

Alice Shah refuses to  
forgive Zarnish Khan  
for calling her 'rudest'

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# PM calls for concerted efforts to eliminate Hepatitis C from Pakistan

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday called for coordinated efforts by federal and provincial governments and all stakeholders to eradicate Hepatitis C from Pakistan, vowing to promote and expand the PM's National Hepatitis C Elimination Programme countrywide.

Speaking at a recognition ceremony here, marking the successful completion of the pilot project of the PM's National Hepatitis C Elimination Programme in Gilgit Baltistan, the

prime minister emphasized the importance of the initiative in addressing the widespread impact of the disease in the country.

Acknowledging the significant support from the Aga Khan Development Network and the World Health Organization (WHO) in this initiative, he said that the hepatitis unit was initially established at the Pakistan Liver and Liver Institute (PKLI) and was later expanded to provide 100% free treatment facilities.

The prime minister expressed regret that



Minister, he resumed the program, which was now operational in Punjab under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. "We see a bright future of Gilgit Baltistan and subsequently other parts of Pakistan," he said expressing the confidence that with the efforts of the incumbent government, Hepatitis C will be completely erased from the country very soon. This aggressive disease is spreading. This is high time to effectively control this disease," he said.

when the new government took office in 2018, the program was discontinued. However, he said that shortly after assuming the office of Prime

# Commander of Bahrain National Guard calls on COAS

HUMA REHAN

RAWALPINDI: General Sheikh Mohammed Bin Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Commander of the National Guard of the Kingdom of Bahrain, called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at General Headquarters (GHQ). "During the meeting, both leaders engaged in discussions on matters of mutual interest, the regional security landscape, and avenues for strengthening bilateral military cooperation," said an ISPR news release. COAS underscored the significance of enhanced



collaboration in addressing shared security challenges and fostering peace and stability in the region. The visiting dignitary lauded the professionalism of the Pakistan Armed Forces and commended their unwavering efforts in combating terrorism.

# Minister Yousaf urges awareness to safeguard, prevent misuse of Prophet's sanctity law

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf emphasized that the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) is the foremost forum for safeguarding the sanctity of the Prophet Peace Be Upon Him.

Addressing a "Roundtable Discussion" to mark the International Day to Combat Islamophobia at the CII the other day, he stressed the importance of raising awareness about the law protecting the sanctity of the Prophet and prevent-

ing its misuse. "Anyone who intentionally commits blasphemous should be punished in accordance with legal principles, but no one should take the law into their own hands," Minister Yousaf asserted noting that whenever a national issue arises, the nation looks towards the CII for guidance. "Even if a prominent scholar expresses an opinion, it remains personal, whereas the council's recommendations represent a collective and institutional perspective," he added. The minister also assured his full support in presenting the coun-



Minister Yousaf asserted noting that whenever a national issue arises, the nation looks towards the CII for guidance.

cil's recommendations before the cabinet when needed. CII Chairman Dr Muhammad Raghbi Hussain Naemi highlighted that March 15 is observed globally as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. He explained that Islamophobia, the baseless fear and prejudice against Islam and Muslims, is not just a theoretical or psychological issue but a real threat that endangers lives. "The purpose of this observance is to counter the misinformation spread about Islam, raise awareness against the discrimination faced by Muslims, and promote interfaith harmony," he added. Dr Naemi underscored the freedom of expression and religious tolerance should not be used as justifications for targeting any faith or its followers. "The world must take this issue seriously and implement measures ensuring equal rights and safety for all

religious communities," he urged. Dr Naemi also elaborated on the council's recommendations regarding the protection of the Prophet's sanctity. He mentioned that the council had proposed appointing dedicated judges to handle blasphemy cases exclusively to ensure swift verdicts and prevent vigilante justice. Furthermore, he advocated for establishing a Counter Blasphemy Department (CBD) akin to the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) to monitor and act against blasphemous content on media, especially social media.

# Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee to meet for Shawwal moon sighting on March 30

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, along with zonal committees, will convene on Sunday evening, March 30, 2025 (corresponding to 29th Ramazan 1446 A.H.), to sight the moon of Shawwal, marking the potential end of the holy month. The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee's meet-

ing will take place at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony where religious scholars, meteorological experts, and other stakeholders will participate in the deliberations to verify moon sighting reports from across the country. The announcement of the moon sighting will determine the date for Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations across Pakistan.

# FPCC shares 'Charter of Economy' with Finance Minister to overcome challenges

KOMAL BUTT

ISLAMABAD: Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) here on Tuesday shared a comprehensive Charter of Economy prepared by the federation with the Finance Minister, Sardar Muhammad Aurangzeb and his team.

The charter was shared by FPCCI delegation during a meeting with the finance minister, according to press release issued by finance ministry here. The delegations were led by President FPCCI, Atif Ikram and included

Patron-in-Chief, S. M. Tanveer and Chief Executive of FF Steel, KPK, Senator Noman Wazir. On the occasion, the FPCCI team emphasized that this Charter was developed to foster political consensus and intended to meet with all stakeholders, including political parties, to form an effective economic strategy that transcends political divides and addresses Pakistan's economic challenges. Their goal is to free the country from its economic calamities by prioritizing the nation's development and eco-



Senator Noman Wazir in Karachi provided a detailed presentation on the proposals and recommendations outlined in the Charter of Economy. The key recommenda-

tions included the reorganization of specialized civil services with the establishment of dedicated groups in critical sectors such as Energy, Finance, Industry, and Health to lead policy formulation and ensure informed decision-making. The Charter also called for embracing solar and wind energy, seen as the cheapest sources of power, and proposed keeping wheeling charges for the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM) at a maximum of Rs 4 per KWH.

It also emphasized a greater focus on regional trade and development financial institutions, with proposals for at least 20% of lending directed toward long-term CAPEX and 10% toward startup CAPEX. A stable exchange rate was recommended to support exports and discourage imports that do not comply with the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA). The Charter also stressed the importance of a uniform gas pricing structure for industries across the country to promote industrial growth.

# State Bank issues new currency notes worth billions for public

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has confirmed that fresh, crisp banknotes will be available for Eid, dismissing rumours that no new notes were issued this year. According to SBP officials, commercial banks across Pakistan have already received Rs 27 billion in fresh currency notes, ensuring their availability to the public. The State Bank reassured that clean and high-quality crisp currency notes will be accessible via ATMs and bank counters nationwide. The SBP clarified that new currency notes have been distributed to 17,000

branches of commercial banks during Ramadan 2025. The State Bank of Pakistan has also deployed cash monitoring teams to ensure smooth and fair distribution, preventing any artificial shortages. Furthermore, SBP has directed banks to keep ATM services uninterrupted during the Eid holidays, ensuring the availability of fresh and clean notes to the public. Banks have been instructed to ensure fair distribution of new notes through their nationwide branch network, SBP added. The State Bank has instructed teams will oversee the process to prevent any irregularities, ensuring that people can get new notes without hassle.

# ISSI hosts seminar commemorating 'International Day to Combat Islamophobia'

AYESHA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a seminar titled "Islamophobia in Focus: Three Years of Progress and Emerging Challenges."

The seminar featured a keynote address by Prof Dr Anis Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of RIPIAH University. Other distinguished speakers included Dr Israr Madani, Founder President of the International Research Council for Religious Affairs (IRCRA); Dr Mujeeb Afzal, Associate Professor at Qaid-i-Azam University; Prof Dr Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, Director General of the Islamic Research Institute at International Islamic University Islamabad

(IIUI); Dr Greg Simons, Professor of Journalism at Daffodil International University; and Dr Sofya Ragoza, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, said a press release.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, highlighted Pakistan's pivotal role in international advocacy, particularly through the designation of March 15 as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia by the UN. Despite some legislative steps in Sweden, Denmark, and the U.S., Ambassador Mahmood highlighted persistent and increasing Islamophobic incidents in Europe, the U.S. and India. He underscored the urgent need for implementation of UN resolutions and for the interna-



