

# PEAKPOINT ISLAMABAD

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Good on set: Saba Qamar boasts getting bouquet from director

Saturday 14 December 2024

## PM directs further reduction of power tariff, stresses prioritizing low-cost power projects

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the relevant authorities to further reduce power tariffs and expedite the implementation process of the action plan of the future power generation projects.

Chairing a meeting here to evaluate and discuss the future electricity and power plans of country, the prime minister stressed to prioritize the low-cost power projects based on local resources. During the meeting, the prime minister was informed about the progress of the ongoing hydro power projects across the country. PM Shehbaz said that the low-cost power project

produce environment friendly and affordable electricity.

He further directed that the current electricity generation capacity should also be shifted to solar energy.

Globally, electricity is being produced from environmentally friendly, low-cost solar energy, he noted, adding that Pakistan was fortunate in this regard as the country had vast potential for solar energy. The prime minister was also briefed on the progress of phasing out inefficient power plants that consume more fuel but produce less electricity. He ordered the immediate closure of such outdated power plants adding that closing these plants would not only save valuable foreign exchange, but



also reduce electricity costs for consumers. The Prime Minister instructed

that immediate action be taken against all officials deliberately obstructing

reforms in the power sector. He also directed that reforms in the electricity

transmission system be expedited. The power transmission system should be upgraded according to international standards, the prime minister further directed. He further directed swift implementation of a system based on modern technology for the selection and transmission of low-cost electricity.

The prime minister issued instructions to complete all measures for the reform of the power sector within the specified timeline.

The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Ahsan Ishaq Khan, Sardar Awaiz Khan, Leghari, Dr Musadik Malik, Minister of State Ali Pervaiz Malik and other relevant high officials.

## Ready to facilitate talks, but decision-making rests with govt: Ayaz Sadiq

AYESHA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq showed willingness to facilitate dialogue between the opposition and the government if any formal offer for negotiations is made.

"I can certainly play the role of a facilitator," he said. However, he clarified that he does not have the mandate for decision-making, he expressed his readiness to contribute positively within his capacity. He said that the decision-making mandate rests with the government

and its coalition partners, who will oversee any negotiations.

The speaker also welcomed the PTI's formation of a committee for dialogue, terming it as a positive step.

He further said that the official commencement of talks is necessary, as relying solely on statements is not enough for meaningful dialogue.

Ayaz Sadiq said that opposition leaders visited him to offer condolences on the death of his sister, but no discussion on political matters took place during the visit.

## Tarar discusses media cooperation with Turkiye during visit to TRT World

PEAK POINT

ISTANBUL: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Friday visited the headquarters of the Turkish National Television channel "TRT World" and discussed media cooperation

between the two countries. During a meeting with Director General International Broadcast of TRT Umar Farooq Tanvirvedi, he discussed media production of joint documentaries and other matters of mutual interest including the promotion of tourism. Pakistan values brotherly relations with Turkiye, he said adding these relations between the two countries

were based on historical and common religious and cultural values. "Agreements with the Turkish government regarding the co-production of dramas, and documentaries are part of our strategic framework," he said. The minister said there was immense talent in both countries. He made a special mention of Pakistani youth Arshad Nadeem, who set a record of 92.97 meters in the javelin throw in the Summer Olympics. There is a very inspiring story of Arshad Nadeem and documentaries could be produced on such iconic youth, he maintained. In the meeting, there was also a discussion regarding the Shandur Polo Festival in Pakistan.

## PMYP, Germany to focus on youth exchanges collaborative programmes

SAMRA ATHAR

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to help broaden their horizons and equip them with valuable skills.

Olympian Khawaja Junaid, a renowned sports figure, on the occasion shared his insights on the role of sports in bridging cultural gaps and promoting youth empowerment.

He emphasized that sports exchanges would not only provide opportunities for skill development but also encourage teamwork, discipline, and mutual understanding among young people.

Syed Amna Batool, Focal Person for the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, highlighted various youth-oriented initiatives being implemented by the government, such as the Green Youth Movement, and National Youth Council and expressed hope that such initiatives could be further enhanced through international cooperation with Germany.

The meeting concluded with both sides agreeing to explore specific areas for collaboration, including educational exchanges, sports programs, and leadership training, with the aim of creating lasting partnerships that empower youth in both countries.

## Punjab's chief minister secures fresh economic partnerships on Shanghai visit

KOMAL BUTT

ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Friday visited Huawei Technologies' Bantian headquarters in Shenzhen longgang district. According to a news release issued by Huawei, she was warmly welcomed by Huawei authorities.

She met Huawei's Government Affairs Director Wang Chengdong to discuss various initiatives to make Lahore a modern digital city.

She also discussed with him issues relating to e-commerce, ecosystem and ICT infrastructure development, digitalization of health and education department.

Chief Minister was briefed in detail by Huawei President Wang Chengdong about Huawei's ongoing projects in Pakistan, especially in Punjab.

