



Is Sania Mirza's son Izhaan set for Bollywood?

Thursday 20 February 2025

Prime Minister invites Bahrain's businessmen to invest in Pakistan

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday invited the businessmen of Bahrain to tap the huge potential of business activities in Pakistan and invest in various sectors.

He also stressed to further increase the trade volume of the two countries.

The prime minister was talking to a delegation of Parliamentary delegation of Bahrain led by Speaker of Council of Representatives of Bahrain, Ahmed bin

Salman Al-Musallam which called on him here at the PM House.

He emphasized that exchange of the parliamentary delegations of the two countries was important to further strengthen bilateral ties.

He also conveyed his best wishes to the King of Bahrain Hamad bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa.

"The brotherly relations of Pakistan and Bahrain are very strong and based on the shared beliefs, history and culture," the prime minister said.

He highlighted that the Pakistanis living in



Bahrain were rendering key services in the country.

He also stressed that Pakistan, Bahrain, and the entire Muslim Ummah should intensify the relief efforts for their Palestinian brothers and sisters.

National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi and senior government officers were present on the occasion.

Tarar arrives to attend inaugural session of international media conference in Riyadh

PEAK POINT

RIYADH: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday arrived to attend the inaugural session of the conference organized by the Saudi Media Group. The three-day conference is being held in Riyadh from Wednesday to Friday.

The inaugural session will be attended by world leaders and important figures from the media from all over the world.

Attaullah Tarar also met with former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and other important figures on the occasion of the inaugural ceremony.

The Saudi Media Forum will explore methods for media production, digital journalism and content creation.

New business models for media, digital transformation and financial stability in the digital age will be reviewed. The Media Forum will also consider strategies regarding fake news and the role of media institutions in restoring public trust.

Pakistan, KSA joint naval exercise 'Affa Al Sahel' concluded

AYESHA REHAN

RAWALPINDI: A joint exercise between Pakistan Navy and Royal Naval Forces, Affa Al Sahel, concluded in Karachi.

The Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said Commander Coast Rear Admiral Faisal Amin along with top officials of both naval forces witnessed the final test exercise.

The training exercises included RPC firing, machine gun firing, close quarters combat, practical rappelling, hostage rescue, EOD drills, mission planning, air clearance using modern techniques and others.

The aim of this joint exercise was to enhance coordination and strategic skills between the two navies.

This exercise will contribute to improving mutual capabilities and coordination to tackle maritime security challenges.

Pakistan rebuffs India's claim of Kashmir being its 'integral part'

PEAK POINT

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan Tuesday hit back at India for claiming Kashmir to be its 'integral part', saying fabrication and obscuration cannot change the legal, political and historical reality.

"Jammu and Kashmir never was, nor is, a so-called 'integral part' of India," Pakistani delegate Asif Khan told at the UN Security Council at its day-long discussion on multilateralism and global governance came to an end.

Justice Khan said that India's claim that Kashmir is an "open wound" that threatens international peace and security. He also said the Indian occupation forces were indulging in gross abuses of human rights, and called on the Security Council, to ensure the implementation of its own resolutions.

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Pakistan committed to fostering regional peace, economic connectivity thru APA, SCO, ECO

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Wednesday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to promoting regional peace, economic connectivity, and sustainable development through active engagement in multilateral forums such as the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA).

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). While addressing the plenary session of the APA in Baku, Azerbaijan, he said that peace, democracy, human rights, and sustainable development

are shared ideals. He highlighted that the APA serves as a vital platform for pursuing these common goals, transforming it into a true institutional voice of the Asian Century.

The Chairman said that global landscape continues to evolve and Asia remains at the center of geo-economic transformation, security concerns, and geopolitical realignments.

Gilani said that parliamentary diplomacy serves as a bridge that connects diverse nations and political systems in pursuit of common interests. "It enables us to address pressing regional issues and chal-

lenges, including economic integration, trade facilitation, climate change, terrorism and cybercrime" he said. He observed that enhanced cultural exchanges, edu-

cational collaborations, and interfaith dialogues can strengthen understanding, solidarity and regional harmony.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Gilani



said, remains central to strengthening regional infrastructure and economic integration.

