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PM vows to modernize Pakistan Railways, inaugurates new Shalimar Express

Upgrades Karachi Cantt Station facilities

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Prime Minister (PM) Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the digitization of Pakistan Railways and the provision of modern facilities would play a key role in strengthening the national economy. He added that the federal government, in collaboration with the Sindh government, would modernize the Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) and upgrade all railway stations across the province and the country.

He expressed these views while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the New Shalimar Express and the newly upgraded waiting areas and lounges at Karachi Cantt Railway Station during his visit to Karachi. Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah, Federal Minister for Railways

Muhammad Hanif Abbasi, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar, and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

The PM said that soon after assuming office, Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi worked diligently to modernize the railway system. After revamping Lahore Railway Station, Karachi Cantt Station has now also been upgraded with contemporary facilities. He said that all railway stations in the province would be modernized with support from the Sindh government to ensure better travel facilities for the passengers.

PM Shehbaz said the Shalimar Express running between Karachi and Lahore has been converted into a new, upgraded train. He described Karachi as not only the economic hub but also "the heart of Pakistan."



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inaugurates newly constructed facilities at cantt Railway station.

Jian Zedong called on Mohsin Naqvi, discusses deepening Pakistan-China security tie

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi held a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Jian Zedong.

During the meeting, Pakistan-China bilateral relations and matters of mutual interest were discussed.

Ambassador Jian Zedong condemned the suicide attack near the Islamabad District Courts and expressed his condolences over the tragic loss of human lives.

The Ambassador said that the spokesperson of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had also condemned this unfortunate incident.

Both sides agreed to further strengthen cooperation in counter-terrorism and security.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan-China relations are based on mutual trust and respect.

He added that China is a trusted friend of Pakistan, which has stood by the country in every difficult moment.

The Chinese Ambassador said that China will continue to extend full cooperation to Pakistan.

Bangladesh's ousted PM Hasina Wajid sentenced to death for students crackdown

PEAK POINT

DHAKA: A Bangladesh court sentenced ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to death on Monday, concluding a months-long trial that found her guilty of ordering a deadly crackdown on a student-led uprising last year.

The ruling comes months ahead of parliamentary elections expected to be held in early February.

Hasina's Awami League party has been barred from contesting and it is feared that Monday's verdict could stoke fresh unrest ahead of the vote.

The International Crimes Tribunal, Bangladesh's domestic war crimes court located in the capital Dhaka,

delivered the guilty verdict amid tight security

with the Awami League's participation.



and in Hasina's absence after she fled to India in August 2024.

The verdict can be appealed in the Supreme Court.

But Hasina's son and adviser, Sajeb Wazed, told Reuters on the eve of the verdict that they would not appeal unless a democratically elected government took office

the protests between July 15 and August 5, 2024, with thousands more injured — most of them by gunfire from security forces. Hasina was represented by a state-appointed defence counsel who told the court that the charges against her were baseless and pleaded for her acquittal.

Ahead of the verdict, Hasina dismissed the accusations and the fairness of the Tribunal proceedings, asserting a guilty verdict was "a foregone conclusion".

Bangladesh has been tense ahead of the verdict, with at least 30 crude bomb explosions and 26 vehicles torched across the country over the past few days. There have been no casualties, however.

According to a United Nations report, up to 1,400 people may have been killed during

At least 42 Indian Umrah pilgrims die in collision between bus and tanker

PEAK POINT

RIYADH: A bus carrying Indian Umrah pilgrims from Makkah to Madinah collided with an oil tanker killing 42 people on Monday.

Local authorities arrived at the scene and rescue operations continued. The exact number of fatalities and the identification of the victims are still being confirmed.

According to Indian media, 16 individuals belonged to Hyderabad, the capital of the state of Telangana.

It is reported that the bus was carrying 43 pilgrims, including 20 women and 11 children.

UN Security Council set to vote on international force for Gaza

PEAK POINT

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Security Council is set to vote Monday on a US-drafted resolution bolstering Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan, especially the deployment of an international force, as Washington warns that a failure to act could lead to renewed fighting. The draft, which has been revised several times as a result of high-stakes negotiations, "endorses" the plan, which allowed for a fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hamas to take hold on October 10 in the war-ravaged Palestinian territory. The Gaza Strip.

