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## PM urges nationwide shift to EVs to cut fuel costs, protect economy

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Monday, alluding to recent regional situation and spiraling global petroleum prices, underlined the need for introduction of environment-friendly electric vehicles (EVs) across the country, thus saving country's precious foreign reserves.

Addressing a ceremony of provision of eco-smart electric vehicles to the Islamabad Capital Traffic Police, the prime minister said that such like precedents of energy saving initiatives should be emulated by all the law enforcement agencies and provinces.

PM urges nationwide shift to EVs to cut fuel costs, protect economy

He observed that a total of 15 electric

vehicles were provided by the interior ministry which ran on batteries without using petrol and oil while another batch of vehicles would be inducted soon.

Terming the initiative a significant one, the prime minister said such like steps would cast positive impacts upon the country's foreign reserves.

On the occasion, he also congratulated Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi and his team for taking this initiative. Federal Ministers, Islamabad Police high ups and relevant authorities were present during the ceremony. The provision of eco-smart electric vehicles had been the part and parcel of prime minister's vision and the government's energy saving policy.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a ceremony of handing over electric vehicles to Islamabad traffic police.

## Trump warns Iran can be taken out in one night, says it 'might be tomorrow night'

PEAK POINT



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Monday that Iran can be taken out "in one night", adding that night might be tomorrow night.

"The entire country can be taken out in one night, and that night might be tomorrow night," Trump said during a press briefing at the White House, where he shared details about Operation Epic Fury.

"We're here today to celebrate the success of one of the largest, most complex and most harrowing combat search-and-rescue missions ever attempted by the military," he said.

Trump said he had ordered the US Armed Forces to do whatever was necessary to bring their "brave warriors" back home.

"It was a risky decision, because we could have ended up with 100 dead, as opposed to one or two," Trump told reporters following the perilous rescue mission.

"It's a hard decision to make, but in the United States military, we leave no American behind.

## 'Peace process ongoing': FO neither confirms nor denies reports of Pakistan proposing framework to end Iran war

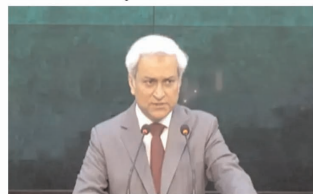
PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office said on Monday that the peace process is "ongoing" but declined to confirm or deny reports that Pakistan has proposed a framework to end the US-Israel war on Iran, according to state broadcaster Pakistan TV.

"There have been several reports of a 45-day ceasefire offer, or 15-point exchange. We do not comment on these individual, specific incidents," said FO Spokesperson Tahir Andrabi.

The comments by the FO spokesperson follow a Reuters report that claimed Iran and the United States have received a plan to end hostilities, which was

put together by Pakistan. Separately, Iran said The Reuters report, it has formulated its



which cited a "source aware of the proposals", claimed the framework was exchanged with the two sides overnight.

Axios, citing US, Israeli and regional sources, first reported on Sunday that the US, Iran and regional mediators were discussing a potential 45-day ceasefire as part of a two-phase deal that could lead to a permanent end to the war.

positions and demands in response to recent ceasefire proposals conveyed via intermediaries, a foreign ministry spokesperson said, adding that negotiations were "incompatible with ultimatums and threats to commit war crimes". Spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said Tehran had a set of requirements based on its national interests that

had already been conveyed via intermediary channels, adding that earlier US demands, such as the 15-point plan, were rejected for being "excessive."

"Iran does not hesitate to clearly express what it considers its legitimate demands and doing so should not be interpreted as a sign of compromise, but rather as a reflection of its confidence in defending its positions," Baghaei said in a press conference.

The latest diplomatic push comes amid escalating hostilities that have raised concerns over disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical artery for global oil supplies.

US President Donald Trump has.

## Two police constables, security guard martyred in Bannu attacks

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Two police personnel and a security guard were martyred in separate firing incidents in Bannu on Monday.

The first attack occurred outside a National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) office in the Baka Khel area, where armed gunmen opened fire on security staff.

