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PM Shehbaz orders third-party audit of customs-bonded warehouses

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed relevant authorities to conduct a comprehensive third-party audit of customs bonded warehouses covering the last three years, warning that negligent officials and irregularities will face swift legal action.

Chairing a review meeting on the matters of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) in Islamabad on Tuesday, PM Shehbaz Sharif said that there was no room for any irregularity in customs bonded warehouses and directed that strict legal action be taken against any officials found involved in irregularities or illegal activities. During the briefing on the matters regarding customs bonded warehouses and inland revenue enforcement, it was

informed that cargo related to petroleum products in customs warehouses is linked with the Web-Based One Customs (We-BOC) system. It was highlighted that bonded trade accounts for 16.5% of the country's total imports and that as per the prime minister's instructions, a countrywide physical stock verification of customs-bonded warehouses will be carried out. The authorities concerned told the participants that comprehensive measures were being taken to ensure the proper licensing and security of customs-bonded warehouses. It was told that valuation technology systems will be reviewed, as all necessary steps were already being taken to eliminate irregularities in the system.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting matters related to the Federal Board of Revenue.

Goods transporters to continue strike as negotiations with govt end without resolution

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Talks between the federal government and the All Pakistan Goods Transport Itehad on Tuesday ended without a resolution, with the transporters' demands yet to be settled. The goods transporters had announced a countrywide wheel-jam strike on Saturday over the daily fixing of petrol and diesel prices, among other issues. Held at the Ministry of Communications in Islamabad, the talks covered the transporters' major demands in detail. Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan assured the transporters of the government's full cooperation in addressing their concerns and resolving the issues faced by the sector. However, the meeting concluded without any agreement or formal acceptance of the transporters' demands and they subsequently announced that their nationwide wheel-jam strike would continue until their demands were accepted.

Talking to Dawn, Muhammad Owais Chaudhry, spokesman for the transporters' association said they would not withdraw their "legitimate and legal" demands.

US-Iran close to 'some sort of arrangement', says Khawaja Asif

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif told Bloomberg News in an interview published on Tuesday that the US and Iran are close to "some sort of an arrangement," according to Iran International English.

"Things are shaping up again in favour of a peace arrangement or a deal. The signals in the last two three days are that we are close to some sort of an arrangement," he added. Meanwhile, Interior Minister Mohsin Raza Naqvi arrived in Tehran on Tuesday for talks with Iranian officials amid mediation efforts to end the ongoing conflict between Iran and the US, according to PRESS TV. Earlier, Iran's official news agency IRNA said Naqvi departed Islamabad for the Iranian capital for talks on bilateral ties and issues of mutual interest. Historic talks between the US and Iran, with Pakistan as the central mediator, took place in Islamabad in early April, intending to achieve a peace agreement between the two countries that were warring with each other before a temporary two-week truce. On June 18, PM Shehbaz signed the 'Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding' as a mediator, formalising the major diplomatic breakthrough between the US and Iran.

The US and Israel launched the war on Iran on February 28, assassinating former supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and military leaders on the first day. Qatar said on Tuesday that negotiations between Iran and Oman on arrangements for the Strait of Hormuz.

Five India-backed terrorists killed in Panjur IBO: ISPR

PEAK POINT



RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed five terrorists belonging to Fitna Al Hindustan during a high-tempo intelligence-based operation in Balochistan's Panjur district, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Tuesday. According to the military's media wing, the operation was conducted on August 10 as part of the ongoing counterterrorism campaign aimed at eliminating Indian-sponsored proxies and restoring lasting peace in the region.

Following the operation, the security forces recovered a significant cache of weapons, ammunition and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) from the site and destroyed them, the ISPR said. Sanitisation operations were subsequently carried out to eliminate any remaining threats in the area, it added. The ISPR said the relentless counterterrorism campaign being conducted under the vision of Azm-e-Istehkam, approved by the Federal Apex Committee on the National Action Plan, would continue at full pace. The campaign by security forces and law enforcement agencies would continue to eliminate.

Govt cuts petrol price by Rs1.70, raises high-speed diesel by Rs1.39

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government on Tuesday reduced the price of petrol by Rs1.70 and increased the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs1.39 per litre. Following the revision, petrol will retail at Rs325.92 per litre while HSD will cost Rs382.25 per litre. The government continues to levy Rs114 per litre in taxes and duties on petrol and Rs100 per litre on HSD. According to the Petroleum Division's notification, the new prices will be applicable on August 12. The price of HSD has come down from a peak of Rs520.35 recorded on April 3.