No-confidence ousts Haq in AJK; PPP's Rathore takes over premiership

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A no-confidence motion against Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq succeeded on Monday, with 36 members in the Legislative Assembly voting in favour of it and two against it. The two lawmakers who voted against the motion were from the PTI. Meanwhile, 14 lawmakers abstained from voting in the 53-member assembly.

After the votes were counted, Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar, who was chairing the session, pronounced PPP's Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore as the new AJK premier. Under the AJK Constitution, a vote of no confidence against the sitting prime minister automatically counts as a vote



in favour of the lawmaker proposed as his successor in the same resolution.

Rathore is the 16th prime minister elected in AJK since 1975, when the parliamentary form of government was introduced in the region.

The no-trust motion was tabled by PPP lawmaker Qasim Majeed in the assembly today, after a resolution for a no-confidence vote against outgoing PM Haq was submitted to the Assembly Secretariat on Friday afternoon. The resolution was signed by 25 lawmakers, 23 from the



PPP and two from the PML-N.

Shortly after today's session began, Haq also arrived in the house. He went up to Rathore and exchanged greetings with him. Haq left after delivering a speech.

People view proceedings of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Assembly live on big screen installed outside the assembly's building on Nov 17. — Photo by Tariq Naqash

Big screens were installed outside the assembly's building, where people viewed the proceedings

DPM Dar reaches Moscow to participate in SCO summit



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar reached Moscow on Monday to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting in Moscow from November 17-18. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Galuzin, senior officials from the Russian Foreign Ministry, and officials of the Pakistan Embassy welcomed DPM Dar upon his arrival at the airport. Representatives from Mongolia, Bahrain, Egypt, Qatar, Kuwait and Turkmenistan, as well as leaders of regional organisations, including the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Euro Asian Economic Union (EAEU), Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).



SPORTS



Pakistan, SL, Zimbabwe set to feature in maiden T20I tri-series on Pakistan soil



PEAK POINT The side featured in the final of the ACC Men's T20 Asia Cup in the UAE and later defeated South Africa 2-1 in a three-match T20I series at home. Earlier this year, Pakistan swept Bangladesh 3-0 in a commanding performance in Lahore.

Ahead of the event, Pakistan featured in a full bilateral series against South Africa comprising two Tests, three ODIs and three T20Is. The hosts drew the Test series 1-1, won the ODI series 2-1 in Faisalabad. They also completed a 3-0 clean sweep against Sri Lanka in the recently concluded ODI series at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium.

Pakistan T20I captain Salman Ali Agha ahead of the tri-series said, "The tri-series comes at an ideal time for us. It allows the group to play consistent cricket against two competitive sides and further refine our T20I plans ahead of all-important ICC Men's T20 World Cup next year.

"We have produced encouraging performances in recent months, winning the tri-series in Sharjah, qualifying for the final of the Asia Cup and winning white-ball series against South Africa and Sri Lanka. The team showed excellent discipline in the ODI series against Sri Lanka and we look forward to carrying that momentum into this tournament.

"We have seen great support for the home side from the Rawalpindi fans and we are expecting quality contests throughout the series."

15-member T20I squad: Salman Ali Agha (captain), Abdul Samad, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Wasim Jr, Mohammad Salman Mirza, Naseem Shah, Sahibzada Farhan (wicket-keeper), Saim Ayub, Shaheen Shah Afridi.

Pakistan squad holds training session ahead of Tri-Nation series 6

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan T20 squad held an optional training session at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, with several key players participating in the practice session.

According to details, the players who took part in the training session included Salman Ali Agha, Babar Azam, Mohammad Nawaz, Saim Ayub, Usman Khan, Salman Mirza, Usman Tariq, and Abdul Samad.

Under the guidance of the coaching staff, the players focused on batting, bowling, and fielding drills.

The tri-nation series is set to begin Tuesday, with Pakistan taking on Zimbabwe in the first match.

ITBA Masters Tenpin Bowling Cup on Nov 22

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The 2nd ITBA Masters Tenpin Bowling Cup Tournament under the auspices of Islamabad Tenpin Bowling Association (ITBA), will be played on November 22 here at the Leisure City Bowling Club, Safa Gold Mall, F-7 Markaz. According to General Secretary, Islamabad Tenpin Bowling Association, Daniyal Ejaz the President, Pakistan Tenpin Bowling Federation, Ijaz-ur-Rehman will inaugurate the tournament. He said that players from the federal capital will participate in the tournament. Two categories of competitions will be organised in the tournament, including singles and doubles categories. Prizes will be distributed among the winning players at the end of the tournament.