He informed that counterterrorism, intelligence-sharing, and regional peace initiatives are key priorities. "Pakistan leads regional sustainability efforts through its commitment to development, disaster resilience strategies, and transnational energy projects",

Leader of Pakistan and Parliamentary delegation observed.

He said that parliamentary cooperation is essential in addressing climate change, water security, and clean energy

transitions. He also advocated for robust cybersecurity frameworks to protect regional economies and societies. He said that APA provides us with an invaluable opportunity to establish legal frameworks, build consensus on regional policies, and undertake constructive dialogue that transcends political differences.

He called for maximizing the impact of parliamentary engagement and developing structured mechanisms within APA to enhance legislative collaboration and policy alignment, bridge gaps and create consensus on pressing regional issues.

DP/FM Ishaq Dar raises Kashmir dispute at meeting with UN chief

PEAK POINT

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, called for a just resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions at a meeting with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday.

The meeting took place at UN Headquarters on the margins of the Security Council's debate on multilateralism and global governance, according to a press

release issued by the Pakistan Mission.

It said Senator Dar also condemned Israel's atrocities against the Palestinian people, and reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for a two-state solution, ensuring a viable, contiguous, and sovereign State of Palestine based on the 1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

In addition, The DP/FM highlighted Pakistan's desire to provide humanitarian support to the millions of destitute people in Afghanistan and to promote its economic devel-

opment, including through implementing connectivity projects between Central Asia and Pakistan through Afghanistan.

In his remarks,



Senator Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's strong support for the United Nations' central role in addressing global challenges, including peace and security, development and climate change.

He underscored Pakistan's unwavering commitment to promoting international peace, and security as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (2025-2026) while highlighting Pakistan's long-standing support for multilateralism and the UN Charter, including UN peacekeeping efforts.

The DP/FM welcomed the initiative by

the UN Secretary-General to organize the Summit of the Future and expressed the hope that the Pact for the Future will be fully implemented, meeting the financing needs of the developing countries to implement the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and climate targets.

On his part, Secretary-General Guterres thanked the DP/FM for Pakistan's active engagement at the United Nations as well as for its role towards maintenance of international peace and security in the form of its UN Peacekeeping contributions.

Supreme Court says it is not under trial in military courts case

KOMAL BUTT

ISLAMABAD: Justice Aminuddin Khan on Wednesday remarked that the Supreme Court is not under trial. It has to decide according to the constitution and law.

Justice Khan gave the remark during hearing of intra-court appeals against the trial of civilians in military court.

A seven-member constitutional bench headed by Justice Khan and including Justices Ajmal Khan, Mandokhail, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Musarat Hilali, Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Shahid Bilal Hassan is hearing appeals.

At the outset of hearing, Aitzaz Ahsan's counsel said that Ahsan submitted that Usaf Bhandari was to argue today. But, he requested him (Bhandari)

and he allowed me to present his arguments.

Justice Khan permitted Khosa to proceed.

The justice told Khosa that Aitzaz Ahsan objected to Salman Akram Raja's arguments given on Tuesday as he (Raja) is also his lawyer. Aitzaz said that Raja had disagreed with Justice Muneeb Akhtar's decision; but he completely agreed with the decision.

Justice Mazhar observed that his objection was merely with regard to the decision on Article 63 A. Raja said that he had disagreed with only one paragraph of the decision. He said he was arguing yesterday as Arzam Junaid's counsel and he stand by his arguments.

An impression was given in the media as if he did not know what I have said. Your question was



put in the headlines that there is no prohibition of court martial of civilians in international laws."

Justice Afghan suggested him to avoid following social media. "We should not be influenced by social media otherwise it would become difficult [for us] to give decisions."