She took keen interest and discussed with him Huawei's projects in the health and education sectors. She apprised him of the Safe City projects in different cities of Punjab,



and vowed to make Lahore Pakistan's first modern smart city with the help of Huawei. She

invited Huawei to invest in Pakistan, especially in Punjab, and offered them full cooperation to set up

Huawei office in Nawaz Sharif IT City. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif also assured Huawei to set up Huawei office and after-sales service center across Punjab. She said, "The vision of Digital Punjab will be realized with the cooperation of Huawei."

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said, "Lahore's first Safe City project was established in collaboration with Huawei." She visited Huawei Technologies and saw its various sections.

"Huawei will assist in capacity building and IT research at Nawaz Sharif IT City." She added, "We want to introduce Punjab's youth to the latest digital technologies with Huawei's assistance."

She underscored, "Huawei will also assist Punjab in ecosystem development."

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## DPM chairs meeting to ensure stability of fertilizer pricing

HUMAREHAN

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired the cabinet committee to ensure stability of fertilizer pricing on Friday.

Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb and Secretaries Petroleum, Industry and Commerce participated in the meeting. The heads of gas companies also attended.

The committee reviewed the prices of fertilizers, stocks and their availability in the market.

They observed that enough stocks are available and prices of fertilizers are stable.

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## TTP could become al-Qaeda's arm to destabilize Afghanistan's neighbours, Pakistan warns

PEAK POINT

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has warned the international community that the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), "the largest terrorist group" operating in Afghanistan, could emerge as al-Qaeda's arm with regional and global terrorist agenda.

"Terrorism within and from Afghanistan poses the single most serious threat to the country, to the region, and to the world," Usman Jadoon, Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, told the UN Security Council on Thursday.

threat from various other terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, the TTP and others has yet to be addressed," he said while speaking in a debate on the situation in Afghanistan.

Highlighting the ranking of 6,000-fighters strong TTP as the "largest terrorist organization," Jadoon said, "With safe havens close to our border, it poses a direct and daily threat to Pakistan's security."

"In countering the TTP's cross border operations, our security and intelligence agencies have confiscated some of the modern weapons acquired by the AIG from stocks left behind by foreign forces," he said.

Government is fighting ISIL-K (Daesh), the

rupt Pakistan's economic cooperation with China, especially CPEC," Jadoon said.

"Given its long association with al-Qaeda, the TTP could emerge as Al-Qaeda's arm with a regional and global terrorist agenda."

"We have evidence of its collaboration with other terrorist groups like the Majeed Brigade that is utilizing terrorism to dis-

rupt Pakistan's economic cooperation with China, especially CPEC," Jadoon said.

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He said the international community is obliged to help the 23.7 million Afghans who need urgent aid and to take adequate measures to bolster Afghanistan's economy — including reviving the national banking system and restoring commercial activity.

"Instead of easing ethnic restrictions, the AIG has intensified the restrictions on women and girls. These restrictions are contrary to Islamic precepts, jurisprudence and the Sharia."

The Pakistani envoy also called for the Doha Process framework to go beyond counter-narcotics and the private sector; Afghanistan's challenges,

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# Over 60 girls showcase skills at 8th AHC-PCB Girls' Cricket Cup

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad witnessed a lively display of talent and determination as the Australian High Commission (AHC) and Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) hosted the 8th AHC-PCB Girls' Cricket Cup, with support from Serena Hotels.

The event showcased how sports can inspire change and promote gender equality. The tournament brought together young players from four schools in Islamabad.

Over 60 girls participated, breaking societal barriers and demonstrating their skills on the cricket field. The week-long event culminated in a spirited final match, attended by Australia's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins.

Ahead of the final

game, PCB first-class coaches conducted an intensive five-day training camp. The initiative aimed to boost the girls' cricketing abilities while building confidence that extends beyond the field. During the final, High Commissioner Hawkins praised the players for their energy and commitment. "The enthusiasm of these young players is inspiring. Sport brings people together, fosters teamwork, and builds confidence. Cricket, in particular, is a shared passion between Australia and Pakistan, making this event a perfect opportunity to promote empowerment," Hawkins said.

He emphasized that the tournament is about more than just playing cricket. "Every ball bowled and every catch taken is a step toward breaking



boundaries, both on and off the field. Pakistan's challenges require the full potential of its people, and that includes empow-

ering women." Since its inception in 2016, the Australian High Commissioner's girls' cricket initiative has expanded

from Islamabad to Lahore and Karachi. What began as a single tournament has now grown into a nationwide platform,

offering girls across Pakistan the chance to excel in cricket and life. CEO of Serena Hotels, Aziz Boolani highlighted

the broader impact of the event. "This platform provides young girls access to professional coaching and opportunities to develop their cricketing skills. It's not just about nurturing future talent but also inspiring them to pursue their ambitions," he said. Boolani acknowledged the collaboration with AHC and PCB, which has been instrumental in turning this vision into reality. Four schools participated in this year's tournament: Mashal Model School Barilnam, SOS Children's Village H-11, Islamabad Model School for Girls F-6/1, and Islamabad Model School for Girls I-9/1. Each team brought a unique energy to the field, with the players proving that cricket can be a powerful tool for transformation. The stands were filled with cheers as the girls

showcased their skills during the matches. Beyond the competition, the event symbolized hope for a future where opportunities are equal for all.