Two officers, Constable Rafullah and security guard Gul Shah Noor, were killed at the scene. A heavy police contingent arrived shortly after the incident, but the attackers managed to flee.

## Iran says its IRGC intelligence chief killed in US-Israeli attack

PEAK POINT

IRAN: Iran said Monday that the head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Intelligence Organization was killed in a US-Israeli attack. State broadcaster IRIB, citing an IRGC statement, said Maj. Gen. Seyed Majid Khademi was "martyred" in the strike. Khademi had been appointed head of the IRGC's intelligence arm in June 2025 following the killing of his predecessor, Gen. Mohammad Kazemi.

Regional tensions have escalated since the US.

## Multiple US aircraft destroyed in airman rescue operation

PEAK POINT

TEHRAN/ WASHINGTON: Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) claimed on Sunday that its forces had destroyed two American C-130 military transport planes and two Black Hawk helicopters in southern Isfahan province following a US rescue operation. The announcements came amid mounting threats from the United States. President Donald Trump, in a series of expletive-laden social media posts, warned Tehran that it would be "living in Hell" if it failed to reopen the Strait of Hormuz by Tuesday (today). The Iranian army also said it had downed two MQ-9 Reaper drones and an unspecified number of Israeli Hermes 900 drones, part of a broader effort to retaliate against air strikes

in the past 24 hours. Footage aired on Iranian state television showed burnt wreckage, which authorities said were US aircraft involved in the operation to rescue a US F-15 airman downed by Iranian forces late last week. The Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway for global oil flows, has been effectively closed since the war began over five weeks ago, spurring a sharp rise in crude prices. Trump had given Iran until



April 6 to reopen the strait. Earlier, a US special forces mission rescued an American airman whose F-15 jet was downed behind Iranian lines, described by Trump as "one of the most daring" operations in US history. Another crew member was already rescued in broad daylight within hours. While the Pentagon reported technical malfunctions in two transport planes during the rescue, all personnel were evacuated

safely, highlighting both the risks of the conflict and Iran's ability to strike back.

Trump's warnings went beyond mere rhetoric. In social media posts, he vowed to strike Iran's power plants and bridges if the strait remained closed, emphasising the country's exposure to devastating attacks on critical infrastructure.

Critics have called his threats a potential violation of international law, coinciding with Israeli strikes on Iranian petrochemical plants and preparations for further operations targeting energy facilities, reportedly awaiting US approval.

Iranian officials dismissed Trump's threats as incoherent and incendiary. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei labelled them "incitement for war crimes and crimes.

## Markets, malls to close at 8pm across country, except Sindh, to conserve energy



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government decided on Monday that markets and shopping malls in the country, barring those in Sindh, would close by 8pm as part of energy conservation measures. The decision was taken during a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad, a statement by the PM's Office said. It added that markets in divisional headquarters in KP would be allowed to remain open till 9pm and consultations were under way regarding business hours for markets in Sindh. Meanwhile, the meeting decided that markets and shopping malls in the rest of KP, Punjab, Balochistan, Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir would close by 8pm, the statement said.



# SPORTS



## PSL 11: Farhan, Philippe lead Sultans to comfortable win over Pindiz



**PEAK POINT**  
ISLAMABAD: Sahibzada Farhan and Josh Philippe scored fifties as Multan Sultans beat Rawalpindi by seven wickets in the 14th match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 11 at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Monday.

Set to chase a 183-run target, the Sultans comfortably knocked the winning runs for the loss of just three wickets and 22 balls to spare. The leaders, however, had a contrasting start to their pursuit as Mohammad Amir dismissed their in-form opener Steve Smith (five) in the second over with just 12 runs on the board. But the early

setback did not bother the Sultans as in-form Farhan and Philippe turned the game on its head by putting together a blazing 110-run partnership for the second wicket, which saw both batters amassing their respective half-centuries. The monumental stand was eventually broken by Amir in the 12th over when he outfoxed Philippe with a slower delivery, who remained a notable run-getter for the Sultans with a brisk 56 off 30 deliveries, comprising six fours and three sixes.

