



Government eyes stronger economic engagement with UK



Seafood exports hit record \$568m, says Maritime Minister



CM Maryam, Musadik Malik review Punjab Climate and Disaster Resilience Plan

Founded By:
(Late) Rehmat Khan

ABC CERTIFIED

Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com
Website: www.peakpoint.pk

Executive Group Editor
Arif Mehmood Khan



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PM Shehbaz chairs high-level meeting in Quetta on Balochistan security situation

PEAK POINT

QUETTA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired a high-level meeting in Quetta on Thursday to discuss the security situation in Balochistan after multiple major terrorist incidents in the province in recent days.

Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir was also present at the meeting of the Provincial Apex Committee on the National Action Plan to counter terrorism.

Addressing the meeting, PM Shehbaz said they had gathered in Balochistan after "very serious incidents took place in the past four days", resulting in the martyrdom of policemen, soldiers and civilians.

Noting that 54 terrorists were killed while

responding to those attacks and in subsequent operations, he affirmed, "This war [against terrorism] will continue until the last fascist terrorist in Pakistan is eliminated."

The prime minister said there was "no doubt that our eastern neighbour is fully involved in this fitna (menace) in all aspects".

"They are providing money to these terrorists and their groups, as well as providing weapons. These terrorists in Afghanistan collectively conduct attacks in Balochistan and KP," PM Shehbaz said.

"Likewise, there are also some khariji hands, about which I do not want to say anything further here," the prime minister said, echoing the military spokesman's recent comments that India.



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Provincial Apex Committee on the National Action Plan, attended by CDF Field Marshal Asim Munir, in Quetta.

'People seek revenge': Crowds mass in Iran's Mashhad for Khamenei's burial

PEAK POINT



hometown of Mashhad.

An Israeli strike assassinated Khamenei in late February on the first day of the Middle East war.

Thousands of people filled the streets of the eastern city of Mashhad, home to one of the holiest sites of Shia Islam.

With new hostilities breaking out with the United States even after an accord last month to end the war, at least one fighter jet escorted the plane carrying the late Iranian leader's coffin to Mashhad.

The burial will be the final act in a marathon six days of funeral ceremonies, which have allowed people to pay tribute in Tehran, the clerical hub of Qom and also in Iraq. Men wore black shirts while women were clad in black chadors, many waving the red flags that symbolise vengeance.

US, Iran trade strikes for a 2nd day in fight over Strait of Hormuz

PEAK POINT



cargo ships transiting the strait, came hours after US President Donald Trump said he believed an interim ceasefire with Iran to be "over".

US forces said the latest attacks against Iran were aimed at "their ability to threaten the freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz", citing recent strikes against commercial ships the waterway.

"This is in retribution for yesterday's bombing of ships by Iran. If it happens again, it will get much worse!" Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

The US strikes rattled several cities along Iran's southern coast and left some areas without power. The US Central Command said later they had struck approximately 90 military targets.

Iran responded with a second day of attacks on Kuwait and Bahrain, both home to US military bases.

Kuwait's Defence Ministry said it was intercepting missiles and drones, while Qatar briefly issued an "elevated security threat" alert before later giving the all-clear.

Gulf companies are set to reveal the unequal toll of Iran war

PEAK POINT



DUBAI: Companies in the Gulf, some of the most directly affected by the Iran war, will provide one of the clearest insights so far of its regional financial impact when they begin reporting their second-quarter earnings this week.

In countries from Saudi Arabia and Oman to the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, company results are likely to be mixed.

Banks and real estate are most exposed given pre-existing challenges that have been exacerbated by the war's impact on inflation on interest rates, while long-term contracts and relatively inflexible demand sheltered telecoms, analysts said.

Energy companies faced supply disruption from the four-month conflict, but also potential gains from the price volatility caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz shipping channel.

"The second quarter is going to reveal the real impact of the war," said Tariq Qaqish, deputy CEO at advisory firm FH Capital.