The AHC-PCB Girls' Cricket Cup reflects a broader commitment to fostering inclusivity and empowerment through sports. By breaking barriers and providing platforms for young girls, the initiative underscores the importance of addressing social challenges through collaboration.

As the final match concluded and players celebrated their achievements, it became clear that this tournament was more than just a game. It is a movement that seeks to inspire a new generation of leaders, both on and off the field.

# Unveiling Ceremony of Quaid-e-Azam Inter-Provincial Games Trophy

MUHAMMAD USMAN

ISLAMABAD: The grand unveiling ceremony of the Quaid-e-Azam Inter-Provincial Games Trophy was held on Friday afternoon at the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) in Islamabad. The trophy was unveiled by Pakistan's Olympic gold medalist, Arshad Nadeem, who expressed his enthusiasm and encouragement for the young athletes during the event. The ceremony was also attended by the Director General of Pakistan Sports Board, Yasir Pirzada. Addressing the audience, Arshad Nadeem highlighted the significance of the event, saying, "This is a major step towards the promotion of sports in Pakistan. It will provide young athletes with an excellent opportunity to showcase their talents, and I am hopeful that this platform will produce international-level play-



ers for the country." Yasir Pirzada emphasized the objectives of the games, stating, "The purpose of this event is to highlight the existing sports talent in the country and provide them with oppor-

tunities to grow. We are optimistic that these competitions will play a pivotal role in bringing new talent to the forefront." The opening ceremony of the Quaid-e-Azam Inter-Provincial Games is

scheduled to take place today (Saturday) at the PSB. Teams comprising male and female athletes from Khyber, Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Sindh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Islamabad will participate in the games. The games will feature competitions in 15 sports disciplines, including athletics, badminton, boxing, football, hockey, judo, kabaddi, karate, squash, swimming, taekwondo, table tennis, volleyball, weightlifting, and wrestling. At the conclusion of the event, trophies and prizes will be distributed among the winning athletes to recognize their hard work and outstanding performance. The Quaid-e-Azam Inter-Provincial Games aim to inspire a renewed passion for sports while serving as an exceptional platform for young athletes to demonstrate their skills on a global stage.

# PAK vs SA: PCB unveils playing XI for second T20I match

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The playing XI for the second T20I against South Africa revealed by Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday with one change in the side as Jahandad Khan replaced Sufiyan Majeed.

The second T20I will be played at the Centurion Park today as South Africa leads the three-match T20I series by 1-0. Newcomer Jahandad debuted for Pakistan's T20I side against Australia in November and picked up a wicket while conceding 37 runs in his three-over spell.

The left-arm pacer has picked up four scalps in four T20Is.

The side includes skipper Mohammad Rizwan and star batter



Babar Azam opening the innings followed by Saim Ayub, Usman Khan and Tayyab Tahir in the order.

The bowling attack includes the experienced Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf who are known for their pace and aggressive bowling.

The attack also has Muhammad Irfan Khan, Mohammad Abbas Afridi and spinner Abrar

Ahmed. The Rizwan-led side had lost the first of three T20Is as the Proteas defeated Pakistan by 11 runs at Kingsmead Cricket Stadium.

The hosts had put up a fight but fell by 184 runs at the loss of nine wickets as veteran batter David Miller's 82 off 40 balls troubled Pakistan's bowling attack.

# ABL Stallions, Lake City Panthers come out winners in double header show

KOMAL BUTT

RAWALPINDI: ABL Stallions had the better of Engro Dolphins to come back to winning ways, taking the match by just five runs while Lake City Panthers crushed UMT Markhors by six wickets as the double header in Bahria Town Champions Cup excited the crowds at the Rawalpindi Stadium on Friday.



With the victory Stallions are now top of the five-team table with three wins in four matches, accumulating six points. Markhors suffered their first loss but were still second with six points in four matches.

Young Ubaid Shah, a sibling of Test fast bowler Naseem Shah, held his nerves to defend 14 off the final over and despite

being hit for a six by Salman Irshad came out with flying colours, conceding eight runs to give Stallions victory.

Chasing a big 191 for victory, Dolphins were treated well on tough waters as Sahibzada Farhan, who scored a brisk 59 off 38 balls with six boundaries and two sixes held the innings. Young Qasim Akram was

good in support with a rapid 24-ball 37, spiced with two sixes and four boundaries. Together they added 46 off 27 balls.

When skipper Faheem Ashraf came to the crease, Dolphins needed 35 runs in 4.1 overs. Left-hand batter Faheem cracked two sixes and a four in his 12-ball 25 but in the end his runs were not enough.

good form intact, scoring 57 not out off just 34 balls. His knock included two sixes and five boundaries, Hussain and Mohammad Mohsin partnership added 109 runs off just 56 balls. Mohsin's eye-catching knock of 55 came off 32 balls which contained four boundaries and as many sixes. The duo smashed a big 65 runs in the last five overs. Leg-spinner Mohammad Ramiz Jr was the pick of bowlers with 2-29.

In the second match, Haider Ali smashed a 99-ball 62 to help Lake City Panthers chase a 164-run target in 18.5 overs.