Need Domestic League to unlock players' potential: Aitzaz Ahsan



PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD: Pakistani footballer Aitzaz Ahsan believes the country's players possess immense talent but lack opportunities to showcase their skills, emphasizing that establishing a domestic football league should be of great help. "After competing in a domes-

Stadium of Pakistan possible squad for the Sports Complex. Syria Pakistan and Syria currently holds the top position in the group standings. In their last away encounter, Syria defeated Pakistan 2-0.

Pakistan head coach Nolberto Solano, said the team is fully aware of the challenges. He emphasized the importance of giving players international exposure and said Pakistan must engage in continuous football activity.

Solano noted that the national team delivered an improved performance against Afghanistan and that players are eager to perform in the upcoming fixture.

He revealed that there are plans to bring more talent into the national squad, and said they received a warm welcome in national match will Pakistan and commend the excellent security arrangements.

He added that the qualifying round and has strengthened its game through a continuous developmental journey.

He expressed confidence that the match against Pakistan will be a good contest.

Syria's football head coach Jose Lana said they received a warm welcome in national match will Pakistan and commend the excellent security arrangements.

Players celebrate Babar Azam's record century, Mohammad Rizwan's 100th match



Anam (5-34) hands Stars first win in National Women's One-Day tournament

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Stars and Invincibles got back to winning ways after bagging defeats in the first round of the National Women's One-Day Tournament 2025-26 as the second round took place on Sunday at the HPC Ground and Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad.

Left-arm spinner Anam Amin returned impressive figures of 5-34 in her 8.2 overs as Challengers were bowled out for 150 in 37.2 overs in pursuit of the 188-run target set by Stars at the HPC Ground, Faisalabad.

Challengers looked well on their way to chase the target before slipping from 101-2 as they lost eight wickets for 49 runs. Opening batter Sadaf Shamas fell five runs short of her century (95, 127b, 8x4s, 3x6s) but couldn't find support from the other Challengers batters after no.4 Huraina Sajjad's

(32, 43b, 5x4s) departure. Aleena Shah, Rameen Shamim and Neha Sharmin Nadeem picked up two wickets each.

Stars' Syeda Aroob Shah chipped in with all-round contribution of 2-20 in six overs and a 47-ball 42 at no.5 hitting five fours and one six

down the 113-run target with 175 balls to spare and eight wickets in the bag. After opting to bat first, Strikers were 58-2 before their innings ran into trouble as they only managed 112 with Aliya Riaz top-scoring with 31 off 59 balls hitting two fours.

Preparations reviewed for the 20th International Cholistan Desert Rally





CDA under fire as senators question billion-rupee farmhouses and repeated plot transfers

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges delivered one of its toughest indictments of federal institutions in years, launching into the Capital Development Authority over missing files, five time plot transfers inside CDA offices, billion rupee farmhouse disputes, and long-pending corruption cases that have left victims trapped in legal and administrative paralysis. The Committee, chaired by Senator Waqar Mehdi at Parliament House, declared that CDA had failed in its most basic responsibility to protect citizens from institutional negligence. Senator Rubina Khalid repeatedly pressed CDA officials on how a single plot could be transferred five times without detection, while senators noted that each disputed farmhouse involved in the matter was valued at around

Rs 1.5 billion, with many cases still tied up in courts. CDA officials were unable to give a clear explanation. Senator Palwasha Khan sharply criticized the broader accountability environment, calling both FIA and NCCIA corrupt institutions and recommending that all dubious allotment cases be shifted to NAB. The Committee's frustration deepened after CDA admitted that multiple corruption cases involving its officials had been handed to FIA but had seen no visible resolution. The confrontation began when the Committee took up the case of a missing file belonging to a resident of Sector I-10/4, Islamabad. Senator Waqar Mehdi said the victim, a salaried individual, had been left in distress because of CDA negligence and demanded immediate relief. CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa told the Committee that land

records were being digitized, that cases were being pursued professionally, and that all decisions of the court would be implemented. He added that CDA was prepared to provide records and even transfer the matter to NAB if required, but the Committee maintained a hard line, questioning the authority's internal control systems and institutional discipline. The meeting then turned to the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority's compliance report. PTA informed the Committee that its role is limited to the removal or blocking of unlawful online content under Section 37 of PECA and that the objectionable segment of a video posted by Rizwan Razi had already been removed by the publisher. PTA reported that it had identified 23 URLs sharing the material and that a majority had already been blocked or removed. PTA