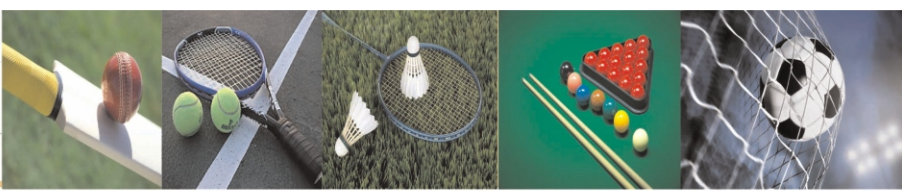
challenge demands collective action and innovative responses affirming OIC's commitment to effective strategies against Islamophobia, strengthening legal protections for minorities, and combating religious hatred through dialogue and mutual respect.

In his keynote address, Prof Dr Anis Ahmad characterized Islamophobia as a socially constructed phenomenon rooted in unjustifiable fear and distorted perceptions of Islam and Muslims, resulting in harassment, discrimination, exclusion, and violation of fundamental human rights globally. Drawing from the Runnymede Trust Report (1997) and recent academic studies, he highlighted the media's role in

perpetuating negative stereotypes and the global need for intercultural dialogue and educational reforms, emphasizing Pakistan's stability as essential to strengthening broader Muslim community globally. Dr Israr Madani discussed the significant rise of Islamophobia post-9/11, driven largely by Western media portrayals associating Islam with security threats. He recognized emerging global awareness and counter-efforts through advocacy, education, and alternative media. Dr Greg Simons critically examined Western media's role in exacerbating Islamophobic perceptions post-9/11, asserting that Islamophobia has been politically instrumentalized to justify foreign interventions. He pro-

posed leveraging alternative media to challenge these biased narratives effectively. Dr. Mujeeb Afzal explained Islamophobia in the context of India, attributing it to historical narratives from the era of Muslim dynasties through colonial rule, and subsequent marginalization under Hindu nationalism. He critiqued contradictions within Nehruvian secularism, which masked grassroots communal politics. Dr. Sofya emphasized proactive measures to address Islamophobia, advocating for positive representations of Islam rooted in universal ethical values. She called for substantial academic and curricular reforms to instill a confident Muslim identity among youth.

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# Big-hitting New Zealand crush Pakistan by five wickets for 2-0 lead

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

NEW ZEALAND men's openers went on a six-hitting blitz on Tuesday to thrash Pakistan by five wickets and go 2-0 up in their Twenty20 series.

The home side reached 137-5 with 11 balls to spare in Dunedin to take control of the five-match series after Pakistan posted 135-9 off 15 overs in a rain-reduced second match.

New Zealand's highlight was a ferocious opening stand between Tim Seifert and Finn Allen in which seven of the first eight scoring shots were sixes.

Remarkably, Seifert played out a maiden off Shaheen Shah Afridi's opening over before Allen cleared the small University Oval boundary



Three times in the second over, bowled by Mohammad Ali. Seifert then smashed 26 off Afridi's second over,

including four sixes. Seifert, who top-scored with 44 in the nine-wicket win in Christchurch on Sunday,

departed on 45 off 22 balls. Allen fell soon afterwards for 38 off 16, with the openers hammering five sixes each.



Four New Zealand wickets fell in the space of four overs midway through the chase before Mitch Hay's unbeaten 21

made the outcome safe. Earlier, captain Salman Agha top-scored with 48 off 28 balls, launching a recovery after

Pakistan were sent in and lost opener Hasan Nawaz without scoring for the second time in the series. They were 19-2 in the

fourth over before the skipper embarked on a knock that featured four fours and three sixes.

Shadab Khan was aggressive in the middle order with 26 off 14 balls and Afridi was not-out 22 off 12.

Four New Zealand bowlers took two wickets, including seamer Ben Sears and all-rounder Jimmy Neesham, who were both recalled, in place of Tim Robinson and Kyle Jamieson.

New Zealand can wrap up the series if victorious in game three in Auckland on Friday.

Pakistan's one change for the match was the introduction of seamer Haris Rauf for leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed.

The start was delayed for 90 minutes because of rain at University Oval.