AJK election outcome remains uncertain as re-polling ordered at 23 stations

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The outcome of two constituencies in the third phase of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) general elections remained uncertain on Tuesday after the Election Commission ordered re-polling at 23 polling stations in Bagh. Re-polling will be held at nine polling stations in LA-15 Bagh-II and 14 in LA-16 Bagh-III on August 15 from 8am to 5pm, according to an Election Commission spokesperson. The decision was taken on the basis of reports submitted by the respective returning officers. In LA-15, results from 204 of the constituency's 213 polling stations had been received. Re-polling will be held at polling stations 114, 135, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148 and 186. In the latest unofficial results received before the re-polling deci-

sion, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) candidate Ziaul



Qamar was leading with 18,825 votes, followed by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate Mushtaq Minhas with more than 15,000 votes. Jamaat-e-Islami candidate Brigadier (ret'd) Muhammad Khan had secured more than 12,000 votes.

In LA-16, results from 172 of the constituency's 186 polling stations had been received. PML-N candidate Sardar Mir Akbar Khan was

leading PPP's Sardar Qamar-uz-Zaman by 3,225 votes in



the latest unofficial results available late on Monday. The final result in LA-16 will remain pending until re-polling is held at polling stations 28, 29, 40, 49, 50, 51, 77, 91, 109, 110, 111, 112, 143 and 149.

The third phase was also marked by a disputed result in LA-17 Bagh-IV, where PPP candidate and AJK Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore was declared the winner against

PML-N candidate Chaudhry Mohsin Aziz, according to state-run Radio Pakistan.

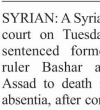
Aziz rejected the result and staged a sit-in outside the returning officer's office after his request for a recount was turned down. He alleged that the results had been tampered with and claimed, based on results held by his campaign, that he had won the constituency by 8,600 votes.

Aziz also alleged that the returning officer's bias had disrupted the peaceful environment in Haveli and claimed the constituency's mandate had been "stolen".

According to the latest results announced by the AJK Election Commission and reported by Radio Pakistan, Awami Dast-o-Baazoo candidate Sajid Iqbal Abbasi defeated former AJK prime minister and Muslim Conference leader Sardar Atiq Ahmed Khan.

Ousted Syrian president Bashar al-Assad sentenced to death in absentia

PEAK POINT



SYRIAN: A Syrian court on Tuesday sentenced former ruler Bashar al-Assad to death in absentia, after convicting him over charges of "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity" during the country's civil war. The ruling against Assad, who fled with his family to Moscow as rebels closed in on Damascus in December 2024, is the first under the transitional authorities who this year began trying figures from the former government, both in person and in absentia. Assad, who was born in 1965, became president in 2000 after his father Hafez died. Shaped in its early years by the Iraq war and crisis in Lebanon, Assad's rule was defined by civil war, which spiralled out of the 2011 Arab Spring, when Syrians demanding democracy took to the streets, to be met with deadly force. A Syrian court also sentenced Assad-era official Atif Najib to death for "crimes against humanity" committed when he was head of political security in Daraa province, the cradle of the country's 2011 uprising.



SPORTS



Pakistan's World Cup hopefuls set for National Champions Cup auditions



PEAK POINT

MULTAN: Pakistan's top white-ball players will vie for a spot in the national squad for next year's 50-over World Cup when the National Champions Cup gets under way in Multan on Tuesday.

Featuring four sides drawn largely from the country's wider white-ball pool, the tournament has been designed to identify options for the World Cup, which will be staged in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia next year.

The seven-match competition, with the final scheduled for Aug 18, will see Pakistan Greens, Multan could have a significant bearing on the pecking order

Multan Cricket Stadium, with each side comprising 11 players and three reserves.

The opening match on Tuesday pits Pakistan Greens, led by Shadab Khan, against Pakistan Whites, captained by Saim Ayub. Pakistan Blues, under Sahibzada Farhan, and Pakistan Gold, led by ODI captain Shaheen Shah Afridi, will begin their campaigns on Wednesday.

With Pakistan's selectors and white-ball head coach Mike Hesson closely monitoring the tournament, performances in Cup is therefore expected to provide the first extended competitive opportunity for several players

ahead of the World Cup.