Farhan, on the other hand, followed suit 11 balls later, getting cleaned up by Amir Khan after

top-scoring for the Sultans with 68 off 36 deliveries, studded with five sixes and four fours.

Following the back-to-back departure of set batters, skipper Ashton Turner and his deputy Shan Masood batted sensibly at the backend and steered their side to glory on the second delivery of the 17th over with an unbeaten 47-run partnership. Masood remained unbeaten with a 15-ball 27, while Turner made 26 not out from just 10 deliveries. Mohammad Amir was the pick of the bowlers for the Pindiz, taking two wickets for 32 in his three overs, while Mohammad Amir Khan bagged

one. Put into bat first, the seventh-placed side racked up 182/8 in their 20 overs despite Faisal Akram's four-wicket haul.

The Pindiz got off to a shaky start to their innings as their opener Yasir Khan (five) was dismissed by Muhammad Ismail in the third over with just 15 runs on the board. Following the early stutter, captain Mohammad Rizwan (19) was joined by Kamran Ghulam in the middle, and the duo batted sensibly to raise an anchoring 33-run partnership for the second wicket, which culminated with the formers' dismissal off Arafat Minhas in the sixth over.

## Officials panel for U-18 National Hockey Championship announced



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has announced the panel of officials for the National Youth Under-18 Hockey Championship 2026, scheduled to be held from April 9 to 19 at the Naseer Bunda Hockey Stadium, Islamabad.

The officials were appointed on the directives of PHF President Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani. The event is taking place as part of PHF's efforts to promote hockey in the country and identify young talent at the grassroots level.

According to the PHF Media Cell, Captain (R) Farrukh Atiq Khan has been named as the Organizing Secretary, while Lieutenant Colonel Abdul Nasir Akhuzada will serve as Chief PHF Tournament Coordinator. Khawar Javed has been appointed as Coordinator, and Muhammad Waqas Sheikh as Media Coordinator. Olympian Khawaja Muhammad Junaid will perform duties as Tournament Director, assisted by Shafiq Bhatti and Muhammad Ahmad as Assistant Tournament Directors. The Tournament Officers include Abdul Malik, Adnan Shehzad, Imran Akram, Sajid Raza, M. Waqas, Junaid Aslam, Muhammad Ali, Asif Parvez, and Hamza Tufail. Sohail Akram Janjua has been appointed as Umpire Manager, while Malik Muhammad Asghar will act as Assistant Umpire Manager.

## Fakhar Zaman breaks silence on T20I retirement speculations



**PEAK POINT**  
KARACHI: Renowned Pakistan batter and Lahore Qalandars opener Fakhar Zaman on Monday broke his silence on speculations about his retirement from T20 International cricket.

Zaman, who has been a key performer both for Pakistan and

under Article 2.14 of the Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel for allegedly breaching Article 41.3 of the playing conditions, which prohibits any action that alters the condition of the ball, during Lahore Qalandars' PSL 11 match against rivals Karachi Kings on March 29.

Consequently, he was handed a two-match ban after match referee Roshan Mahnama conducted a disciplinary hearing, following a thorough review of all evidence and providing Fakhar an opportunity for a personal hearing. Fakhar, who denied the allegations throughout the process, had requested a full disciplinary hearing under the PSL Code of Conduct.

"After the World Cup, I had decided to retire from T20 cricket. However, I no longer intend to retire and want to finish my T20 career on a high note," Zaman stated. It is pertinent to mention that the 35-year-old has been a standout performer for the Green Shirts in the T20I format, having played 120 matches and scored 2,494 runs at an impressive strike rate of 132.51, including 14 fifties. He has also excelled for Lahore Qalandars in the PSL, representing the franchise for the 11th consecutive season. So far, he has played 99 matches, scoring 3,018 runs at a strike rate of 141.82, which includes 24 fifties and two centuries. Recently, Fakhar was charged with a Level 3 offence