Justice Mandokhail remarked that the media should also be careful while reporting.

Justice Hilali said that

the application before Jawad S. Khawaja who is a former chief justice of Pakistan.

Advocate Khosa started his arguments and said that the eyes of the entire nation are on this case; because of this case the Supreme Court is under trial. Justice Khan replied that the Supreme Court is not under trial.

Advocate Khosa said that judicial decisions are quoted as precedence.

Justice Mandokhail asked him to argue the legal status of Section 2 D.

Justice Khan asked him not to relate Section 2 D with May 9 and 10. He told him to first present his view independent of the section, and then argue whether Section 2 D applies to May 9 or 10 incident.

Advocate Khosa submitted that fundamental rights have been protected

in the constitution. Section 2 D cannot be maintained. He argued that the formation of military courts must be seen in historical context.

He said that the Section 2 D was introduced in 1967. It dismembered Pakistan. The Hamoodur Rehman Commission report mentioned that it created hatred against the institution.

Justice Mandokhail questioned is there any prohibition on making laws in the constitution? Khosa replied that they had to introduce the 21st Amendment for military courts.

Justices cannot be tried in military courts. Judges and proceedings are not independent in military trials. That's why a judicial commission was demanded on May 9 incident," added

Advocate Khosa. Advocate Khosa said that he had been struggling for the rule of law. The Section 2 D is against Islamic teachings; military trials are kept secret.

Justice Khan said that Khawaja Haris had argued that there was a complete procedure for a transparent trial [in military court].

Justice Mandokhail reminded Khosa of his "long political profile" and said that he had been a federal minister, senator, member of the assembly, governor and attorney general. "What steps did you take to repeal Section 2 D while holding these positions?"

The justice observed that he would not mind if parliament revoke this section.

Justice Hilali said his stance in parliament is different and in the court

he talked about something else.

"Military courts were formed later; the reasons for the fall of Dhaka were different," she added.

Khosa said that "we want a strong army who has the support of masses. We want the army to get out of the issue of trials."

Advocate Khosa submitted that you [the judges] knew how the 26th Amendment was passed. Give the decision, and we will implement it. You will be revered by the public if the trial of civilians in military court is ended. The 26th Amendment was passed through the use of force.

Justice Hilali questioned him had any member resigned on the passage of 26th Amendment? He replied that Akhtar Mengal tendered his resignation.



Champions Trophy: Pakistan lose maiden match against New Zealand



ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

KARACHI: Pakistan faced a defeat against New Zealand by 60 runs after failing to chase a daunting target in the opening match of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 played at the National Bank Stadium, Karachi, on Wednesday.

Chasing a daunting 321-run target, the home

side could accumulate 260 before getting bowled out in the 48th over despite half-centuries from Babar Azam and Khushdil Shah. Pakistan had a dismal start to the pursuit as they were reduced to 22/2 in 10 overs with skipper Mohammad Rizwan (three) and Saud Shaheel (six) falling cheaply.

Following the early hiccup, Fakhar Zaman

joined Babar in the middle in a bid to launch recovery. The pair, however, could add 47 runs to the total as Fakhar fell victim to Michael Bracewell in the 21st over after scoring 24 off 41 deliveries with the help of four boundaries.

Vice-captain Salman Al Agha then offered some fightback with a

blistering 42-run cameo until falling victim to Nathan Smith in the 31st over. Pakistan then lost two more wickets in quick succession, including that of their ace batter Babar Azam, and consequently slipped to 153/6 in 34 overs. Babar scored a cautious 64 off 90 deliveries, smashing six fours and a six. Coming out to bat at number seven,

Khushdil Shah went after the New Zealand bowlers, hitting 10 fours and a six on his way to a brisk 49-ball 69. He was eventually dismissed in the 44th over by Will O'Rourke, who put New Zealand just two wickets within the victory. Pakistan's tailenders Haris Rauf and Naseem Shah offered some resistance down the order but

their efforts were not enough to lead their side to victory. Mitchell Santner and O'Rourke took three wickets each for New Zealand, followed by Matt Henry, who claimed two.