Hesson met the coaching staff of all four teams on Sunday and briefed them on Pakistan's preparation plan for the global event. Former Test captain Misbah-ul-Haq is coaching Shaheen's Gold, while Ijaz Ahmed Jr, Iqbal Imam and Aizaz Cheema are in charge of Greens, Whites and Blues respectively. The tournament comes after a two-month white-ball camp at the National Cricket Academy, where players worked on their fitness and skills. The Champions Cup is therefore expected to provide the first extended competitive opportunity for several players

after the camp. Shaheen said the primary objective was to ensure that Pakistan had adequate replacements ready for every position before the World Cup.

"Injuries are something we face whenever we go to a World Cup," he said at a pre-tournament press conference on Monday. "The purpose of this tournament is to make sure that if, God forbid, an injury occurs, we already have a player available for that particular position." He added that players had been assigned specific roles in the four teams so their ability to perform in different match situations could be assessed.

Arfa wins U13 Azadi Cup Tenpin Bowling C'ship title



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Arfa won the under-13 titles in the Marka-e-Haq Azadi Cup Tenpin Bowling Championship, here at Leisure City Bowling Club, Safa Gold, F-7 Markaz.

President, Pakistan Tenpin Bowling Federation, Ijaz-ur-Rehman and a large number of peoples were also present on the occasion.

The Under-13 competitions were held in the 3-day championship. Arfa won the field with 97 points while Anabiya obtained 2nd position with 64 points and Urwa bagged 3rd position with 48 points.

The ladies singles competitions are ongoing in the championship in which Misha, Rozina, Areesha, Alina and Maha have qualified for the next round in the ladies singles competitions. The Championship will continue till August 14, and prizes will be distributed among the winning players at the end of the championship.

The Championship is being played under the auspices of Pakistan Tenpin Bowling Federation.

Pakistan step up England Test preparations



PEAK POINT

ENGLAND: Pakistan's Test squad stepped up preparations for their upcoming series against England with a training session at Kent County Cricket Club in Beckenham on Tuesday.

The players took part in batting and bowling net sessions as the team management focused on adapting to English conditions ahead of the three-Test series.

Former captain and the seasoned opening batsman Shan Masood, who has been recovering from an injury, also joined the training session and did bat

ment focused on adapting to English conditions ahead of the three-Test series.

Former captain and the seasoned opening batsman Shan Masood, who has been recovering from an injury, also joined the training session and did bat

The players also took part in physical drills and fielding exercises during the session, with the coaching staff working on fitness, sharpness and match readiness.

Pakistan will next face an England Select XI in a four-day warm-up match starting on August 12. The game will provide the squad with an opportunity to acclimatise to local conditions and allow the team management to assess

players ahead of the opening Test. The three-match Test series against England is scheduled to begin on August 19, with the first match to be played at Headingley in Leeds. Pakistan will be looking to use the warm-up game and remaining training sessions to fine-tune their combinations and prepare for the challenge of playing Test cricket in English conditions.

The series will form part of the ongoing World Test Championship cycle and is expected to provide an early test of Pakistan's ability to compete away from home.

Ben Shelton sweeps Joao Fonseca to reach Montreal quarter-final



Pakistan shooting team shines at British Open

PEAK POINT

LONDON: Pakistan's national shooting team, headed by Lt Gen Ahsan Gulrez, delivered an exceptional performance at the F-Class British Open 2026, securing 13 medals, including seven golds, despite fielding one of the smallest contingents at the prestigious international competition.

The F-Class British Open was held from August 3 to 8 at Bisley, United Kingdom, bringing together approximately 185 world-class shooters from 24 countries.

The championship featured some of the leading F-Class marksmen from around the world and provided an intensely competitive international field.

Pakistan participated with a contingent of only 12 shooters, but the team produced outstanding results across individual and aggregate competitions.

The Pakistani shooters

secured a total of 13 medals: seven gold, two silver and four bronze, demonstrating remarkable consistency and competitiveness against some of the world's most experienced rifle shooters.

The performance is particularly significant as the

will compete against leading teams and marksmen from across the world.

Officials associated with the team described the British Open results as evidence of Pakistan's growing strength in long-range competitive rifle shooting and the ability



British Open serves as an important competitive build-up to the 7th F-Class World Championship, being held at Bisley from August 10 to 16, 2026. Following their strong showing at the British Open, the Pakistani shooters have moved into the international championship, where they

of its shooters to compete successfully at the highest international level.