## PCB BoG approves financials, key reforms in 82nd meeting

**PEAK POINT**

LAHORE: The 82nd meeting of Board of Governors (BoG) of Pakistan Cricket Board was held under the chairmanship of Mohsin Naqvi, where several key decisions were approved regarding governance, finance, and future development of cricket. The Board formally approved the audited financial statements for the fiscal year 2024-25, marking an important step in ensuring financial transparency and accountability. In line with international standards, the BoG also approved the procedural rules in accordance with the ICC Global Anti-Corruption Code, reinforcing the PCB's commitment



to integrity in sport. The meeting further approved an Expression of Interest (EOI) for collaboration with the Saudi Arabia Cricket Federation for the development of a cricket stadium in Jeddah, signaling PCB's intent to expand its international partnerships. Additionally, the Board sanctioned the re-demarcation and renaming of Lahore's

cricket zones, taking into account geographical considerations to improve domestic cricket structure and administration. The BoG highlighted the growth of commercial cricket, paying tribute to the strength of the league. The PCB chief Naizi for his significant contributions to Pakistan Super League has become an attractive market for investors and has expressed confidence over the past two years in strengthening domestic cricket near future.

## 3rd Zainab Ali Naqvi Memorial World Juniors Tennis Championship (Leg-1)–2026 to begin yesterday



**PEAK POINT**  
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) is pleased to announce that the ITF Pakistan 3rd Zainab Ali Naqvi Memorial World Juniors Tennis Championship 2026 (Leg-1) commenced today, 7th April 2026, at the PTF Tennis

Complex, Islamabad. A total of 24 boys and 15 girls from 14 countries - including Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Singapore, Japan, China, Australia, Russia, Poland, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Thailand - are participating in the championship. Mikael Ali Baig and

Hamza Roman of Pakistan are the 1st and 2nd seeds in the tournament, respectively. This international tournament is dedicated to the memory of Zainab Ali Naqvi, a talented young tennis player from Karachi, who tragically passed away on February 12, 2024, after suffering a heart attack while compet-

ing in an ITF Junior Tournament in Islamabad. Results: Masamune Matsumoto (JPN) bt Inam Qadir (PAK) 6-2,6-0; Jamie Chen (HKG) bt Ethan Chiang (SGP) 6-3,6-1; Jayden Park (HKG) bt M.Ahmad Afzal (PAK) 6-1,6-1; Arham Tariq (PAK) w/o Seo Lee (KOR); Ruoyu Hua (CHN)

bt Abdaar Ali (PAK) 6-1,6-0; Ho Wan Yeung (HKG) w/o Kongyi Hu (CHN); M.Yahya w/o Daniel Alwadi; M. Ayyan Waqas w/o Mouluk Agarwal (IND) Varvara Rubrsova (RUS) bt Yeanna Chowdhury (BAN) 6-0,6-2; Eyu Yoshida (JPN) bt Soha Ali (PAK) 6-3,6-1; Safia Urazalina (KAZ) bt

Romaisa Malik (PAK) 6-0,7-5; Yelizaveta Slepchenko (KAZ) Yuriko (JPN) 6-4,6-1; Yijia Wang (CHN) bt Yuliia Artuhina (POL) 6-1,6-1; Rino Shinden (JPN) w/o Yeva Kim (KAZ). The main draw matches for both boys and girls will commence on April 7, 2026, at 10:00 AM.



# Government managed global oil crisis responsibly: Ali Pervaiz Malik

## PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Ali Pervaiz Malik on Monday informed the National Assembly that the government had handled the recent global oil crisis responsibly, ensuring the availability of petroleum products while protecting vulnerable segments of society.

Speaking in the House, he said Pakistan meets nearly 80 percent of its energy requirements through imports, making it highly vulnerable to regional disruptions.

He added that tensions

originating in a neighboring country had spread across the wider region, with repercussions being felt throughout the global economy.

"I will try to place a few facts before you regarding how this situation has unfolded and how its impact is extending to the wider world," he said, adding that history would ultimately judge whether the government fulfilled its responsibilities.

The minister said the crisis was triggered by escalating regional tensions, particularly after the February 28 developments affecting the Strait of Hormuz, through which around 20 to 25 per-



cent of the world's oil supply passes.