Gas force majeure hits Punjab

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Amid hot and humid weather, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Ltd (SNGPL) has declared force majeure — a legal term that absolves contractual liability — for its inability to supply regasified liquefied natural gas (RLNG) for three weeks due to renewed tensions around the Strait of Hormuz. This may significantly hamper the power supply from over 5,000MW of RLNG-based plants in Punjab and curtail the transmission of power from Sindh to upcountry load centres, resulting in higher loadshedding in the days ahead. Informed officials said while rationing.

Israeli strike kills Gaza aid worker organising FIFA World Cup screenings shortly before Egypt-Argentina clash

PEAK POINT

GAZA: An Israeli strike in Gaza prior to the kick-off of the FIFA World Cup clash between Argentina and Egypt killed a top Palestinian aid official who helped organise screenings of the game across the strip, according to media reports.

The Associated Press said the blast that killed Mohamed al-Wahidi, an official with Egypt's relief arm in Gaza, turned "what was supposed to be a moment of celebration — the live screening of a potential upset against Argentina by an Arab team — into a reminder of how the near-daily Israeli strikes are continuing to kill civilians despite a truce reached in October". The report also quoted

Dr Mohamed Abu Selmiya, the director of al-Wahidi was not the tar-



Shifa Hospital, as saying that the strike that killed al-Wahidi on Tuesday hit a car in the Sabra neighborhood of Gaza City at dusk.

He said three others were killed in the attack, including the driver, Ahmed Daghmush, 33, and two brothers, 10-year-old Hamza al-Deri and 8-year-old Fari. According to the publication, the

get of the strike. "It said the attack was aimed at a Hamas militant and that it was checking whether Daghmush was the target. Dr Abu Selmiya said he was a taxi driver without any known links to militant groups," it stated.

The committee for which al-Wahidi worked is the relief arm of the Egyptian government, which provides food,

shelter and other assistance to Palestinians in Gaza, it added.

Meanwhile, the Guardian reported that Gaza's Sabra district was hit around an hour before the match commenced.

It quoted Wahidi's cousin as saying that he was "widely loved and had a strong presence at family and community gatherings", and was known for supporting people in need.

Israel has repeatedly carried out strikes in Gaza since a US-mediated ceasefire with the Palestinian group Hamas was reached last October.

At least 1,084 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since the ceasefire took effect, according to the territory's health ministry.

ADB says Pakistan's economy grew at 3.7% in FY26



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said Thursday that Pakistan's economy grew at 3.7% in fiscal year 2025-26, supported by strong performance in the industrial and services sectors along with modest gains in agriculture.

According to the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) July 2026, the economic growth during FY26, which ended on June 30, 2026, was driven by broad-based expansion across key sectors of the economy. The ADB, however, revised down its GDP growth forecast for FY2027 to 3.7%, citing higher energy costs and mounting pressure on workers' remittances.



SPORTS



PCB confirms four-team One-Day tournament ahead of World Cup 2027



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) confirmed on Thursday that it will hold a four-team One-Day tournament in August ahead of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027.

Director of High Performance, Aaqib Javed, said the competition would take place before the start of the domestic first-class season and is aimed at identifying a core pool of players for the global event, which is approximately 18 months away.

Javed stressed that preparations for the 2027 World Cup must begin immediately, with the tournament designed to assess

Pakistan's white-ball talent in a competitive environment.

"We have around 18 months until the 2027 World Cup, so this is the right time to begin our preparations," Javed said.

He explained that the tournament had been jointly planned by the national selectors and coaching staff to create four evenly matched teams featuring all of Pakistan's leading white-ball players. "The selectors and coaches sat together and designed this four-team tournament. Four balanced sides will be selected, and all white-ball players will take part,"

he said. According to Javed, the selectors and coaches will also determine each team's playing XI

based on the specific roles assigned to individual players, allowing them to evaluate combinations more effectively.