reiterated that investigations and prosecutions under PECA do not fall within its mandate. The Committee next reviewed the Federal Board of Revenue's report on postings of Customs officers in Balochistan. FBR stated that recent transfers were based on intelligence reports indicating the facilitation of smuggling networks. Numerous sepoy, inspectors and superintendents had been removed and not reinstated. FBR said that in anti-smuggling operations, documentary evidence required for formal disciplinary action is rarely available, making transfers the most effective tool to disrupt networks. After a joint inquiry with the Senate, FBR said it had issued transfer orders for two officials, with a third to follow, while five others would not be posted back to Balochistan as it could compromise efforts against smug-

gling. The Committee then examined serious concerns regarding Dr. Nadeem ul Haque, former Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission and former Vice Chancellor of PIDE. Officials informed senators that Dr. Haque had previously been fined over a harassment conviction and had shown repeated disregard toward Parliament. Despite this, he continued to publish articles invoking his former state positions, which the Planning Commission described as misleading and harmful to institutional credibility. Members expressed strong concern over his conduct, stating that his writings appeared irrational. The Committee directed that media houses be advised not to publish material in which he uses past state affiliations in a misleading manner. Tensions heightened when the privilege motion moved by Senator Nawab

Umer Farooq Kasi was taken up. Officials briefed the Committee on the abduction and murder of Musavir Khan Kakar, stating that kidnappers had demanded a ransom of Rs 700 million from a jewellery trader. When the ransom was not paid, the child was murdered and later recovered from an isolated area. A post mortem examination has been completed. Senator Waqar Mehdi expressed deep concern over the worsening security situation in Quetta and announced that the Committee would conduct an on ground visit for a detailed briefing from local authorities. Concluding the proceedings, Senator Waqar Mehdi said that all departments must furnish complete records, respond transparently, and demonstrate accountability. The Committee will take up the matter again in its next scheduled meeting.

Pakistan hosts ICAST-2025, bringing global space community to Islamabad

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is set to become the centre of global scientific attention as the International Conference on Applications of Space Science and Technology (ICAST-2025) begins from November 18-20 at the Institute of Space Technology (IST) in Islamabad.

Organized jointly by the

Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) and IST, the conference carries the theme "Space for Sustainable Development," underscoring the growing role of space-based solutions in addressing global challenges.

ICAST-2025 is expected to be one of the largest space-related gatherings in the region,



drawing more than 2,000 participants, including over 70 international delegates from 25 countries across Asia, Europe, Africa, North America, and Oceania.

Senior officials from global space organizations, renowned scientists, researchers, astronauts, policymakers, and industry experts will be attending the three-day event. The

conference will open with an inaugural ceremony, followed by a rich and diverse programme designed to promote dialogue, research collaboration, and knowledge exchange. Participants will engage in panel discussions, seminars, plenary sessions, masterclasses, and a series of technical sessions covering emerging trends in satellite technologies.

Opinion & Editorial

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Agriculture crisis

A NEW FAO report, Impact of Disasters on Agriculture and Food Security, is a grim reminder of the toll climate-driven disasters are exacting on global agriculture and food systems. The estimated cost of these disasters in terms of agricultural losses over the last 30 years is staggering: \$3.26tr, or 4pc of global agricultural GDP. And behind the statistics lie millions of lost livelihoods, growing hunger and the increasing fragility of rural economies. The message is that climate disasters are intensifying faster than we can cope.

The report also highlights a parallel digital revolution that could transform how we manage agricultural risks. AI, remote sensing, drones, sensors, and digital insurance platforms are opening new opportunities for proactive action rather than reactive responses. These technologies have enabled more precise early warning systems and allowed millions of farmers to access parametric insurance and timely advisories. However, we can also witness the widening gap between countries able to harness these technologies and those still struggling to gain even basic climate resilience. Nowhere is this divide more evident than in Asia, which accounts for nearly 47pc of all global agricultural losses, reflecting the region's acute exposure to floods, storms and droughts.

Water under siege

Syed Khawar Mehdi
When India announced earlier this year that it was 'suspending' the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), the warning bells in Islamabad rang loud.