He noted that key energy and industrial supplies — including diesel, LPG, LNG, fertilizers, and other chemical products — traditionally pass through the affected

region, and disruptions in these routes have significantly impacted global supply chains. "As a result, prices of these commodities have surged multiple times worldwide," he added.

Ali Pervaiz Malik said

the government faced a difficult choice between ensuring crude oil prices surged from around \$70 per barrel to as high as \$170 per barrel within a short period, while diesel prices also rose sharply in international markets. He said Pakistan's long-standing supply arrangements, particularly with Kuwait, were disrupted, forcing the country to procure fuel from alternative markets at significantly higher premiums. "Premiums increased from around \$5 per barrel to as high as \$60-70 per barrel, while shipping and insurance costs also surged manifold due to the conflict," he added.

Highlighting the severity of the crisis, he said global crude oil prices surged from around \$70 per barrel to as high as \$170 per barrel within a short period, while diesel prices also rose sharply in international markets. He said Pakistan's long-standing supply arrangements, particularly with Kuwait, were disrupted, forcing the country to procure fuel from alternative markets at significantly higher premiums. "Premiums increased from around \$5 per barrel to as high as \$60-70 per barrel, while shipping and insurance costs also surged manifold due to the conflict," he added.

# Extension lectures were successfully held at Federal Urdu University Islamabad

## PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The extension lectures were successfully held at Federal Urdu University Islamabad on Monday, jointly organized by the Departments of International Relations and Mass Communication. The sessions were delivered by Dr. Maria Eleanora, who spoke on themes including cyber art as soft power, art and politics, and digital creativity in the global sphere. Dr. Maria is a professor at the University of Lodz Poland, and she will deliver special lectures during this week. A large number of students from International Relations attended the first session, while Mass Communication students participated actively in the second. Both sessions fea-



tured interactive questions answers segments, where students engaged enthusiastically and described the lectures as a valuable source of exposure and learning. Dr. Faisal Javiad the head of department presented the guest speaker's introduction and delivered the speech of thanks. Dr. Sikandar Zarren and Saima Azhar conducted the sessions. Faculty members including Syed Ahsan Ali and Choudhary Rasheed Sal also attended. Dr. Maria expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to visit Pakistan, describing it as a multicultural country and acknowledging the academic environment at the university. The next sessions will be conducted tomorrow.

# Opinion & Editorial

## The age of AI empires

Asad Baig  
"AI HAS long ceased to be just technology; it is now infrastructure," I said in a recent talk. "If it's so important, why isn't it making money?" somebody asked. Fair question. On paper, the investment in AI looks irrational. Billions are going in, with no clear profit's coming out. Even Meta's Reality Labs lost nearly \$20bn last year alone.

So I told them a story. There was a time when railways looked like a terrible investment. Massive costs and slow returns. If you judged them by early balance sheets, you'd call it a failure. Rail was never about selling tickets but controlling movement, connecting economies, and unlocking industries. The money came later. The power came first. The people who understood that were concerned about control, not early profits.

Artificial intelligence feels eerily similar. Still framed as software and models, it is something far more physical. It runs on data centres that consume electricity at the scale of cities. It is an infrastructure that looks less like code and more like power grids, mines and industrial systems. And increasingly, executives at some of the largest technology companies are now acknowledging that the real constraint on AI is not innovation, but energy. Google's leadership has warned that the US must significantly expand energy production to

keep pace with AI demand, calling for the use of "all sources of energy". Tech companies are securing massive, long-term power deals while exploring private generation and reshaping where data centres are built based on access to electricity. They are projected to spend hundreds of billions on AI infrastructure, numbers that resemble national industrial programmes more than corporate expansion. These investments are already creating distortions: power shortages, delays in grid connections and a renewed reliance on fossil fuels to meet immediate demand.

Is America's AI race accelerating a deeper obsession with energy security? Which raises a question that feels uncomfortable, but difficult to ignore: is America's AI race accelerating a deeper obsession with energy security, pulling it back towards regions like Iran and Venezuela, where control over oil and gas still shapes global power? The timing is difficult to dismiss.