Haider smashed five sixes and four boundaries in an eye-catching knock. Umar Siddiq (30) and Sharjeel Khan (23) laid the foundation with an opening stand of 52.

# USWNT end year as no. 1 in Fifa Coca-Cola Women's World Rankings

ZAHID YAQOOB KHAWAJA

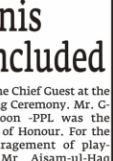
ISLAMABAD: The United States Women's National Team (USWNT) has ended the year 2024 as the number one team in the FIFA Coca-Cola Women's World Rankings. This marks the continuation of their dominance in the women's football world. Spain has moved up to second place, while Germany has returned to the top three, pushing England down to fourth place. Sweden and Canada maintain their positions in the top six, while Brazil and Japan have swapped places. The Netherlands has broken into the top 10, pushing France out of the top tier for the first time in their history. Other notable movements include Poland, Belarus, Indonesia, and Estonia, who have all made significant gains in the rank-

Rank	Team	Points
1	USA	100.00
2	Spain	70.00
3	Germany	65.00
4	England	55.00
5	Sweden	50.00
6	Canada	45.00
7	Brazil	35.00
8	Japan	30.00
9	Korea	25.00
10	Netherlands	20.00

ings. Saudi Arabia has also achieved its highest ranking ever, along with Northern Ireland and Cabo Verde. The next edition of the FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking will be published on March 6, 2025.



# PTF -Trials to Select Teams for ITF/ATF Development Championships and World Junior Tennis Team Event



MUHAMMAD HARRIS

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) conducted trials to select the Pakistan 14 & under Boys and Girls teams for the upcoming ITF/ATF Development Championships scheduled to take place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 13th to 23rd January 2025 and for the World Junior Tennis Team Event

WJT scheduled in February/March 2025. The trials were held from 10th to 12th December 2024 at the PTF Tennis Complex in Islamabad. A total of 12 boys and 8 girls, based on their rankings in the 14 & under category were invited to participate in the trials. Selected Players: Boys:1. Rashid Ali Bachani. Shayan Afridi. Razik Sultan. Girls:1. Bismal Zia. Hajra

Abdur Rehman. The top two boys will represent Pakistan in the ITF/ATF Development Championships while the top three boys will represent Pakistan in the World Junior Tennis Team Event (WJT). Mr. Muhammad Ahd, an ITF Level-2 Coach will accompany the team as a coach. PTF President Mr. Aisam ul Haq Qureshi congratulated the select-

ed players and extended his best wishes to them, acknowledging their hard work and dedication. He remarked that this is a proud moment for the players and their families. PTF Secretary-General Col. Ziauddin Tufail (R) also congratulated the players and expressed confidence in their abilities to perform well on the international stage.

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# ITF Pakistan PPL-Syed Dilawar Abbas World Junior Tennis Championship Leg-2 concluded

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The ITF Pakistan PPL-Syed Dilawar Abbas World Junior Tennis Championship Leg-2 sponsored by Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) is concluded at the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) Tennis Complex in Islamabad. This prestigious event has brought together 80 junior players from around the globe, including 50 boys and 30 girls representing countries such as Pakistan,

Japan, China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Canada, Korea, Germany, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Singapore, USA, Belarus, and Russia. In the Boy's Singles, Yuyuan Guo of China beat Sion Ji of Korea 7-6(3), 6-2 and won the girl's title. Mr. Tarique Mahmood Murtaza Chairman Islamabad Tennis Association (ITA)

was the Chief Guest at the Closing Ceremony. Mr. G. Ali Noon -PPL was the Guest of Honour. For the encouragement of players, Mr. Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, President-PTF and Col. Ziauddin Tufail Secretary-General-PTF were also present at the closing Ceremony and distributed the prizes. The closing ceremony was also attended by Advocate Majid Bashir President-ITA, Mr. Tufail Cheema Secretary-ITA and a large number of players.



ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way at Srinagar Highway during stunning view of sunset, in the Federal Capital.

# Private Medical Colleges Under Scrutiny for Excessive Charges

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Sub-Committee of the Senate Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, chaired by Senator Paliwasha Muhammad Zai Khan, met to address the surging fees charged by private medical colleges and evaluate measures undertaken by the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC). During the meeting, Senator Paliwasha revealed the alarming increase in medical college fees, citing examples such as Abwa Medical College charging Rs. 1.87 crore for its MBBS program, while Akhtar Saeed Medical College and Hazrat Bani Sarkar Medical College demanded Rs. 1.34 crore and Rs. 1.29 crore, respectively. She noted that these fees had skyrocketed from Rs. 8 lakh per year in 2018 to Rs. 30 lakh in the 2023-24 session, deeming the rise unjustifiable. Criticizing the