Days later, Afghanistan's interim government confirmed its intention to fast-track a major dam on the Kunar River, a key tributary of the Kabul that flows into Pakistan's Indus system. Together, these moves signal a new and deeply troubling phase in South Asia's hydropolitics, one in which water is no longer just a shared resource but a potential weapon. For a country whose very survival depends on the Indus Basin, the threat is existential: can Pakistan defend its waters before they are cut off, and what kind of defence makes sense in a region already haunted by conflict?

being the lower riparian, Pakistan signed the IWT on September 19, 1960 under the advice and insistence of the World Bank and the US—conceding its rights to the three eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) during the negotiations. What was presented as a negotiated settlement was, in essence, a strategic renunciation of natural claims. The final outcome, celebrated internationally as a model water-sharing accord, allocated the eastern rivers to India and the western rivers to Pakistan, specifically the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab.

The treaty survived wars in 1965, 1971 and 1999—and countless crises. Yet in April 2025, India abruptly declared the treaty 'in abeyance' after a security flare-up in Pahalgam. Pakistan called it a false-flag provocation and warned that tampering with Indus flows would be an act of war. Experts acknowledge that India currently lacks the infrastructure to cut off western river flows entirely, but the political signalling is unmistakable: suspending the treaty is less about engineering capacity than geopolitical leverage. In an era of climate stress, leverage can rapidly morph into coercion.

To Pakistan's north, Afghanistan's renewed push to dam the Kunar River adds urgency. The Kunar contributes nearly three-quarters of the Kabul River's annual flow, which enters Pakistan near Peshawar and ultimately feeds the Indus system. Pakistan has long sought a water-sharing framework with Kabul; none has materialised. Kabul's announcement to "begin construction as soon as possible" asserts sovereign right but intensifies Pakistan's water insecurity. Nearly 80 per cent of Pakistan's renewable freshwater originates beyond its borders; if both India and Afghanistan pursue aggressive upstream development, the Indus Basin could face a two-front squeeze.

This mounting anxiety feeds an increasingly pointed debate at home: should

Pakistan adopt pre-emptive measures, such as a strategic dam on the Chitral River (which becomes the Kunar inside Afghanistan), before upstream constraints turn catastrophic? But unilateral action near contentious frontiers risks diplomatic escalation. Water wars rarely open with airstrikes—they begin with survey teams, bulldozers and hurried construction orders. The wiser strategy is to build internal strength before external confrontation.

That strength may lie not only in mountain reservoirs but beneath our rivers. Pakistan's riverine aquifers are vast underground reservoirs that extend not only under the riverbed but also alongside it throughout the floodplains, forming one of the world's largest connected groundwater systems, paralleling the Indus and its tributaries, and holding an estimated 400 million acre-feet of water. Hydrologists like Dr Hassan Abbas argue this is Pakistan's true 'strategic storage': nature's giant underground dam, immune to bombing, diversion, sabotage or blockade. Sustainable extraction technologies, such as horizontal collector wells, could secure urban supply, support agriculture during droughts and serve as a national water reserve. Crucially, unlike surface dams, aquifer development avoids international friction and domestic displacement.

Courtesy The News

Tenuous currents

Aisha Khan

IN a region where rivers carve the landscape and also trace the fault lines of politics, the Kabul River basin stands out as a microcosm of looming water insecurity. For Pakistan and Afghanistan, the river system presents an unusual hydrological and diplomatic twist, which in the absence of a comprehensive treaty, means increasing the risks of conflict, over a resource that is both a lifeline and geopolitical. The Kabul River system has emerged as a potential flashpoint in Pak-Afghan relations, with growing concerns that Afghanistan's accelerated dam construction—supported by foreign actors, particularly India—could alter river flows critical for Pakistan's irrigation, hydropower, and food security.

Pakistan's complex position as both an upper and lower riparian on different tributaries of the basin presents both risks and opportunities. The Chitral River originates in Pakistan and flows into Afghanistan as the Kunar River, before re-entering Pakistan to join the Kabul River and eventually the Indus. This geographic configuration gives Pakistan upstream leverage, yet its downstream dependence makes it vulnerable to flow reductions. The Kabul River system has emerged as a potential flashpoint in Pak-Afghan relations. Recent hydrological estimates indicate that Pakistan currently receives around 17 million acre feet annually from the Kabul River system, contributing nearly 20 per cent of total Indus inflows during the early Kharif season. Projected upstream development by Afghanistan including up to a dozen dams could reduce flows by approximately 3 MAF (about 16pc), directly impacting early cropping, water storage, and energy generation in KP and downstream Punjab. Climate change further compounds this risk by reducing glacial melt predictability and altering seasonal runoff patterns. The result: rising potential for hydro-political tension and environmental insecurity in a basin already lacking a formal water-sharing framework.