The US is once again deeply entangled in regions at the heart of global energy flows. Iran remains central because of its position in the global oil system. Venezuela, with some of the largest proven oil reserves in the world, has re-emerged as a space of renewed strategic engagement. Individually, none of this is new. But in the context of an accelerating AI race, it invites a different

question. The companies driving AI are building infrastructure that demands continuous, uninterrupted energy. Data centres are becoming the new industrial base, and they require constant power now.

Nuclear energy is often presented as the long-term answer. But reactors take years, often decades, to come online. AI demand is rising in real time. In the short to medium term, systems still lean heavily on natural gas, the fastest and most scalable way to generate reliable power. So the question sharpens: if the US needs immediate and stable energy to sustain its AI ambitions, does that reinforce the strategic importance of gas-rich regions? Does it make control over supply routes, chokepoints and reserves central again?

Here, the comparison with China becomes unavoidable. China has spent years building a structural advantage in clean energy, from solar manufacturing to battery production and critical mineral processing. It is not just producing energy; it is producing the systems that generate, store and distribute it. This creates a self-reinforcing ecosystem where technological ambition is backed by domestic capacity. The US, by contrast, appears to be pursuing a more immediate and diversified strategy, combining renewables, nuclear ambitions, and crucially, gas.

Courtesy Dawn

## Pakistan's tight diplomatic rope

### Kamran Yousaf

As the war in the Middle East drags well into its second month, with no clear end in sight, Pakistan has refused to step back from diplomacy. Instead, Islamabad has doubled down on its efforts to carve out space for dialogue.

In an increasingly polarised environment, Pakistan has emerged as a key intermediary between Iran and the US. Its role, though understated, has not gone unnoticed. Islamabad was instrumental in delivering a 15-point framework from Washington to Tehran, an effort that, at least partially, underscores its diplomatic relevance. The US has publicly acknowledged Pakistan's role, while Iran too has appreciated the effort.

Pakistan today represents one of the few remaining windows through which diplomacy can still be pursued. Recent developments suggest that Islamabad's efforts came close to yielding tangible results. Not once, but twice, arrangements for direct or indirect US-Iran talks were nearly finalised. Both times, however, the process collapsed at the eleventh hour. In fact, the deep-rooted mistrust between the two sides continues to haunt any diplomatic initiative. For Iran, past experience weighs heavily, the perception that the US has historically used negotiations as a cover to prolong or reallocate military campaigns remains a major stumbling block. This trust deficit has made Pakistan's task significantly more complex. Adding to the uncertainty were reports in sections of the Western media claiming that Islamabad might no longer serve as a potential venue for talks, citing an alleged Iranian reluctance to travel to Pakistan. However, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi was quick to dismiss such claims. He clarified that Tehran had never refused to come to Islamabad and, in fact, praised Pakistan's diplomatic outreach. His remarks served as an important signal: despite setbacks, the door to diplomacy has not been shut.

Courtesy Tribune

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## ADR: the way to go

In a country where judicial stalemate is the order of the day, and where litigations move at a snail's pace, an alternate mechanism for dispensation of justice is inevitable. Former puisne judge, Syed Mansoor Ali Shah has pointed out a perfect way to address this enigma. He rightly believes that Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is the way to go, and all efforts must be made in a lawful circumference to introduce this erstwhile convention as the modus operandi in facilitating speedy justice. All it pertains is a community-based decorum where the peers and notables gather for adjudicating disputes and, through the dictum of honesty, push the envelope further in reaching a middle ground for provision of justice. ADR can go a long way in curtailing the mounting case backlog in our courts. Reports say more than two million cases are waiting to see the light of the day, and the apex court itself is seized with around 56,000 high-profile petitions pertaining to public importance. It is also a miserable reality that Pakistan ranks 129th out of 142 on the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2024; and is among the lowest in South Asia. Moreover, the dual-tier judicial system introduced in haste under the 27th constitutional amendment has led to a visible compromise in transparency, and the independence of lawfare has become questionable.

## MoITT reviews progress on women's digital empowerment project



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT), which chairs the National Steering Committee (SC) for the Digitalisation for Women Economic Empowerment (D4WEE) Project, convened a high-level meeting at the UN Women Country Office in Islamabad to review progress and strengthen coordination on the initiative.