# England not in favour of Saudi-backed T20 league

PEAK POINT

MELBOURNE: The chief executive officer of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), Richard Gould on Tuesday stated that the English cricket board would not back a Saudi Arabia-sponsored international Twenty20 league because there was not sufficient time on the schedule for it.

Eight teams will compete at four separate venues in the tournament, which will be supported by Saudi Arabia's national wealth fund's sports department.

"With the busy international calendar, a host of established franchise leagues around the world, and existing concerns about player workloads, there is no scope or demand for such an



idea," Gould told the same newspaper. "It's not something that we would support."

The ECB is keen to protect its own 100-ball format league, The Hundred, having raised \$1.27 bil-

lion last month after selling franchise stakes to private investors. The Indian Premier League remains the benchmark in franchise cricket, while Australia, Pakistan, West Indies, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates also have their own T20 leagues.

The Australian Cricketers Association has backed the proposed league saying it was mandated to "pursue initiatives that benefit our members".

"The ACA's early interest in exploring this concept is motivated by a desire to develop and normalise best-practice collective bargaining and an international gender-equity pay model for male and female cricketers," the player's union was quoted as saying in the report.

# Haider Ali eyes return in PSL 10

RIZWAN HAIDER

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani batter Haider Ali has expressed optimism about his potential return to the 10th edition of Pakistan Super League (PSL).

The tournament is slated to take place from April 11 to May 18, with matches being held in four cities including Karachi, Lahore, Multan, and Rawalpindi. Ali, who represents Islamabad United got injured during the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) and was ruled out of the BPL Qualifier-2 in 2025.

"We have talented players who can take the team to victory. Our players have the talent and ability to excel in the tournament," he told APP.

Ali, said he has recovered



er and will be going to the National Cricket Academy for rehabilitation and training. "I'm working hard and hope to return to the Pakistan Super League this year," he said.

He also expressed his gratitude to fans for their support during his injury and vowed to repay them with strong performances in the upcoming PSL season. Ali, who was named in Pakistan's squad for the 2019 ACC Emerging Teams Asia Cup in Bangladesh in November 2019, emphasized the

importance of adapting to different game situations. "Playing in leagues is different from playing international cricket.

A player's performance depends on the game situation, and sometimes even the best players can have off days.

It may be mentioned that Ali, made his T20 debut for Pakistan, against England, in September 2020 and scored 54 runs in his debut T20 match, beginning the first cricketer for Pakistan to score a fifty on a T20 debut.

# Qamar Zaman shares valuable tips with junior squash players

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Former World Champion and legendary squash player Mr. Qamar Zaman shared valuable tips and techniques with junior players during the IM Sciences



Ramadan Camp held at the PAF Hashim Khan Squash Complex in Peshawar. The camp started on the 1st of Ramadan. Mr. Zaman and PAF coaches provided valuable training to

junior boys on a daily basis. A total of 43 junior players participated in the camp, which featured categories for boys Under 9 (15 players), Under 10 (10 players), and Under 11 (10 players), as well as a Girls

Under 9 category (8 players). The camp is sponsored by IM Sciences, and the closing ceremony is scheduled for March 24, 2025. The principal of the college will be the chief guest, along with Mr.

Dawood Khan, the Secretary of the Public Health and Engineering Department, and the President of the KP Squash Association, who will also attend the ceremony.

# HBK Ramadan Sports Gala kicks off

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: The HBK Ramadan Sports Gala commenced with a grand ceremony last night at the Peshawar Press Club lawn. The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Candapur formally inaugurated the event by playing a badminton match. The ceremony was attended by Provincial Minister for Sports Syed Fakhar Jahar, Adviser on Information Barrister Saif, Adviser on Health Ehtesham Khan, HBK Chief Executive Dr. Mohib Afridi, Secretary Information Arshad Khan, President of Peshawar Press Club M. Riaz, Secretary of Peshawar Press Club Tayyeb Usman, Chairman Sports Committee Irfan Musa Zai and a large number of press club members. Addressing the opening ceremony, Chief Minister Ali Amin Candapur praised the journalists of the province for their sacrifices in fulfilling their professional responsibilities. He acknowledged their crucial role in the fight against terrorism, stating that their contributions



are widely recognized. He emphasized that in a restrictive environment such recreational events for journalists are essential and he commended the