PMDC, Senator Paliwasha stated that it had failed to regulate these colleges effectively, facilitating the exploitative fee structure. Registrar PMDC, Dr. Shaista Faisal, explained that while the PMDC has been empowered under the 2023 Act to regulate medical college fees, it had limited enforcement capabilities in prior years. She highlighted a 2012 mandate where PMDC had set a cap of Rs. 5 lakh per annum with a 5% annual increase, but this was not adequately protected by law. Despite its recent empowerment, the PMDC failed to provide sufficient details on its enforcement actions post-2023. Addressing these concerns, Special Secretary NHR&RC Mirza Nasir ud Din Mashud informed the Sub-Committee that Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif had formed a committee to determine reasonable fee structures for private medical colleges. The Sub-Committee, in a firm stance, recommended reimbursement of exorbitant fees to the affected parents and restrained private colleges from collecting next year's fee until the issue is resolved. Additionally, the PMDC was directed to scrutinize audit reports of these colleges to ensure transparency. Citizens were encouraged to confidentially report grievances related to private medical colleges by contacting the Sub-Committee at Room No. 2, Parking Area, C-Block, Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunications, C-5 Islamabad, or by calling 051-9229555. The meeting was attended by Senators Syed Masroor Anshar, Dr. Muhammad Humayun Mohmand, Special Secretary NHR&RC Mirza Nasir ud Din Mashud, Registrar PMDC Dr. Shaista Faisal, and other senior officials.

# Registrar of Quaid-e-Azam University Fined for Failing to Disclose Public Information

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Information Commission (PIC) has imposed a fine equivalent to ten days' salary on the Registrar of Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad, for failing to disclose information requested under the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017. According to details, in August 2024, a citizen submitted an information request seeking details regarding faculty members granted Extraordinary Leave (EOL) without pay for postdoctoral research abroad between January 2018 and 2024. The request specifically asked for a certified list of faculty members who received leave under the Surety Bond program after completing their PhDs. When the university failed to provide the

requested information, the appellant filed an appeal with the Commission. In response, the university claimed the information was personal and classified, arguing that the requester had no legitimate reason to access it. The appellant contested this claim, stating that the requested information pertained to public records and cited previous Commission rulings in favor of transparency in public institutions. After reviewing the case, the Pakistan Information Commission ruled that the requested information did not violate individual privacy and was part of public records maintained by the university and involved usage of public fund. The Commission noted that there was no legal exemption under the Right of Access to Information Act,

2017, to withhold it. Consequently, the appeal was allowed, and the Registrar was directed to provide the information within ten days. Despite this order, the university failed to comply. A show-cause notice was issued to the Registrar on November 21, 2024, under Section 20(1)(f) of the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017. The notice, dispatched via registered mail, also went unanswered, and no representative appeared before the Commission. The Commission, in its order dated December 12, 2024, expressed dissatisfaction with the Registrar's conduct, stating that sufficient opportunities were given to comply with the law. The Registrar's failure to respond, appear, or furnish the required information was deemed a willful obstruction of the

Act's implementation and a disregard for the law. As a result, the Commission imposed a fine equivalent to ten days' salary on the Registrar under Section 20(1)(f) of the Act. The Commission directed the Vice Chancellor of Quaid-e-Azam University, the Secretary of the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, and the Accountant General Pakistan Revenue to ensure compliance with the order. Notices have been issued to these authorities to submit compliance reports by the next hearing, scheduled for January 15, 2025. The Pakistan Information Commission reaffirms its commitment to upholding the principles of transparency and accountability as enshrined in the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017.

# Under training ANF officers visit Safe City

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of under training Assistant Directors and Inspectors from the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) visited Safe City Islamabad on Friday. Deputy Director technical Safa City welcomed the delegation, a public relations officer told APP.

He said that the delegation visited the command-and-control center, the data hub unit, modern technology-equipped cameras, and the police operations center hall. They were fully briefed about the procedures and advantages of this project. Under training ANF officers visit Safe City. Furthermore, the student delegation was informed that Safe City Islamabad is playing a significant role in various departments through modern techniques, including the Police Operations Center, Emergency Control Center, Data Hub Unit, Dispatch Control Center, E-Callan System, and the "Pucar-15" helpline.

# Opinion & Editorial

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**DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD**

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## Judiciary farm

**Abdul Moiz Jafarri**  
A MONTH has passed since the government altered the scheme and practice of the superior judiciary via the 26th Amendment to the Constitution. These amendments were first attempted in the dark of the night, without sharing even a draft of how our social contract was to be altered. Hence a parliamentarian pick-and-drop service was run by the hybrids and championed by their minions has already been commented on extensively. We were told that this was in part to protect the democratic process from maverick judges. We were told these changes were necessary, and would allow for a streamlining of all judicial decision-making, reduce delays and pendencies in courts and help the judges focus on their jobs rather than the distractions of political activism. We were told that these amendments weren't the empire simply striking back when it found a willing individual in the chief justice's seat, but a necessary balancing of an off-perverted situation of power that the judiciary had created through arbitrariness and excess. Consider, then, the state of the judiciary after the amendments made in its structure have been allowed to take root. The 'constitutional bench' of the Supreme Court has been assembled without any reasoning given as to why the members picked made the cut and why those ignored did not. The arbitrary power of the chief justice in making benches, the structuring of which this amendment was deemed necessary, has been replaced by the arbitrary power of the executive to constitute the benches. Introduced into the mix is the inherent conflict of interest that the government is choosing which senior judges get to decide cases in which by far the most frequent respondent is the government itself. Consider the state of the judiciary after the amendments have been allowed to take root. On the competence and effi-