"The playing XIs will be selected according to each player's role. This tournament will help us determine which group of players should form the core of our plans going forward," he added.

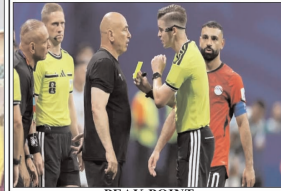
Javed noted that all matches would be televised, ensuring every player's performance could be closely monitored and making it easier for the management to identify the strongest squad for future assignments.

"Every match will be broadcast, everyone's performances will be visible, and that will make it easier for us to build the right player pool," he said.

The former Pakistan pacer also emphasised the importance of improving the national side's standing in the ODI rankings ahead of the World Cup.

"Pakistan's ODI team should be ranked among the top four in the world. Anything below that is unacceptable. We are determined to make significant progress in the rankings," Javed concluded.

Egypt file complaint against referee after World Cup exit



PEAK POINT

MEXICO: The Egyptian football federation on Wednesday said it had asked for the officiating team from their 3-2 defeat to Argentina in the last 16 of the World Cup to be thrown out of the competition. "Hany Aburida, president of the Egyptian Football Federation, filed a complaint with Fifa, demanding an investigation into the French referee Francois Letexier... after the serious refereeing mistakes committed by the team of referees and double standards," said a statement from the federation. On Tuesday, Letexier ruled out a Mostafa Ziko goal when Egypt were leading 1-0 after VAR intervened to spot a foul on Lisandro Martinez much earlier in the move. A few minutes later, Ziko put Egypt 2-0 up and on the brink of a place in the last eight for the first time, but there was further controversy in added time, after Cristian Romero and Lionel Messi had brought the champions level. In the build-up to Argentina's winner scored by Enzo Fernandez, Egypt believe they should have been awarded a penalty for a pull by Alexis Mac Allister on Hamdy Fathy. "Aburida demanded the investigation of the entire team of referees, including the video technology referees, because of the blatant errors and insisting on not reviewing some of the footage that we believe are in favour of the Egyptian national team."

Women's cricket gets its first Lord's Test as England face India



PEAK POINT

DUBAI: Lord's will finally host a women's Test, 142 years since staging its first such men's match, when England face India in a four-day game at the 'Home of Cricket' starting Friday.

"It just boggles my mind that it is just the first (women's) Test

Australia by eight the field a distant wickets in a one-day dream.

international on England's No 5 August 4, 1976.

England's captain at Lord's that day was the late Rachael Heyhoe Flint, a pioneering figure in a women's game where players were still wearing skirts rather than, as they do now, white or coloured trousers.

Heyhoe Flint, who died in 2017, now has a gate named after her at Lord's.

But in 1976, days that a Test Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the owners of Lord's, were still decades away from admitting women as members, with the thought of the females walking directly through the Long Room of the that attracted a capacity crowd.

Pakistan begin preparations for West Indies Test tour with pre-series camp



Pakistan Football federation unveils plans for First-Ever 8-franchise professional league and FIFA Mini-Pitches

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan football is undergoing a historic revolution under the visionary leadership of PFF President Syed Mohsin Gillani. By leveraging strategic "FIFA Diplomacy," Gillani has established direct personal ties with top FIFA and AFC leadership, successfully pulling the sport out of long-standing isolation, resource scarcity, and administrative crisis. This direct collaboration has already restored the country's international sporting prestige, highlighted by the historic visit of AFC President Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa to Pakistan. The most revolutionary milestone of this new roadmap is the blueprint for Pakistan's first official Men's Professional Football League, which will feature 8 franchise teams. This league is poised to transform football into a self-sustaining commercial industry,

offering permanent employment and sustainable professional careers to hundreds of local players. Concurrently, infrastructure development is accelerating nationwide, focusing on upgrading stadiums and constructing FIFA Forward Mini-

Pitches. These structural plans follow a spectacular two-year run of historic victories across all formats. Pakistan clinched its first-ever FIFA-recognized international title in 74 years at the Diamond Jubilee Tournament in the Maldives. Furthermore, the men's national team made history by



qualifying for the second round of the FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifiers for the first time, while the women's team achieved a record-breaking jump in global rankings. Significant progress was also recorded at the youth level,

with historic performances by the U-16 and U-19 teams, alongside the national futsal team's global debuts in Riyadh and Thailand. To transition players to modern football standards, the PFF has secured strategic partnerships with global football powerhouses including Argentina, Japan, Saudi Arabia.