Peshawar Press Club administration for organizing the event. The Chief Minister assured that the journalist community remains a priority for the provincial government and pledged continued support in the future. Earlier President of Peshawar Press Club M. Riaz thanked the Chief Minister for his presence and stated that the primary objective of the sports gala is to provide journalists with recreational opportunities alongside their professional duties. It is noteworthy that the Peshawar Press Club has been organizing such events for several years and this marks the second consecutive year that it is being held in collaboration with HBK. This year's Ramadan Sports Gala features five different games including badminton, snooker, table tennis, ludo and carrom board. More than 200 members are participating in the event, which will continue for a week.

# HBL PSL X trophy to tour Islamabad on March 23

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The first-ever trophy tour in the history of HBL PSL commenced March 14 from Hyderabad and Karachi, with 'Lumina' scheduled to travel to 11 cities across Pakistan till March 29. According to details, the 10th edition of HBL PSL is scheduled to take place in four cities—Karachi, Lahore, Multan, and Rawalpindi—from April 11 to May 18.

In the first leg of the trophy tour, the Trophy



was displayed at various locations across

Hyderabad and Karachi till March 15.

Following Hyderabad and Karachi, the trophy travelled to Lahore, Multan. The trophy will now visit Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Peshawar and Islamabad. The second leg of the trophy tour will be announced in due course.

HBL PSL X 'Lumina' Trophy first-leg tour schedule: March 19-Bahawalpur; March 20-Faisalabad; March 22-Peshawar and March 23-Islamabad.

# USA Rugby Announces Landmark 2025 Home Test Series

Six-Match Slate Marks Largest Home Schedule Since 2019

ZAHID YAQOOB KHAWAJA

ISLAMABAD: USA Rugby and World Rugby have unveiled an ambitious home test series for 2025, bringing top-tier international rugby to fans across the United States. Supported by TEG Sport, the series features six matches over five weeks in four cities, making it the most extensive home schedule in recent history. The Women's Eagles will use the series to prepare for the Rugby World Cup in England, while the Men's Eagles will compete in the Pacific Nations Cup as part of their campaign for 2027 Rugby World Cup



qualification. The expanded schedule reflects USA Rugby's commitment to growing the sport domestically and providing elite competition opportunities for its national teams. "This is a landmark year for USA Rugby," said USA Rugby CEO Bill Goren. "Bringing the Men's and

Women's Eagles to fans across the country in our biggest home since 2019 is a tremendous step forward for the sport." 2025 USA Rugby Home Test Series Fixtures: April 26: USA Women vs. Japan - Wallis Annenberg Stadium, UCLA, Los Angeles; May 2: USA Women vs.



## Hanif Abbasi urges adoption of modern safety technologies in Railways

ARSHAD MALIK

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi on Tuesday directed railway authorities to adopt modern safety technologies and enhance emergency preparedness to ensure passenger safety at all times. He chaired a high-level meeting at the Ministry of Railways, attended by key stakeholders, to review Pakistan Railways' operations and discuss future strategies. During the meeting, the Minister stressed that the safety and security of passengers must remain the top priority in railway operations. He took a detailed briefing on train schedules, passenger services, technical operations, and safety protocols. Hanif Abbasi empha-

sized the need to maintain punctuality in train arrivals and departures and called for collective efforts to ensure efficient and timely services. He also directed railway officials to strengthen security at railway stations and on board trains to prevent any untoward incidents. Upgrading infrastructure, including tracks, stations, and rolling stock, was also highlighted as a key focus area. The Minister said that introducing modern, comfortable trains would encourage more people to use Pakistan Railways as their preferred mode of travel. Hanif Abbasi stressed the importance of customer service, urging staff to be professional, courteous, and helpful when dealing with passengers. He called for

better communication with travellers, ensuring they were informed in advance about train timings, delays, and service interruptions. He also highlighted Pakistan Railways' economic potential, encouraging officials to explore new revenue streams through private-sector partnerships, improved freight services, and tourism development. The Minister said that Pakistan Railways could play a vital role in economic growth and social development due to its extensive network and rich history. Hanif Abbasi called for a renewed commitment from all stakeholders to transform Pakistan Railways into a modern, efficient, and reliable transport system that meets the needs of the people.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways, Muhammad Hanif Abbasi holds high level meeting at Ministry focuses on enhancing efficiency, passenger safety, and modernizing Pakistan Railways.