ciency front, these constitutional benches have worked for more than 30 days and are yet to author a streamlining of all judicial decision-making, to list the most important constitutional questions, including those asked of the amendments that gave rise to their existence. The appeals against the military trials of civilians won't, with people behind bars despite a Supreme Court judgement declaring their incarceration illegal, whilst the new constitutional judges are busy hearing suo motu cases where the litigants are dead, or regime policies, under challenge now, are reversed or rendered redundant. On the judicial activism front, the constitutional judges have remarked that they continue to enjoy suo motu powers. We have to rely on the reporting of their remarks because, on the transparency front, livestreaming of these proceedings are currently not available, although it is an established position that access of the public via livestreaming in matters involving fundamental constitutional questions is mandatory. When it comes to appointing more judges, things aren't looking better. Lawyers are nominated for elevation to the respective superior courts. The Judicial Commission is then made to realise by the country's senior-most judge that the very amendment to the Constitution by which it itself is born contains an express command to create a set of rules of procedure, including a structure for criteria for judges' appointment. So the appointments are put off until the rules can be framed to measure the candidates against. How seriously this process of rule-making is being taken — as the one way to end arbitrary appointments — is best exemplified by the timelines given by the Judicial Commission. The deadline afforded to all members to submit names of possible candidates to the judiciary for consideration falls before the date on which the rules are to be finalised. In this first round, we seem to be replacing the arbitrary method of judicial nomination with nomination by roulette. Pick people who you think

will meet the standard which we will later set for them. Meanwhile, why doesn't everyone throw in a few names and let's spin the wheel a bit? Meanwhile, the country's senior-most judge, who has worked for over a year on developing the rules, triggered provincial constitutional benches, the Judicial Commission met and voted to ignore the top eight judges of the court when constituting the benches. The vote passed only because two Supreme Court constitutional bench members in the commission voted in favour of the executive's proposal, against the vote of the province's chief justice, who is best placed to make such a determination, and against their own chief justice (of Pakistan). No reasons were given by any on the commission as to why this decision was made and why these judges were ignored. Meanwhile, the head of the constitutional bench in the Supreme Court needed an extra judge to hear the military trials case, and because the amendment requires provincial seniority to be respected, he was to pick the next senior-most judge in line. He did not, skipping the next two judges from Punjab to replace Justice Ayesha Malik. No reasons were given as to how this could be done, why the need was felt in the first place. Already slow-crawling cases have ground to a halt. To scratch an itchy spot, we have cut off an arm. Courtesy Safa

## Life in a 'posh' area

**Omar Qurashi**  
If most 'posh' neighbourhoods in Pakistan — and in particular in Karachi — residents must often do things on their own and pay for them even while they pay taxes and other charges for these very services. Everyone in Karachi is billed monthly for water, but many never get this water. Instead, they pay for water through expensive tankers and the cost can run into tens of thousands every month for a household of 6-8 people plus domestic help. Some areas get water for 1-2 hours every 10-12 days and many don't get even a drop. The most obvious question is that if there's enough water to be supplied through water tankers then why can't it be supplied through the piped network? And the answer to that is that yes there should be enough water to supply to all city residents (after all, they are billed every month for water supply to their homes) but it is willfully diverted by a cabal of greedy officials, politicians, policemen, and other important and powerful members of society. And this happens because on an annual scale, the profits of controlling Karachi's residential water supply, or at least partially controlling, is a multi-billion rupee enterprise and in this each player — from bottom to the top — has a cut. And who pays? Karachi's hapless residents. And there's not much by way of protest, presumably because most of these residents who also pay money water charges to the city's water authority are able to afford paying thousands extra every month for water tankers. Only when the political leadership itself turns off the hydrants that supply water to Karachi's tanker mafia will this matter be fixed and this relentless robbery of residents come to an end. Then there is the matter of security: many residents in these 'posh' areas have security guards at their homes, or even offices. They also take these security guards whenever they need to step out of their homes. The result is often men armed in city streets (after the open back of a Vivo brandishing weapons, which violates a law against the display of weapons in public by anyone other uniformed police or law enforcement personnel). Many people have private security guards even though the Sindh Police (and through it the Karachi police) gets the largest chunk of funds from the annual provincial budget. Then take the case of basic street cleaning and garbage collection. While there are some areas that do have a reasonably functional garbage collection system, they are the exception and not the rule as far as Karachi is concerned. They often see debris lying around — in many cases caused by roadwork carried out by the municipal agency — but when residents ask that it be picked up the requests are ignored for months. Courtesy The News