Noskova books all-Czech Wimbledon final clash with Muchova



Parliament committee rejects official briefings on women's employment, warns ministries over poor policy responses

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: A parliamentary committee rejected official briefings on women's employment policies, expressing serious dissatisfaction over weak presentations, unclear statistics and the absence of senior government officials during an important discussion on female labour force participation in Pakistan. The committee warned that continued failure to provide proper policy plans could lead to parliamentary action. The Special Committee on Gender Mainstreaming met at Parliament House, Islamabad, under the chairpersonship of Dr. Nafisa Shah, MNA, to discuss women's participation in the workforce, unpaid care work, domestic workers' rights and ways to increase women's role in Pakistan's economy. The committee strongly criticized the absence of Federal Secretaries from the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Ministry of Human Rights and Ministry of

Planning. Members said that sending junior officers instead of senior officials weakened parliamentary accountability and showed a lack of seriousness on important national issues. Chairperson Dr. Nafisa Shah said that senior leadership should personally attend committee meetings where major policy decisions and national issues are being discussed. During the meeting, officials from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development and development organizations presented reports about women's employment and the care economy. However, committee members expressed dissatisfaction with the presentations, stating they lacked proper research, clear explanations and detailed policy solutions. Lawmakers questioned differences in female labour force participation figures and asked officials to explain how statistics were collected. They also raised questions about women's

unpaid work at homes, domestic labour and the contribution of women working in agriculture, including those involved in the Hari (sharecropping) system. The committee emphasized that Pakistan needs its own national policy for the Care Economy instead of depending mainly on international organizations. Members said foreign support can help, but Pakistan's policies should be designed according to the country's own needs and conditions. The Care Economy includes jobs and unpaid work related to childcare, elderly care, household support and other services that help society function. Members said investment in this sector could create jobs, increase women's participation in the economy and support national growth. The committee also reviewed the implementation of the Protection of Domestic Workers Act, 2022, and expressed concern that enforcement remains weak despite the introduction of rules. Lawmakers highlighted several problems

faced by women workers, including lack of legal recognition for care workers, absence of proper registration systems for domestic workers, shortage of childcare facilities and risks of exploitation and human trafficking in unregulated domestic work. The committee recommended changing labour laws to officially recognize care workers and provide them legal protection. Members suggested introducing a Care Worker Scorecard system to track the progress of workers entering the formal economy. The committee also called for a nationwide registration system for domestic workers to protect both workers and employers and recommended expanding daycare facilities across Pakistan. Officials were directed to prepare stronger policy plans. The Ministry of Human Rights was asked to coordinate with different ministries and prepare a combined briefing on the Care Economy. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics was directed to explain its survey methods and clearly separate

unpaid household work, domestic work and professional care work in official data. The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development was asked to prepare proposals for training and overseas employment opportunities for female care workers, while the Planning Commission was directed to develop a national policy recognizing care work as an important part of the economy. The committee also discussed the issue of the gender pay gap in Pakistan. Officials informed members that according to the Pakistan Gender Pay Gap Report 2025, women earn around 30 percent less in monthly wages and 25 percent less in hourly wages compared with men. The ministry said Pakistan is working with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to reduce wage discrimination and improve working conditions through programmes focused on decent employment, skills development and social protection. The committee was also informed about new

opportunities for women seeking employment abroad. Officials said the minimum age requirement for women working overseas as domestic workers has been reduced from 35 years to 25 years under changes in the Emigration Rules, 1979. Officials said the decision aims to create safer employment opportunities for women, increase financial independence and improve remittance inflows. After detailed discussions, the committee rejected the briefings from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development. Members directed that Federal Secretaries must personally attend the next meeting with complete policy frameworks and better-prepared presentations. The committee said improving women's participation in Pakistan's workforce requires serious government action, stronger laws and better protection for millions of women contributing to the economy.