The team, under the leadership of Lt Gen Ahsan Gulrez, will now look to carry its medal-winning form into the F-Class World Championship as competition intensifies at Bisley.

Young female karate players compete during the 1st Junior South Punjab Azadi Karate Championship at the Sports Gymnasium





Medicines must Remain affordable, Senate tells PPMA as Pricing review intensifies

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD / KARACHI: The Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA) came under strong scrutiny as the Senate questioned whether medicine prices in Pakistan were becoming difficult for ordinary citizens to afford. The Senate Committee warned that the growth of the pharmaceutical industry cannot come at the cost of public access to essential medicines and demanded that companies review their profit margins. The issue was discussed during a meeting of the

Senate Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination held in Karachi under the chairmanship of Senator Amir Waliuddin Chishti. The meeting was attended by Senator Syed Masroor Ahsan, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, Senator Nadeem Ahmed Bhutto, Senator Nasir Mehmood Butt, Senator Anusha Rehman Ahmad Khan through Zoom, Federal Minister Syed Mustafa Kamal and senior officials from federal and provincial health departments. Representatives of the

Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association and Pharma Bureau gave the Committee a detailed briefing regarding pharmaceutical pricing and the impact of deregulation on the industry. They argued that allowing market-based pricing had improved medicine availability, encouraged investment and helped maintain the sustainability of pharmaceutical companies. However, Senator Amir Waliuddin Chishti made it clear that the Committee's main priority was ensuring affordable medicines for ordinary people. He acknowledged the

importance of quality medicines and a stable supply chain but stressed that pharmaceutical companies must also act responsibly and rationalize their profit margins. The Committee informed PPMA and Pharma Bureau that the Competition Commission of Pakistan was already reviewing the matter and would submit its findings. Senator Amir Waliuddin Chishti warned that if the pharmaceutical industry failed to voluntarily address pricing concerns, stronger regulatory steps could become necessary. The Chairman said that the

Committee had been discussing pharmaceutical pricing issues with the industry for more than a year. He clarified that the Committee supported the growth of Pakistan's pharmaceutical sector, but not if ordinary citizens were unable to afford necessary medicines. The Committee also informed industry representatives that preliminary findings available to it were not completely satisfactory and urged companies to take practical steps before further action was considered. The Senate Committee's discussion comes at a time when

medicine affordability remains a major concern for families across Pakistan. The Committee stressed that a balance must be created where pharmaceutical companies can continue investment and production while patients receive medicines at reasonable prices. The meeting concluded with directions to concerned organizations to submit progress reports on discussed matters before the next meeting, keeping the focus on improving healthcare access and protecting public interest.

IBCC Director General Hameed Niazi appointed Joint Secretary, Federal Education Division

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government has appointed Hameed Niazi, Director General of the Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC), as Joint Secretary in the Federal Education and Professional Training Division. The Establishment Division has issued a notification regarding his appointment. According to the notification, Niazi has been appointed as Joint Secretary, Federal Education and Professional Training Division,



on a deputation basis for a period of three years under the prescribed terms and conditions. Hameed Niazi has demonstrated his administrative and professional capabilities as a highly competent, dynamic and experienced officer. Education experts said that, drawing on his capabilities and experience, Niazi is expected to play an effective role in the federal education sector as well. Education News Islamabad has extended heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Hameed Niazi on assuming his new responsibility.

VC FUUAST participates in COMSATS digital governance demonstration

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor (VC) Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (FUUAST), Prof. Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari, participated in a demonstration of an integrated digital governance system developed by COMSATS University here on Tuesday. The demonstration was presented by Rector COMSATS University Islamabad, Prof. Raheel Qamar, along with his team. The presentation highlighted COMSATS' in-house digital governance solutions aimed at modernizing and streamlining university operations. The system covers major areas of university administration, including the student lifecycle, electronic filing, financial operations, recruitment and statutory governance.

Opinion & Editorial

ISLAMABAD
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Murder unanswered

The death of Mir Raza, the owner of a Karachi-based dessert chain, has now taken a new turn. A kidnapping case that briefly drifted toward a theory of suicide has been reclassified as murder, only after the family forced a court-ordered exhumation and a second post-mortem exposed what the first had missed or chosen not to see. That reversal should trouble us more than it comforts us. A system that requires public pressure and a grieving family's persistence to arrive at the truth is not a system working as intended. The crime scene was not preserved, by the home minister's own admission. The first post-mortem missed injuries that a second medical board found unmistakable, including a rear entry gunshot wound and fractures consistent with torture. Two officers have since been suspended, which is itself an acknowledgment that something went wrong beyond ordinary error. In light of this, collusion becomes a reasonable question rather than an unfair one. The possibility of interference cannot be brushed aside, particularly when the authorities themselves acknowledge shortcomings. There are too many questions that now require answers. Why was the possibility of murder not properly pursued from the outset? Why were basic forensic procedures omitted?