Courtesy Dawn

Pakistan's economic future tied to population, climate action: Aurangzeb



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday said Pakistan's long-term economic outlook was inseparably linked to how effectively the country confronted the dual national challenges of rapid population growth and mounting climate vulnerability.

He expressed these views while addressing the launch ceremony of the District Vulnerability Index for Pakistan (DVIP), organized by the

Population Council here.

The minister noted that while the country continued its trajectory toward macroeconomic stabilization and growth, Pakistan could not realize its full potential without addressing the pressures created by population momentum and escalating climate risks.

He highlighted that the impacts of high population growth were reflected in persistent human development challenges, including child stunting, learning poverty and a workforce insufficiently equipped for the future.

At the same time, the minister said, climate change continued to expose communities to extreme temperatures, floods, droughts, and environmental degradation, with the most severe effects falling on districts already struggling with poverty, weak infrastructure, and limited access to essential services. Senator Aurangzeb affirmed the ministry's commitment to supporting national efforts in population and climate-related policy-making by integrating these priorities into budgeting and resource allocation. He underscored the increasing role of finance ministries globally in mainstreaming climate and demographic considerations, reinforcing that Pakistan must adopt the same approach to ensure long-term resilience and equitable development. The minister commended the Population Council for producing a comprehensive, data-driven District Vulnerability Index based on three years of research.

He emphasized that the Index provides actionable management information through its detailed.

MQM-backed local govt amendment to be tabled soon, says Mustafa Kamal

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Federal Health Minister Mustafa Kamal said that in the coming months, an MQM-backed amendment related to the local government system will be introduced and passed in the Assembly. He added that no bargaining was done during the passage of the 27th Amendment.

At a press conference in Karachi, Mustafa Kamal said that MQM had presented a constitutional amendment bill in the Assembly, and during the 26th Amendment, their bill had been referred to the committee.

He said the federal government had requested them to temporarily hold off on the matter. He added that if MQM wanted, it could have asked for more ministries and privileges. "I want to congratulate Pakistan and the people of Pakistan," he said.

Kamal stated that MQM



worked to solve public issues and approached every political party. To join the government, they set one condition: support for their single-point local government amendment bill. The PML-N agreed to this, and Kamal expressed gratitude to various political parties for supporting them. The federal minister said that the PPP had not been willing to accept their bill in the 27th Amendment. The federal government appealed to them, saying that important legislation was needed at this stage. He thanked the Prime Minister, cabinet, PML-N, Chaudhry Salik.

Envoys present credentials to President Zardari

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Four newly designated envoys to Pakistan, Monday, presented their credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari in a ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The president congratulated them on their appointment and expressed confidence that their tenures would further strengthen Pakistan's bilateral relations with these four countries.

"Those who presented their credentials included Tim Kane, High Commissioner-designate of Australia; Munsoo Kurrimbaccus, High Commissioner-designate of Mauritius; Maja Mortensen, Ambassador-designate of Denmark and Salem Mohammed Salem Al Babaw Al Zaabi, Ambassador-designate of the United Arab Emirates," President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

While talking to the high commissioner-designate of Australia, president highlighted Pakistan's friendly relations with the country, emphasizing enhanced trade and investment cooperation, agriculture and particularly in the education sector with a sizeable community of Pakistani students in Australia.

He noted the importance of people-to-people linkages, with a shared passion for sports and appreciated the role of the Pakistani diaspora in Australia in promoting goodwill between the two nations. Maraturais During his meeting with the high commissioner-designate of Mauritius, the president termed the long-standing bonds of friendship, underpinned by deep cultural affinity and shared Commonwealth heritage, as pivotal.

He also underscored the importance of further strengthening bilateral ties, especially in trade, investment, agriculture, defence cooperation and interparliamentary linkages.

In his interaction with the ambassador-designate of Denmark, the president discussed the fraternal relations with Denmark and appreciated the close coordination between the two countries at the UN Security Council. He underscored the potential for enhanced cooperation in trade, agriculture, dairy products, technology and infrastructure development.

He appreciated Denmark's support for Pakistan's green transition and climate resilience agenda.