Opinion & Editorial



Arif Mehmood Khan
Group Editor: 0333-5366814

Samra Athar Kakakhel
Resident Editor
Nadim Tanoli
Joint Editor: Mob-0301-7777874
Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com
www.peakpoint.pk

Laws in the dark

Legislation is meant to serve the public interest. It is meant to address the concerns of citizens and create a fairer society. Yet, far too often, laws that directly affect the privileges of those in power pass quietly through assemblies, escaping scrutiny until they are exposed by public outrage. More than two months after the K-P Assembly enacted laws enhancing lawmakers' salaries, allowances and privileges, details of the legislation have resurfaced, prompting widespread criticism. The K-P Province (Salaries and Allowances of Members) Act and the K-P Assembly Powers, Privileges and Immunities (Amendment) Act reportedly provide lawmakers with expanded benefits, including access to government facilities, exemptions from certain charges, security arrangements and official passport entitlements. At a time when ordinary citizens are being asked to endure economic hardship and fiscal restraint, such provisions inevitably raise questions about priorities. The greater concern, however, is the manner in which these legislations slipped through the cracks and makes its way into law. Any law restricting the publication of assembly proceedings deemed confidential must be carefully examined to ensure it does not undermine press freedom or public accountability.

Rising economic prospects

Ishtar Husain
ALTHOUGH it will take time for US-Iran negotiations to produce a durable peace deal, regional states have begun positioning themselves to benefit from the new economic opportunities that are likely to emerge. Anticipating greater regional integration, Türkiye, for example, has announced incentives to attract manufacturing investment.

Pakistan, too, is well placed to benefit. It has earned global goodwill for helping reduce regional tensions and supporting diplomatic efforts for peace. At home, the economy has reached an important inflection point. After restoring macroeconomic stability, the challenge now is to move towards investment-led, export-oriented and inclusive growth. The new budget seeks to balance fiscal discipline under the IMF programme with steps to ease business constraints and give relief to citizens — an aim that's essential but not easy to fulfil.

Implementation of the broader reform agenda is a sine qua non for availing emerging opportunities: improving security, making energy prices competitive, privatising SOEs, broadening the tax base while reducing compliant taxpayers' burden, expediting regulatory reforms, investing in quality human capital, replacing generalised subsidies with targeted support, digitising

the economy, reducing government size and boosting public institutions. Success depends less on announcing reforms and more on implementing them through responsibilities, timelines and accountability.

Here, we focus on how Pakistan should seize the economic opportunities arising from a regional peace settlement. Some are asking how many billions of dollars Pakistan should receive for its constructive role. This is a mistaken approach. A country aspiring to dignity and self-reliance shouldn't revert to the rentier-state model that's weakened its economy. Indeed, we should gradually convert or repay the nearly \$12 billion in friendly-country deposits supporting our foreign exchange reserves. We should build partnerships based on expanding trade, attracting investment for productive sectors (agriculture and industry) and acquiring technology and managerial expertise. Friendly states' proposals must be judged against these goals. Implementation is critical. Agreements must be supported by measurable milestones, regular monitoring and effective coordination, with the PM himself reviewing progress.

Iran, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia offer immediate economic opportunities.

Iran: A stable, economically revitalised Iran offers Pakistan enormous opportunities. Scholars like Vali Nasr and Nargis Bajoghli say

that the emerging generation of Iran's security and political leaders is technocratic and strategically nationalist rather than ideological. They know that prolonged economic stagnation is the greatest threat to political stability. Hence economic recovery is central to their national priorities. This change should facilitate stronger bilateral economic cooperation while helping improve border security.