Put into bat first, the Blackcaps registered 320/5 on the board in their allotted 50 overs, thanks to a match-defining fourth-wicket partner-

ship between Young and Latham. The visitors, however, got off to a shaky start to their innings as mystery spinner Abrar Ahmed inflicted an early blow by casting Devon Conway (10) on the third delivery of the eighth over.

New Zealand suffered two more blows in quick succession as pacers Naseem Shah and Haris

Rauf picked up the key wicketkeeper batter Latham, who scored a match-winning half-century in the tri-nation ODI series final last week, joined set batter Young in the middle.

Pakistan dominates Combaxx 7th Asian Open Taekwondo Championships

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's taekwondo athletes showcased exceptional skill and determination at the Combaxx 7th Asian Open Taekwondo Championships, securing an impressive haul of 15 medals—2 gold, 5 silver, and 8 bronze. The event witnessed fierce competition, but Team Pakistan's outstanding performance reaffirmed its position as a leading force in the martial arts arena. Iran clinched 2 gold medals, while Egypt and Tajikistan secured 1 gold medal each. Afghanistan grabbed 2 bronze medals, and Palestine secured 1 bronze medal. In the Men's -58kg category, Haroon Khan clinched the gold medal, while Siddique Akbar secured silver, and Tayyab Muhammad earned bronze, showcasing Pakistan's dominance in this weight class. In the Men's -74kg category, Pakistan continued its winning streak with Junaid Faizan grabbing the bronze



medal, demonstrating remarkable skill and perseverance. The Men's -87kg division saw Omar Hamza Saeed make his mark with a silver medal, reinforcing Pakistan's strong presence in the heavyweight category. Pakistan's female athletes also delivered

exceptional performances: In the Women's -49kg category, Zahraa Khawar Fateemaah Tuz brought home the silver medal, highlighting her agility and strategic prowess. The Women's -63kg category was dominated by Pakistani athletes, with Sabira

Bibi winning gold, Zoya Sabir securing silver, and Fazila Bibi claiming bronze. Hafiza Aslam Khadija also earned bronze medal, underscoring Pakistan's talent depth in this division. In the Women's +73kg category, Manisha and Aneza Imran secured bronze medals, contributing to the overall medal tally. The outstanding performance of Pakistani athletes at the championship is a testament to their hard work, dedication, and the support provided by coaches and the national taekwondo federation. Their achievements not only bring pride to the nation but also inspire the next generation of martial artists. The Pakistani contingent's success at this championship underscores the growing talent and potential within the country's taekwondo community. It also highlights Pakistan's commitment to nurturing and promoting martial arts on both national and international platforms.

President Zardari attends opening ceremony of Champions Trophy at National Stadium



PEAK POINT

KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari attended the opening ceremony of the Champions Trophy at the National Stadium here on Wednesday.

First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari also

accompanied the President. He was received by PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi on arrival at the National Stadium. The President and the First Lady, accompanied by former captain Sarfaraz Ahmed, carried the Champions Trophy onto the field. President Zardari met with the captains of the Pakistan and New Zealand cricket teams. Later, the President and the First Lady also watched the match between the two teams.

PTF to promote tennis from grass root level to encourage talent, Aisam

SAMRA ATHAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) set to promote tennis at the grass root level to strengthen the country's standing in the sport, said the President of PTF, Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi on Wednesday. In an exclusive chat with APP, the former world number eight in doubles emphasised the importance of youth development at the junior level to ensure a steady pipeline of talent for the future. "We've immense potential in tennis in Pakistan, but to produce world-class players we'll have to focus at the grassroots level," Aisam said.



"The PTF, along with key stakeholders has decided to focus on schools, academies and local clubs to identify and train budding players, enabling them to represent our country at the international level." The tennis ace, who has been an ambassador for tennis in Pakistan for over two decades, revealed that the PTF was working on a structured approach to introduce tennis to children from a young age.