Lakki admin turns challenges into opportunities-Naurang's TMA set to fly high

PEAK POINT

LAKKI MARWAT: From protests over unpaid wages to a passion for public service, from streets lost in darkness to roads and towns glowing with new lights, and from empty coffers to record-breaking revenues, Lakki Marwat's turnaround is nothing short of inspirational-fueled with passion by highly motivated district's administration's machinery steered by the dynamic incumbent deputy commissioner. Every rupee earned, every lease signed, and every service delivered now stands as proof that when leadership is visionary and governance is practical, even the most fragile institutions can become engines of progress. Once symbols of bureaucratic fatigue and public despair, district offices that were once choked with backlog and inefficiency have now become symbols of what happens when good governance meets practical reform — institutions that not only survive, but truly serve.

Rana Mashhood leads Pakistan at Helm for 1.6 Billion commonwealth youth

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, steers Pakistan at the forefront of global youth empowerment at the 10th Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Task Force Meeting held at the International Youth Centre, Kuala Lumpur.

Participating virtually while the Pakistani delegation attended in person, he addressed representatives from 56 Commonwealth countries, highlighting Pakistan's initiatives in education, employment, entrepreneurship, climate action, and youth inclusion.

"The youth are not just beneficiaries of policies they are partners in shaping the future," Rana



Mashhood said, underlining Pakistan's commitment to turning international commitments into practical measurable action. He praised the Commonwealth Secretariat for its ongoing efforts in youth development and referred to the recent 10th Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting in London, which strengthened the vision of "Aiming Higher Delivering More for Young People in the Commonwealth." As Co-Chair of the CYMTF.

Pakistan joins the world in marking the inaugural World Cervical Cancer Elimination Day

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan joins the world in marking the inaugural World Cervical Cancer Elimination Day, a global health milestone designated by the Seventy-eighth World Health Assembly. The day builds on the historic pledge of 17 November 2020, when 194 nations committed to the WHO's Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer. Earlier this year, the Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI), with support from Gavi and civil-society partners such as the Dopasi Foundation, launched Pakistan's first HPV vaccination campaign. More than 13 million girls aged



9-14 in Punjab, Sindh, Islamabad, and Azad Jammu Kashmir received the free vaccine in schools and health facilities. From 1 January 2026, the HPV vaccine will be formally integrated into Pakistan's Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), ensuring routine protection for all eligible girls. To observe the importance of this global day.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Munsoo Kurrimbaccus, High Commissioner designate of Mauritius, presenting his credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Criminal Networks Adopting E-Commerce Models make drug trafficking harder to detect: UNODC

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) held a special session on "Dark Web and E-Commerce in Pakistan: Emerging Tactics of Drug Trafficking and Law Enforcement Responses," organized by the IRS Cyber Security Program led by Ms. Alina Fayaz. The discussion brought together diplomats, government representatives, and international experts to examine rapidly evolving digital threats. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, opened the session by noting that while

online platforms offer significant opportunities, their ease of access also exposes young people to criminal activities, including the online purchase and sale of drugs. He stressed the urgent need to strengthen state capacities, train cyber domain specialists, and upgrade investigative agencies such as the FIA. He also underlined the importance of inter-agency collaboration and knowledge-sharing to counter increasingly sophisticated digital drug-trafficking techniques. Troels Vester, UNODC Country Representative, highlighted the Dark Web's growing role



as a sophisticated enabler of cybercrime, providing anonymity for a widening range of illicit activities. He noted that messaging applications are being misused for drug distribution and that

criminal networks are adopting e-commerce-style operating models, making trafficking more organized and harder for authorities to detect. He warned that Pakistan's online drug mar-

kets are expanding rapidly, with sellers using encrypted channels and digital payments to evade law enforcement. These developments, he emphasized, demand a coordinated, technology-driven, and well-resourced response. Oliver Gadney, Programme Coordinator GPML at UNODC Headquarters, shared insights into technological tools, investigative methodologies, and global best practices for countering dark-net-based crime. He highlighted growing challenges in tracing online trafficking networks and stressed the need for

strong inter-agency cooperation, including efforts to disrupt the financial foundations of such criminal enterprises. He further noted that law enforcement must continually adapt to fast-evolving digital ecosystems while maintaining compassion toward individuals struggling with drug use. Amb. Mansoor Khan, former Chair of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), pointed out that Afghanistan and Pakistan remain among the largest producers and transit routes for opiates fueling regional drug flows.