During President Masoud Pezeshkian's recent visit, both countries agreed to raise bilateral trade from about \$3bn to \$10bn by 2028. Achieving this target needs close collaboration between the commerce ministry and private sector to identify products in which Pakistan enjoys a comparative advantage. Pakistan can expand exports of rice, meat, textile, surgical instruments, fruit and processed foods, while importing raw material and intermediate goods from Iran at competitive prices.

Our engineering and logistics organisations should participate in Iran's post-war reconstruction through commercial partnerships with Iranian firms. Skilled and semi-skilled workers whose wage costs are lower than those of their Iranian counterparts can contribute to reconstruction activities.

Iran's opening of six trade routes to Central Asia and Azerbaijan is another opportunity.

Courtesy Dawn

Feeding girls to predators!

Zainab Ali Khan

As I sit and write this op-ed on the pandemic of violence against women and girls in Pakistan, I wonder if my words will reach the right ears and actually make a difference. June 2026 has proven to be a new low for Pakistan when it comes to the rape and murder of its girls. It has turned into a nation that eats its children. Let me recount just some of the cases from June 2026 to show you why I am disgusted, disillusioned and disappointed by the current state of affairs. In Gujranwala, Punjab, a 16-year-old girl was nearly abducted while walking with her sisters. In Ghotki, Sindh, a teenage girl was gang-raped while working in a landlord's field alongside her parents, and the assault was filmed so the family could later be blackmailed into silence. In Karachi, the country's most advanced city, three-year-old Kulsom was raped and murdered, her body delivered in a flour sack to her doorstep and discovered by her grandfather. In Lahore, the provincial capital of Punjab, an 18-year-old domestic worker died after months of severe torture and repeated rape at the hands of her employer's son and the family driver. In Sargodha, one of the fastest growing cities of the country, eight-year-old Muntaha — sent by her parents to buy a pack of cheese — was found raped and murdered on a shop rooftop. It is self-evident, therefore, that Pakistan is a country where simply stepping out to buy basic groceries, walking with family elders, or playing in front of one's own doorstep can result in a woman or child being brutally raped, beaten and murdered. Pakistan has signed a slew of international treaties, promising the world that it will protect its children from discrimination, prostitution and child pornography, armed conflict, torture, and the worst forms of child labour. And yet here we are in June 2026 — one of the most violent periods for children in Pakistan. International findings reaffirm Pakistan witnessing extreme violence against women, with Concern Worldwide ranking it the worst country for women's rights and the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2025 placing it last.

Courtesy Tribune

In meeting with Naqvi, UN chief praises Pakistan's efforts for peace



PEAK POINT

NEW YORK: United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Thursday appreciated Pakistan's efforts for promoting peace during a meeting with Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. The meeting between the two came on the sidelines of the fifth United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS 2026) at the UN headquarters in New York.

According to state-run PTV News, the two exchanged views on the regional situation and broader international developments, including Pakistan's mediation efforts between the United

States and Iran and its longstanding role in promoting peace. It added that the UN chief commended Pakistan's efforts for peace.

Earlier, Naqvi had met with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Alexandrovich Kolokolov, on the sidelines of the summit.

The two interior ministers discussed the regional security situation and ways to enhance cooperation in counterterrorism, counter-narcotics, cybercrime and law-enforcement training, the interior ministry said. They also discussed conducting joint police exercises and developing coordinated

approaches against terrorist networks operating in the region, particularly in Afghanistan, it added. Both sides agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between their respective ministries to further institutionalise bilateral cooperation. The meeting also reviewed progress on decisions taken during their previous talks, while Naqvi invited his Russian counterpart to visit Pakistan, it added. During the meeting, Naqvi said more than 25 terrorist organisations were active in Afghanistan and stressed that eliminating extremist groups was a collective responsibility requiring coordinated efforts. On Tuesday, Naqvi had met Chinese Minister of State for Public Security and Head of the Special Service Bureau Ling Zhifeng. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening security cooperation, including counterterrorism, border management, combating irregular migration and counter-narcotics efforts. Meanwhile, addressing the UN Chiefs of Police Summit, Naqvi called for greater international cooperation to tackle transnational security.

