa Mosque Affairs Department, affiliated with the Jordanian Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, is the legal entity with exclusive jurisdiction to administer the affairs of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif and to regulate entry thereto.