"We are planning to hold more junior tournaments and training camps across different cities. The idea is to make tennis more accessible to kids from all backgrounds, not just those who can afford expensive coaching," he

added. According to Aisam, one of the key strategies includes collaborating with schools to introduce tennis as part of their extracurricular activities. "We need to take tennis to schools, if cricket, hockey and football

can have structured school programmes, why not tennis?" he asked.

One of the biggest challenges for young tennis players in Pakistan is the lack of proper facilities and coaching expertise. Aisam acknowledged this gap and said that the PTF was working on improving infrastructure and training local coaches to meet international standards. "There are very few international-standard tennis academies in Pakistan. We need to build more courts and hire certified coaches who can groom young talent the right way," he explained.

"The federation is now committed to upgrading existing facilities and setting up new tennis centres in key cities," said Aisam, who also opened the ACE Tennis Academy in 2023 which will focus on developing performance tennis nationwide.

India's Gill pips Babar Azam to No 1 ODI spot

RIZWAN HAIDER

ISLAMABAD: India right-hander Shubman Gill has overtaken former Pakistan captain Babar Azam to become the top ranked ODI batter in the world as the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Wednesday issued latest rankings.



Asalanka jumped eight spots to eighth, while Pakistan captain Mohammad Rizwan climbed six places to 15th with a new career-high rating. New Zealand duo Devon Conway (up five runs to 35th) and Glenn Phillips (up six places to 41st) also make good ground on the list for ODI batters this week, with in-form Pakistan right-hander Salman Agha jumping 24 spots to 48th on the back of good displays in the recent Tri-Nation series.

The massive changes at the top of the ODI rankings come just prior to the start of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka spinner Maheesh Theekshana has climbed atop the Men's ODI Bowling Rankings - taking the premier position for the first time by surpassing Afghanistan's tweaker Rashid Khan.

This is the second time Gill has held the No.1 ranking in ODI

cricket, with the India batter having also gone past Babar to claim top spot midway through the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in 2023. Babar dropped to second place and 23 rating points behind the new No.1, while India skipper Rohit Sharma remained in the third spot. New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell moved up two places to fifth and Sri Lanka dasher Charith

Haider Ali confident of Pakistan's success in ICC CT

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani cricketer Haider Ali is optimistic about the national team's prospects in the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy 2025, saying the Green-shirts has the potential to make a significant impact in the tournament. Ali, who made his first debut in September 2019, said Pakistan team has all the capability to move to the top in the Champions Trophy. "We have a talented squad with players who can take the team to victory in the Champions Trophy. Pakistan team has the talent and ability to excel in the tour-



perform well in the mega event," he told APP. Ali, who was injured during the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) and was ruled out of the BPL Qualifier-2 in 2025, said he expects to recover within a week and a half. "I'm working hard on my rehabilitation 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 his off days." It may be mentioned that Ali had his T20 debut for Pakistan, against England, in September 2020 and scored 54 runs in his debut T20 match, becoming the first cricketer for Pakistan to score a fifty on a T20 debut.

KP Games to begin today, Abdul Nasir

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Games organized by the Directorate General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will begin from 20th February today, in which more than 2,000 male and female athletes will participate. All the athletes have reached Peshawar. All preparations for the Games have been completed. Male athletes will participate in 16 and female athletes in 12 games. These views were expressed by Director General Sports Abdul



that all arrangements for the games have been completed and Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur will inaugurate the games. Teams from DI Khan, Bannu, Kohat, Mardan, Swat, Abbottabad and Peshawar regions will participate in the mega event. He said that male players will participate in athletics, football, hockey, volleyball, basketball, karate, taekwondo, boxing, squash, table tennis, badminton, gymnastics, throwball, judo, wushu and handball, while female players will participate in athletics, hockey, cricket,

Pakistan to become fastest growing economy in Asia within 22 years: Ahsan Iqbal

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said Pakistan has the potential to become Asia's fastest-growing economy within 22 years. This optimism stems from Pakistan's favorable demographic and resource dynamics. Notably, Pakistan's ratio of natural resources to population is unmatched in the region, providing a unique advantage.