Government eyes stronger economic engagement with UK

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government is seeking to deepen Pakistan's economic and financial engagement with the United Kingdom by promoting investment, expanding cooperation in capital markets and financial services, boosting remittances and advancing the country's economic diplomacy agenda, Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said on Wednesday. The minister was talking to Pakistan's newly appointed High Commissioner to UK, Tipu Usman, who called on him here Thursday. According to press release issued by finance ministry, they discussed matters of exploring avenues for further strengthening Pakistan-UK economic and financial cooperation. Aurangzeb welcomed the High Commissioner on his new assignment and expressed confidence that his experience and diplomatic acumen would contribute to further enhancing bilateral economic engagement.

and advancing Pakistan's economic diplomacy objectives in the United Kingdom.

Discussions also focused on strengthening Pakistan's engagement with international investors and financial institutions, while leverag-

ing London's position as a leading global financial centre to support Pakistan's financing and capital market objectives.

Aurangzeb highlighted the government's ongoing efforts to diversify financing sources, deepen Pakistan's access to international capital markets, and strengthen the country's financial architecture. They also exchanged views on developments in digital finance, blockchain-based financial solutions, virtual assets, and emerging instruments such as the tokenization as part of Pakistan's broader digital transformation agenda. Avenues for enhancing cooperation in debt management and capital market development, including continued engagement with the United Kingdom Debt Management Office also came under discussion. The High Commissioner briefed the minister on prospects for engaging institutional investors and facilitating future investment roadshows in coordination with leading financial institutions. Aurangzeb underscored the important role of the Pakistani diaspora in the United Kingdom in strengthening economic linkages between the two countries, particularly through remittances and the Roshan Digital Account, investment.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, holding a meeting with Pakistan's newly appointed High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Mr Tipu Usman, to discuss Pakistan-UK economic and financial cooperation.

Seafood exports hit record \$568m, says Maritime Minister

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Anwar Chaudhry on Thursday said Pakistan's exports of fish and fish preparations reached a record US\$568 million during fiscal year 2025-26. In a statement, the minister said the milestone reflected the government's commitment to strengthening the blue economy, expanding seafood exports and ensuring compliance with international food safety and quality standards. He said frozen fish remained the leading export commodity with earnings of US\$105.09m, followed by frozen squid and cuttlefish (US\$103.71m), fish meal (US\$83.12m), shrimps (US\$62.14m), crabs (US\$36.89m), sardines (US\$30.62m), mackerels (US\$22.67m), flat fish (US\$17.24m), octopus (US\$15.18m) and minced fish meat (surimi) (US\$14.63m).

The minister said seafood exports were shipped mainly to China, Thailand, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, Japan, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Indonesia and the United States.

Junaid Chaudhry said the record performance.

Pakistan, Croatia discuss ways to boost bilateral, EU ties

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Croatia on Thursday discussed ways to strengthen bilateral and the European Union (EU) ties, exploring diverse avenues of cooperation spanning trade, investment, agriculture, and port connectivity.

The bilateral ties and cooperation were discussed during the delegation-level talks held here between Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and the visiting Croatian Minister for Foreign and European Affairs, Dr. Gordan Grlic Radman. During their talks, Deputy Prime Minister Dar and Foreign Minister Radman discussed ways to enhance cooperation in key sectors, including trade, investment, agriculture, labour mobility, visa facilitation, education,



defence, climate change, tourism, infrastructure, and information technology (IT). The two sides also exchanged views on various facets of Pakistan-EU cooperation, alongside reviewing regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Recognizing that connectivity lies at the heart of sustainable development, regional stability, and global economic integration, both leaders specifically discussed the possibilities and potential for establishing collaboration between the ports of Pakistan and Croatia.