## Experimenting with democracy

One of the seasons in Pakistan is the season of 'national government' — a time when everyone suddenly and without any prompt starts talking about a 'national government' that will change the course of Pakistani politics and democracy and fix everything. Just as suddenly, the season shifts as well. We are currently experiencing National Government Season — emblematic of a troubled political system. From speculative statements by politicians to lofty suggestions by analysts, the idea always seems to generate considerable buzz. This time too it has the usual propping it up as a solution. Most dismiss it as wishful thinking by those left out of the corridors of power, as well as a calculated attempt to 'test the waters' — which, to be fair to Pakistani politicians, have never passed the national government test. Here's a simple fact: a national government is neither a solution to Pakistan's current problems nor a viable way forward. Proponents of the national government theory argue that it is necessary to resolve the political tensions that have gripped the country since the no-confidence vote against former prime minister Imran Khan two years ago. They believe that Pakistan's precarious political climate demands a government that includes representatives from all major political parties, including the PTI, and that such a setup would de-escalate tensions and pave the way for fresh elections. Critics rightly point out the fundamental flaws in this approach. There is no evidence to suggest that a national government would succeed where others have failed. On the contrary, such an arrangement risks further entrenching the hybrid governance model that has undermined Pakistan's democratic institutions.

# Chinese embassy holds CPEC's outstanding Pakistani staff awarding ceremony

**JAVED KHAN**  
 ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of China in Pakistan on Friday organized the awarding ceremony for outstanding Pakistani staff of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects to recognize 43 persons from different projects who have contributed to the CPEC construction. Addressing the ceremony, Chinese Ambassador Jang Zaidong emphasized that we should look at reality, trends and prospects, and strengthen our confidence in practical cooperation between the two countries, especially the CPEC construction. Chinese embassy holds CPEC's outstanding Pakistani staff awarding ceremony. He said, "We have favorable opportunities for the development of our two countries. The continued recovery of the

economies of the two countries has created new opportunities and injected new impetus into our promotion of practical cooperation, especially the CPEC construction." The ambassador said, "We have high-level strategic guidance from the two countries. The important instructions and consensus of the leaders of the two countries have provided us with fundamental guidance and enhanced confidence in promoting high-quality joint construction of the CPEC." Jang Zaidong said, "We have a solid foundation for cooperation between the two countries. The fruitful results achieved in cooperation between the two countries, especially in the CPEC, have laid a solid foundation and provided important support for building an

upgraded version of the CPEC." He said, "We are ready to work with Pakistan to draw the blueprint of the CPEC to the end, coordinate high-quality development with high-level security, coordinate quantitative growth with quality improvement, and coordinate the advancement of major landmark projects with the construction of 'small but beautiful' livelihood projects, coordinate cooperation in traditional fields with cooperation in emerging fields, create an 'upgraded version' of the CPEC, and write a new chapter of pragmatic cooperation, building a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era, and continuously enriching the vivid practice of high-quality joint construction of the Belt and Road."



**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Minister for Planning & Development Ahsan Iqbal along with Chinese Ambassador Mr Jang Zaidong, awarded the staff working on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at the Chinese Embassy for their outstanding performance and contributions to the success of the initiative.

# Rana Tanveer praises KSR relief for food basket distribution in Pakistan's remote communities

**MOHSIN ALI**  
 ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday lauded the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its unwavering humanitarian efforts and contributions to Pakistan at an event marked the distribution of food baskets to underprivileged communities in remote areas of the country. Addressing the launch of latest food security initiative in Pakistan for 2024-2025, organised by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRC) here at the Saudi Embassy, the minister said, "It is indeed a privilege and honor for me to stand here today as we gather and witness on occasion, a testament to the enduring spirit of generosity and compassion shared by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan."



Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Rana Tanveer praised their commitment to global humanitarian causes. He described their benevolence as "a shining example of Islamic values and teachings." The distribution of food baskets, he noted, would bring much-needed relief to thousands of families grappling with poverty, malnutrition, and food insecurity. "These efforts resonate deeply with Pakistan's vision of building an inclusive and resilient

# Terrorism claimed 924 lives, NA briefed on 10-month data

**PEAK POINT**  
 ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly was briefed on the 10-months data regarding terrorism-related incidents, highlighting a surge in militant attacks that claimed at least 924 lives, including those of civilians and law enforcement personnel, during the period. A total of 1,566 terrorist incidents were reported during the first 10 months of the ongoing year, while counter-terrorism operations resulted in the killing of 341 terrorists. This information was disclosed by the Ministry of Interior with the submission of details of casualties and injuries in terrorist attacks to the lower house of the parliament. As per the shared data, at least 2,122 people faced injuries in the terrorist attacks recorded from January to October. Of the total casualties, 573 were members of the law enforcement agencies (LEAs), accounting for 26.4 per cent of total martyrdoms, and 1,353 LEAs were injured,

accounting for approximately 64% of total injuries. Meanwhile, 351 civilians were also martyred and 768 civilians were injured. The data shows that LEAs were the primary target of terrorists. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa witnessed a sharp rise in terrorism with 948 incidents claiming the lives of 583 people and left 1,375 injured. Of these, 437 were members of the LEAs, constituting 74% of the total, 1,259 were injured, constituting approximately 77% of the total injured. The attacks also martyred 146 civilians and left 316 injured. In KP, terrorists mainly targeted the LEAs. In Balochistan, 582 terrorist attacks led to 307 martyrdoms and 644 injured. Out of the total 110 LEAs personnel were martyred, accounting for 35% of the total, while 263 injured. In Punjab, 197 civilians also fell as martyrs, representing 64% of the total, with 381 civilians injured.