He expressed these views while addressing as a chief guest at the inauguration of the Astrolabe Datacenter at NED Engineering University here. Among other notables, Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, Professor Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed and Vice Chancellor NED Engineering University Dr. Sarosh Hashmat Lodhi were also present. Earlier, the minister formally performed the inauguration of the Datacenter. Ahsan Iqbal said that Pakistan got all required resources like we have manpower, natural minerals, and the modern infrastructure that we have put in place, and now, we only need stability and continuity of policies, and if we do this, we can move forward in this continent. The Federal Minister said that what he built the Datacenter, now important is its utilization that will be its functions and how will we use this facility so that we can provide better learning to our students. It is important that how will we conduct research within our education

and how will we bring private sector investments and privatize it in knowledge and industry, he added. Ahsan Iqbal said that Pakistani universities have to become problem solvers, solution providers and a center of innovations that will give us all the possibilities for a bright future for the sustainable development. He said that Pakistan's universities have to lead, particularly, the engineering universities have to take the lead as the key to Pakistan's future is in the hands of engineering universities. He said that today United States is a superpower not on the strength of its weapons, not on the strength of its economy, if America is a superpower, then its universities are on the back of America.



KARACHI: Federal Minister of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal Inauguration the Astrolabe Datacenter at NED University.

COAS in UK to participate in 7th Regional Stabilization Conference

HUMA REHAN

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), is on an official visit to the United Kingdom to participate in the 7th Regional Stabilization Conference at the esteemed Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.



During the visit COAS will deliver the keynote address on "The Emerging World Order and Pakistan's Future Outlook", said an ISPR news release. The Stabilization Conference serves as the premier platform for Army-to-Army dialogue between Pakistan and the United Kingdom, held annually to foster collaboration.

On the inaugural day of his visit, General Syed Asim Munir was dignified a warm and dignified welcome, including a ceremonial Guard of Honour at the historic Royal Horse Guards Parade Ground, presented by an impeccably turned-out contingent.

During his visit, the COAS will engage with key members of the UK's

civil and military leadership to discuss matters of mutual interest. His engagements will include meetings with Mr Adam Toney Radik, Chief of Defence Staff UK, General Sir Roland Walker, Chief of the General Staff of the British Army, and Mr Jonathan Nicholas Powell, the UK National Security Advisor.

Furthermore, the COAS will hold discussions with Ms. Yvette Cooper, Home Secretary, to address shared challenges and underscore the importance of fostering deeper collaboration.

Further, the COAS will engage with key members of the UK's

NA body approves key climate projects, pushes for stronger environmental accountability

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, chaired by Muneer Hassan, greenlit several high-impact climate projects under the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) 2025-26.

The committee, that met here on Wednesday also took a firm stance on environmental violations, calling for stricter enforcement of anti-pollution laws and advocating ground-breaking legislation to hold businesses accountable for climate impact.

The session saw intense scrutiny of major initiatives, including the Pakistan Bio-Safety Clearing House, the National Biodiversity Conservation Project, the Climate Resilient Urban Human Settlements Unit, and the Marine Biodiversity Governance Initiative.

Each project was evaluated for its financial feasibility, environmental impact, and alignment with global conservation frameworks, particularly the UN Marine Biodiversity Treaty.

The committee emphasized the importance of the Biosafety Project, which addresses genetic modifications and compliance with international biosafety protocols. The National Biodiversity Conservation Project was also spotlighted for its role in safeguarding Pakistan's marine ecosystems, both within and beyond its territorial waters.

Expressing concern over persistent violations of anti-pollution laws, the committee called for stricter enforcement by motorway police, including higher fines for illegal stubble burning. The Inspector General of Motorway Police has been summoned to brief the committee on enforcement progress in the next meeting.