## PNS ASLAT visits Maldives during deployment on regional maritime security patrol

MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) ASLAT visited Maldives during Regional Maritime Security Patrol (RMSP) deployment.

Upon arrival at Port Mahe, the ship was warmly welcomed by officials of the Maldives National Defence Force (MNFDF) and Coast Guard, according to a news release.

During the port visit, the Commanding Officer of PNS ASLAT called on Chief of Defence Force Major General Ibrahim Hilmy and Commandant Coast Guard Brigadier General Mohammad Saleem. During these interactions, matters of mutual interest were discussed.

PNS ASLAT visits Maldives during deployment on regional maritime security patrol. The Commanding Officer also conveyed warm wishes from Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf to the people of Maldives.



During its stay in the Maldives, the Chief of Defence Force, government officials, the Commissioner of Pakistan, diplomats, and ambassadors/representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Russia, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, and the United States, along with members of the local community, visited the ship. Pakistan Navy ships are regularly deployed on RMSP missions to fulfill international obligations for maritime security, ensure freedom of navigation on the high seas,

## IMF shares MEEP draft with Pakistan to finalise \$7b EFF deal

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The IMF has provided Pakistani authorities with the draft of the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEEP) to help build consensus.

This move could pave the way for reaching a staff-level agreement under the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF). According to sources, some relief measures are being considered for the construction and real estate sectors. However, it is yet to be decided whether these relief measures will be implemented immediately or included in the upcoming budget. It is worth noting that negotiations between Pakistan and the IMF concluded without a final agreement, and a staff-level agreement remains essential before the release of a \$1 billion tranche. Meanwhile, the IMF has imposed strict conditions for financial discipline, Express News reported. Sources indicate

that the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) fell short of its tax collection target, prompting expenditure cuts and additional measures to achieve a primary surplus. The IMF has also proposed reducing electricity prices and maintaining the petroleum levy at Rs 70 per litre.

Furthermore, the IMF has inquired how the government plans to address circular debt, as previous cross-subsidy models have failed in the past. In response, the government has presented a six-year plan to eliminate circular debt in the energy sector.

According to sources, if the IMF approves the draft, the Pakistani government is expected to receive financial relief. Earlier, the IMF mission returned to Washington without reaching a staff-level agreement with Pakistan for the release of over \$1 billion loan tranche but said that "significant progress" was made during the talks towards striking a deal.

## Pakistan, Turkmenistan discuss strengthening energy cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik and Turkmenistan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Atadjan Movlamov, on Tuesday discussed ways to strengthen bilateral ties and expand energy cooperation. During a meeting, the Ambassador congratulated Ali Pervaiz Malik on his recent appointment and expressed confidence in his leadership to steer Pakistan's energy sector towards sustainable development.

According to a press release, the ambassador highlighted the strong and longstanding relationship between the two countries, particularly in the energy sector. Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik said Pakistan and Turkmenistan share a history of cultural and economic cooperation based on mutual respect and a shared vision for regional prosperity. He also outlined



Pakistan's efforts to upgrade its energy infrastructure and attract foreign investment in the sector. The minister expressed Pakistan's keen interest in exploring new opportunities for collaboration with Turkmenistan, especially in the energy domain. He also outlined

## NDMA, Jaz sign LoU to strengthen risk communication, early warning systems in Pakistan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Pakistan Mobile Communications Limited (Jazz) have entered into a Letter of Understanding (LoU) to strengthen disaster risk communication and improve the dissemination of early warnings.