The D4WEE Project is a four-year programme (2024-2028) funded

by KOICA. The Steering Committee serves as the project's highest governing body, providing strategic oversight, guiding policy integration, and ensuring accountability.

Key government and private sector stakeholders attended the meeting to assess ongoing efforts and ensure the effective delivery of programme objectives.

Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja highlighted the committee's mandate to embed project outcomes into institutional strategies, ensure

sustainability beyond the project cycle, and track gender-disaggregated results in real time.

She noted Pakistan's progress in digital inclusion, stating that the gender gap in mobile internet usage declined from 36-38 percent to 25 percent over the past year.

She also highlighted the creation of over 800,000 digital wallets by women under the Ramadan digital payments initiative.

Additionally, she emphasized government efforts to expand access to digital services and financial inclusion by providing seven million free SIMs to underserved women.

The minister stressed that integrating women into Pakistan's digital economy is critical to formalizing the largely informal sector, which accounts for about 50 percent of the country's GDP. She said greater participation of women would strengthen the workforce, enhance per capita productivity, and help build a sustainable talent pipeline. She also called for strategic preparedness for emerging technologies.

## Islamabad Safe City to be upgraded to 'Capital Smart City'

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to transform the Islamabad Safe City project into a fully integrated Capital Smart City, aimed at modernizing policing, traffic management, and civic services.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Safe City Headquarters in Islamabad, where he chaired a high-level meeting to review progress on Phase-II of the Safe City project.

During the briefing, it was decided that all ongoing work under Phase-II will be completed by May 30. The minister directed authorities to ensure the timely completion of the project without any delays.

Naqvi announced that the Central Command and Control System in Islamabad will be upgraded, adding that advanced



systems for traffic management and crime control will be fully integrated under the Capital Smart City framework.

He stated that every possible resource is being utilized to make Islamabad a safer city.

The meeting also approved the new design of the Safe City Headquarters.

Inspector General of Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi briefed the minister in detail, revealing that 75% of Phase-II work has already been completed. The installation of modern cameras and monitoring.

## Representatives from Pakistan's fan industry seek policy interventions during meeting with finmin



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The country's fan industry on Monday sought policy interventions to reduce the export of its raw materials for balanced value addition, greater quality exports and energy-efficient fans in the country.

They also recommended interventions that could enable financing and energy efficiency initiatives during a virtual meeting with Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb.

The group of representatives from the electric fan industry was led by members of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of

Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and the Pakistan Electric Fan Manufacturers Association (PEFMA). The group highlighted sectoral challenges, export potential, and avenues for policy support. According to an official statement from the finance ministry, Aurangzeb reiterated the government's commitment to undertaking focused consultations with individual sectors to better understand their operational landscape and support their growth. The group provided an overview of the structure and economic significance of the fan industry, highlighting that it was a fully indigenous manufacturing sector with around 300 manufacturers concentrated in Gujrat and Gujranwala. "The industry contributes significantly to employment, with approximately 40,000 direct and over 150,000 indirect jobs, and maintains a strong value addition profile. Members also shared insights into the sector's export footprint, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, while noting recent trends in export performance," the handout said.

## Governor Kundi, PPP leaders discuss organizational matters

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday held a meeting with Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) President

Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha and Chairman KP Farzand Ali Wazir, wherein matters related to party organization and welfare activities were discussed in detail. During the meeting, the participants exchanged views on organizational affairs of the party, activation of workers and future political strategy. Various proposals were also considered to further strengthen and mobilize the party structure across the province. The Governor said that organizing the party at the grassroots level was the need of the hour so that public issues could be highlighted effectively. He emphasized enhancing contacts with party workers and making the organizational structure more vibrant and active. Consultations were also held regarding the holding of proposed conventions of the party and its subsidiary organizations.

## Quality basic healthcare remains government's highest priority: Ayaz

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Monday emphasized that a healthy nation forms the foundation of a developed and stable state.