Collective efforts urged for greener economy amid climate change challenges

ARSHAD MALIK

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam underscored the need for collective efforts to address the challenges posed by climate change and facilitate the transition to a greener economy.



She stressed the growing urgency for industries to embrace environmentally friendly practices, from reducing carbon emissions to integrating renewable energy and sustainable supply chains.

Speaking at a tree plantation event titled "Green Earth is Clean Earth" held by the

Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) at Gullistan Fatima Park in Islamabad on Wednesday, Romina praised the initiative, emphasizing the critical role that businesses and the wider community must play their role in ensuring a green and sustainable future. "Business communi-

Shaza highlights Pakistan's stance on digital economy at DCO General Assembly

MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, on Wednesday highlighted Pakistan's commitment to the digital economy and global cooperation.



Representing Pakistan at the 4th Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) General Assembly in Jordan, she underscored the importance of international partnerships in advancing digital development.

Actively engaging in discussions, she shared Pakistan's digital transformation strategy with international ministers and reaffirmed the country's dedication to fostering digital cooperation

promoting a news release. Pakistan's role in the digital revolution, Shaza Fatima said. Discussions with member countries focused on digital skills development and technology for progress.

With a strong commitment to bridging the digital divide and fostering international collaboration, Pakistan remains dedicated to leveraging technology for progress.

Finance minister meets WB delegation, discusses country's economic outlook

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday met with World Bank delegation and discussed economic outlook and reform agenda of the country.

and Dr. Tauqir Hussain Shah beside Country Director for Pakistan Najy Benhassine, Vice President & Corporate Secretary Mercy Tembon, Board Operations Officer Shadiya Adam, and Senior Operations Officer Karl Bach. The Finance Minister welcomed the delegation and appreciated the World Bank's continued support for Pakistan's economic and development agenda.

He specifically thanked the delegation for the new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) 2026-35, which was

formally launched in January 2025 with an unprecedented \$20 billion commitment to support Pakistan's development priorities.

The Finance Minister also apprised the delegation about his recent visit to Saudi Arabia for the AUIA Conference 2025, organized by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Saudi Minister of Finance. He highlighted that the conference brought together more than 30 finance ministers from developing countries to discuss global economic chal-

Ayaz Sadiq felicitates nation on hosting ICC Champions Trophy

PEAK POINT

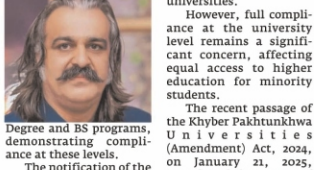
ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Wednesday extended heartfelt congratulations to the Pakistani nation and cricket enthusiasts worldwide on the hosting of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 in Pakistan.

"Today is a historic day," the Speaker said. He said that this marks the first ICC mega event in Pakistan since 1996. He described the hosting of the Champions Trophy 2025 as a moment of national pride and joy.

KP CM urged to ensure effective implementation of 2% Minority Quota in universities

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: The Civil Society Support Group has urged Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur to take concrete measures for full and effective implementation of the 2% minority admission quota across all public sector universities in the province.



According to a press release issued here on Wednesday, in 2021 Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa introduced a 2% minority admission quota in public sector universities to enhance educational opportunities for minority communities.

Progress continued in 2022, with the allocation of a 2% quota at the Intermediate level and a 1% quota for Associate

universities. However, full compliance at the university level remains a significant concern, affecting equal access to higher education for minority students.

The recent passage of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities (Amendment) Act, 2024, on January 21, 2025, transferred the powers of the Chancellor from the Governor to the Chief Minister, granting direct authority over public universities. Given this legislative shift, civil society urges the Chief Minister to direct the Department of Higher Education to develop an online centralized monitoring and compliance system to track the implementation of the quota.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, meeting with the World Bank delegation to discuss Pakistan's economic outlook and reform agenda.