The agreement was formalized at the NDMA Headquarters in Islamabad. The ceremony attended by Brig Qasim Mahmood, Chief of Staff NDMA and Amir Ibrahim, CEO Jazz. This partnership leverages Jazz's mobile technology to strengthen national disaster preparedness. Key initiatives include



real-time early warning dissemination, AI-driven enhancements to NDMA's mobile app, and nationwide awareness campaigns on climate change and disaster risks. Additionally, NDMA and Jazz will collaborate on capacity-building programs, while Jazz will provide emergency communication support as part of its CSR commitments. Amir Ibrahim, CEO of Jazz, emphasized the importance of this collaboration, stating, "At Jazz, we recognize the urgent need for a proactive and technology-driven approach to disaster management. Our partnership with NDMA represents a crucial step in strengthening Pakistan's emergency response framework, ensuring that communities receive timely and reliable information to safeguard lives and livelihoods."

## Junaid Chaudhry meets Romina Khurshid, discuss maritime affairs

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry on Tuesday held a meeting with Coordinator to Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam at Kohsar Block, Ministry of Maritime Affairs.

Romina Khurshid Alam congratulated Junaid Anwar Chaudhry on assuming his new portfolio and expressed confidence in his leadership to advance the maritime sector with sustainable and

climate-resilient policies, said a press release. During the meeting, both dignitaries discussed key areas of collaboration between the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Climate Change Division, focusing on environmental sustainability in Pakistan's maritime sector. They emphasized the importance of green initiatives, coastal ecosystem preservation, and climate adaptation strategies for ports and fisheries.

The minister reaffirmed his commitment for integrating climate-friendly policies into mar-

itime affairs. He highlighted ongoing initiatives such as the promotion of sustainable blue economy practices, mangrove conservation projects, and efforts to reduce marine pollution.

He also stressed the need for technological advancements in port operations to minimize carbon emissions. Romina Khurshid Alam acknowledged the Ministry's efforts and assured full cooperation in implementing eco-friendly policies to mitigate the impact of climate change on Pakistan's coastal regions.

She reiterated the government's resolve to enhance climate resilience in all sectors, including maritime affairs, to ensure sustainable economic growth.

Both officials agreed to strengthen inter-ministerial coordination for the development of policies that align with Pakistan's international climate commitments. They also discussed the joint initiatives in marine biodiversity conservation, plastic waste reduction in coastal areas, and the promotion of clean energy solutions in port operations.

## Chairman PCP congratulates new NPC leadership

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Press Council of Pakistan (PCP), Arshad Khan Jadoon Tuesday congratulated the newly elected office-bearers of the National Press Club (NPC).

In his message, he congratulated Azhar Jatoi on becoming President, Nayyar Ali as Secretary, and Waqar Abbasi as Finance Secretary of the NPC.

He described the National Press Club as an important platform that has always worked for press freedom and the rights of journalists in Pakistan.

He expressed confidence that the new leadership will take practical steps for the welfare of journalists and the development of the media sector. Highlighting the challenges faced by modern journalism, he emphasized the need for promoting free, responsible, and fact-based reporting.

He said he was hopeful the NPC would continue its tradition of supporting quality journalism. Arshad Khan Jadoon also expressed optimism that the new team will make the National Press Club more active and effective in the future.

## Kh. Asif slams PTI for boycotting National Security Meeting

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has strongly criticised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for refusing to attend the Parliamentary National Security Committee meeting.

In a statement on social media platform X (formerly Twitter), Khawaja Asif accused PTI of prioritising Imran Khan over national security. He further condemned PTI's stance, stating that while Pakistan face terrorism threats, PTI continues playing politics for personal interests. He labeled this behavior as a betrayal towards the nation. It is noteworthy that PTI boycotted the securi-



ty meeting, demanding that they be allowed to meet Imran Khan first before attending. He added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur will attend the meeting in his official capacity. According to reports, PTI Secretary Salman Akram Raja, along with Mahmood Achakzai and others, addressed a joint press conference in Islamabad and announced their decision to boycott the meeting scheduled today. Salman Akram Raja said, "We have decided not to attend the National Security Meeting, and no representative from our side will participate." He further stated that PTI's political committee had already made this decision yesterday. He added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur will attend the meeting in his official capacity.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry meets Ms Romina Khurshid Alam to discuss maritime and climate initiatives.