# Iranian Ambassador, Minister discusses strengthening bilateral ties, trade

**PEAK POINT**  
 ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, Reza Amir Moghadam, paid a courtesy call on Federal Minister for Privatization, Investment Board and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan, here Friday to discuss matters of mutual interest and bilateral cooperation. During the meeting, both officials engaged in discussions on enhancing bilateral relations between Pakistan and Iran. The meeting discussed the potential for increasing trade and investment, as well as the potential for stronger cooperation in areas like road infrastructure and trade corridors. Minister Aleem Khan emphasized the strong religious and historical ties that



bind Pakistan and Iran, underlining the importance of further enhancing these connections. He also expressed Pakistan's desire to continue strengthening its relationship with Iran in various sectors. "We must work towards increasing cooperation between the two countries in all fields, and address any obstacles hindering trade and investment," said Aleem. He also noted that Pakistan's improving economy offers attractive opportunities for foreign investments, adding that both nations could benefit from sharing expertise and experience. The discussion also focused on the role of cooperation in the transportation sector and the challenges that need to be addressed on priority.

# IT sector key to economic growth: Finance Minister

**ARSHAD MALIK**  
 ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Friday underscored the IT sector's critical role as a rapidly growing industry contributing to Pakistan's economic growth. "The IT sector has the potential to be a cornerstone of foreign exchange generation through exports remittances. A collaborative approach, consistent policies, and targeted reforms are essential to unleash its full potential and repatriation of foreign earn-

ings," he stated while chairing a high-level meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee on IT Export Remittances. The meeting was convened to explore ways for boosting the flow of IT export remittances, which are crucial for Pakistan's economic growth and digital economy, said a press release issued by finance ministry. The meeting was attended by Minister of State for IT & Telecom Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja; Advisor to the Finance Minister, Khurram Schehbaz; Chairman FBR; Governor SBP; CEO

Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB); Secretary and Special Secretary IT & Telecom; Member IT & Telecom; and senior officials from the Finance Division. The meeting highlighted the sector's opportunities and challenges, focusing on improving the ease of capital movement to boost IT export remittances. Participants noted that while IT exports are steadily increasing, a substantial portion of revenue remains unremitted. Discussions emphasized the need for simplified procedures, consis-

# 318 Pakistanis return to Islamabad from war-torn Syria

**PEAK POINT**  
 ISLAMABAD: Under the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, 318 Pakistani citizens evacuated and brought back to Pakistan via a special chartered flight. The flight, operated by a private Georgian airline, departed from Beirut and landed at Islamabad International Airport on December 13 at 1:15 am. Pakistan's Ambassador to Lebanon, Salman Athar, along with the embassy staff, personally saw off the passengers at Beirut Airport. The evacuees included pilgrims and other citizens caught in Syria amid the ongoing conflict. Upon their arrival in Islamabad, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, along with officials from the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), warmly received the returnees. A special assistance desk was also set up, and refreshments were arranged to ensure the comfort of the passengers. Out of approximately 2,000 Pakistanis residing in Syria, over 700 are married and living there with their families. To date, 475 Pakistanis, including 250 visitors and 20 students and teachers, have crossed into Lebanon from Syria.

# BISP, Nestle Pakistan discuss expands economic empowerment measures for deserving women

**PEAK POINT**  
 ISLAMABAD: Around 3,500 BISP beneficiaries are currently working as sales agents in 29 districts across the country under the partnership between BISP and Nestle. While additional 500 beneficiaries will be included in the program next year. This was revealed during a meeting of Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid and Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad, with the Corporate Head of Nestle Pakistan, Waqar Sheikh, at the BISP Headquarters on Friday. During the meeting,

# Govt will not reject PTI's offer for negotiations, says Sanaullah

**PEAK POINT**  
 ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Rana Sanaullah on Friday revealed that the government has not yet received a formal message from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on initiating the process of dialogue despite the rival party's claims of having formed a negotiations committee. In a bid to create an "atmosphere of reconciliation" and defuse pre-emptive tensions in the country amid PTI's civil disobedience threat, the former ruling party and the government reportedly agreed to use parliamentary forum for negotiation. For the task, the Imran Khan-founded party has also formed a five-member negotiation



committee comprising Omar Ayub Khan, Ali Amin Gandapur, Sahibzada Haid Raza Salim Akram Raja and Asad Qaiser. However, the party has allegedly failed to formally communicate to the government in this regard. Criticising the political rival for this reason, the Adviser to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Political Affairs said that PTI's stance towards the government is still the same: "Why should we engage in talks with you?" The former minister's remarks came during a discussion on the potential dialogue between the government and PTI. Sanaullah reiterated that the PML-N has always favoured resolution of issues through talks, recalling that the party ever proposed a "Charter of Economy" when it was in the opposition. He assured that PML-N would not reject any message for dialogue from PTI. "If it reaches out, we will not refuse to engage," he added, noting that efforts were made to contact PTI before their "final call." He, however, clarified that discussions had not included the offer of the release of PTI founder.



**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chairs a high-level meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee on IT Export Remittances at the Finance Division.