CM Maryam, Musadik Malik review Punjab Climate and Disaster Resilience Plan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting between Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and Federal Minister for Climate Change Dr Musadik Malik was held in Lahore on Thursday during which issues related to the climate in the province were discussed. Senior Minister Maryum Aurangzeb, Chief Secretary, Chairman NDMA, SMBR and PDMA participated in the meeting.

Punjab Senior Minister Maryum Aurangzeb presented the "Punjab Climate and Disaster Resilience Plan 2026" and gave a detailed briefing in the meeting.

The meeting agreed on early warning system for forecasting severe weather events between the Federation and Punjab.



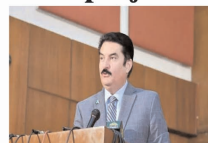
The meeting also agreed on mutual coordination at least 6 hours before any extreme weather event. The meeting considered to establish centralized information screens in all districts of Punjab in collaboration with the federal government. The meeting reviewed proposal to install centralized information screens related to climate and floods at district and tehsil level. Maryam Nawaz ordered immediate mock exercises to prepare for monsoon and floods.

Governor KP, Chinese envoy discuss strengthening bilateral cooperation, CPEC projects

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday held a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong and discussed ways to further strengthen the longstanding Pakistan-China friendship, bilateral cooperation and development partnership.

The meeting was attended by Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Babar Saleem Swati, President of Pak-China Friendship in the KP Assembly Akbar Ayub Khan, Adviser to the Chief Minister on Finance Muzammil Aslam, PPP Parliamentary Leader Ahmad Kundi, JUI-F Parliamentary



Leader Maulana Lutfur Rehman, ANP Parliamentary Leader Arbab Usman, PMLN Deputy Parliamentary Leader Jalal Khan, NDM leader Afrasiab Khattak, Provincial Adviser on Minerals Arif Ahmadzai and members of the provincial assembly. The two sides exchanged views on enhancing cooperation in economic, trade and development sectors.

Acting President invites Croatian businesses to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Thursday invited Croatian businesses to explore opportunities in information technology, renewable energy, agriculture, livestock, food processing, tourism and hospitality, urban development and water and waste management. He said the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) offers a streamlined mechanism to facilitate and support foreign investment. He was talking to Dr. Gordan Grlic Radman, Minister for

Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Welcoming the Croatian Foreign Minister and his delegation, Mr Gilani described the first-ever visit of a Croatian Foreign Minister to Pakistan as a historic milestone in bilateral relations. He said Pakistan greatly values its longstanding friendship with Croatia, founded on mutual respect and goodwill and expressed confidence that the visit would provide fresh impetus to bilateral cooperation.



The acting president commended Croatia's remarkable progress over the past three decades and appreciated its important role in Europe and beyond, including as a member of the European Union and NATO. He noted that

Pakistan remains committed to strengthening its engagement with Croatia, both bilaterally and within the broader framework of Pakistan's partnership with the European Union. Recalling that diplomatic relations

between Pakistan and Croatia were established more than three decades ago, the Acting President underscored the importance of regular high-level exchanges and parliamentary diplomacy in strengthening bilateral relations. He encouraged the establishment of Pakistan-Croatia Parliamentary Friendship Groups to promote sustained interaction between the elected representatives of the two countries.

He also extended a cordial invitation to the President of the Republic of Croatia, Mr. Zoran

Milanovic, to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at mutually convenient dates.

Mr Gilani stressed the need to substantially expand bilateral trade and investment, observing that the existing trade volume remained well below the potential of the two economies. He welcomed the growing presence of Croatian companies in Pakistan, including Infobip's partnerships with leading Pakistani businesses and KONCAR's contribution to the Chashma Hydropower Project, expressing the hope.