On the occasion of World Health Day, he said the serves as a reminder that providing quality, timely and equitable healthcare to all citizens is a fundamental responsibility of the state.

Ayaz Sadiq highlighted that Pakistan faces multiple challenges in the health sector, including limited access to services, shortage of resources and a rapidly growing population.

He stressed that addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive strategy, sustainable



policymaking and practical measures to ensure that every citizen can access basic healthcare without discrimination.

Ayaz Sadiq said that while the government and relevant institutions are taking steps to improve the sector, more coordinated and effective efforts are needed, particularly in remote and underdeveloped areas.

He underscored that disease prevention can be promoted through precautionary measures, healthy lifestyles.

## SAPM Haroon meets Punjab agricultural minister to boost agri exports, policy coordination

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Monday met Provincial Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Punjab Syed Ashiq Hussain Shah and discussed development of the agriculture and livestock sectors as well as enhanced coordination between the federation and the provinces. The meeting was attended by Federal Secretary for Industries and Production Saif Anjum, Punjab's Provincial Secretaries for Agriculture and Livestock, and the CEO of the Engineering Development Board, said a news release. During the



meeting, both sides discussed ongoing initiatives in Punjab's agriculture and livestock sectors, their outcomes, and future strategies to further strengthen these key areas of the economy. Haroon said that, in line with the directions of prime minister, the government is committed to empowering the agriculture and livestock sectors to enhance exports and support economic growth.

## NDMA issues nationwide rain alert including for Karachi, Lahore, northern areas

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued a nationwide alert following a fresh forecast of rain, windstorms, and snowfall across the country. The NDMA stated that the current weather patterns strictly align with the seasonal outlook issued by the NEOC in January. Furthermore, the authority is set to release a detailed weather forecast spanning from April to June. Thunderstorms, gusty winds,

and rain are expected in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Chitral, Dir, Swat, Kalam, Mingora, Battagram, Peshawar, Manshera, and Abbottabad regions. Similar conditions, including windstorms and hailstorms, are predicted for Haripur, Swabi, Nowsheera, Mardan, Charsadda, Kohat, Karak, Bannu, Lakkhi Marwat, Tank, DI Khan, and Waziristan as well, it said. The disaster management authority said rain and windstorms are forecast for Islamabad, and Punjab's Murree, Rawalpindi, Attock, Gujrat, Khan, Jhelum, Chakwal, Gujrat, Gujranwala,



Hafizabad, Sialkot, and Mandi Bahauddin. Narawal, Sargodha, Jhang, Faisalabad, Lahore, Sahiwal, Kasur, Okara, Burewala, D.G. Khan, Multan, and Bahawalpur districts are also expected to receive rainfall. In Sindh, Karachi, Hyderabad, Thatta, Badin, Sujawal, Jamshoro, Dadu, Khairpur, Sukkur, Larkana, Jacobabad, Shikarpur, Ghorhi, Naushahro Feroze, Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar, Umerkot, Tharparkar, Mirpur Khas, Tando Allahyar, and Tando

Muhammad Khan are braced for gusty winds and thunderstorms. In Balochistan, rain and windstorms are expected in Quetta, Zhob, Loralai, Dera Bugti, Ziarat, Kalat, Qila Saifullah, Qila Abdullah, Chaman, Pishin, Barkhan, Sibi, Nushki, Khuzdar, Awaran, Washuk, Panjgur, Turbat, Gwadar, and Lasbela.

Whereas, snowfall is predicted for upper hilly areas of Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir, with rain forecast for Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Astore, Diamer, Kharmand, Shigar, Ghizer, Nagar, Muzaffarabad, Bagh, Rawalakot, Haveli, Poonch,

Kotli, Mirpur, Bhimber, and Neelum Valley. The NDMA warned that strong winds, lightning,

and hailstorms could damage weak structures, trees, standing crops and power lines. Commuters are cautioned that rain may cause slippery roads and snowfall could disrupt traffic flow in mountainous regions.

There is also an increased risk of landslides in hilly areas due to continuous rainfall.

The weather department said citizens should avoid unnecessary travel and exercise extreme caution while driving.