The tipping point of change

Jawed Naqvi
DISCUSSIONS are happening about how so many of the young protesters that rocked the Modi government recently came from families that have been faithfully voting for the right-wing prime minister. A crucial fact that seems to elude the discussants is that liberal or communist or fascist ideologies are not hatched in hatcheries. Unlike Narendra Modi, they are not 'non-biological' beings that gatecrash our earthly world.

To begin with, it would be useful to bear in mind that the jailed left-wing student leader Umar Khalid had transcended to secular left politics from circumstances in which his father was a member of a major Muslim revivalist body.

Likewise, Neha Bora, president of the pro-communist All-India Students' Association who fasted for 23 days at the protest, tells you sans demur that she broke away from a family tradition of voting for the Muslim-baiting BJP. The flow can be in the opposite direction too. Howard Fast, as the despairing chief of the US Communist Party, famed for writing the story of Spartacus, the slave rebel of Rome, became a Buddhist seeker after abandoning Marxism.

Numerous such examples abound in the Indian intellectual pantheon of progressivism and regression, which we can discuss. A scene is vivid from my childhood in

which the migration to progressive politics would seem facile despite the good intentions. It was a balmy morning in Mustafabad, a village of erstwhile Shia taluqdars in the heart of Uttar Pradesh.

Some young men and women in the joint family had recently got the first university degrees. Marxism was in the air in university campuses in the 1960s. That morning the tea was of just the right temperature, its bouquet flavourful. Three bespectacled young men from among the learned ones were steeped in a discussion that straddled Marx, Nehru, Josh and Neruda.

The men were wrapped in embroidered woollen shawls over spotless white muslin kurta-pajama attires when the mehtrani, the woman carrying human refuse in an open reed bucket, walked past. Other than putting the handkerchiefs on their faces briefly, the men remained unabashedly unperturbed in their intellectual chatter.

A follower of Dalit politics would have reacted differently to the brutal absurdness of the frame. Indian communists added B.R. Ambedkar and the sickening caste angle to their class analysis grudgingly, only recently harnessing it to the dialectical quiver. These early activists had the theory but not the praxis, which would take years to arrive, or perhaps not. It's not clear that most of the youth who defied the fierce police assault the other day had, in fact, crossed the

tipping point from their social reality.

Thus, it's not even clear that most of the youth who defied the fierce police assault the other day to scare the hell out of a stubborn authoritarian government had, in fact, crossed the tipping point from their social reality. A Buddhist would call the migration nirvana — the blowing out of greed, hatred and ignorance.

Collectively, the youth displayed a healthy mix of all three characteristics. When and if they reassemble it could be a different variety of mix. Arvind Kejriwal had held out a similar promise when his Aam Aadmi Party stopped the Hindutva juggernaut in Delhi in 2015.

The 'Modi wave' had taken care of Maharashtra and Haryana state polls in quick succession. Kejriwal stopped the BJP chariot in Delhi. Then something equally important occurred. He rejected the offer of support from the Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid, and people were emboldened to believe that the time had come to separate religion from politics as the constitution ordains. Then in a crude display of regressive religiosity, he started holding election campaigns from Hindu temples and wooed senior voters with offers of free Hindu pilgrimages.

One doesn't have to agree with T.S. Eliot who says: "Youth is cruel and has no remorse. And smiles at situations it cannot see."

Courtesy Dawn

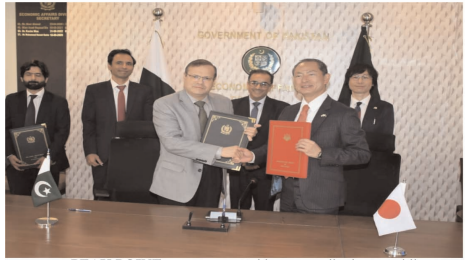
Science, policy and society

Muhammad Hamid Zaman

I attended a conference last week that focuses on how environmental damage drives drug-resistant infections. Just as I was inspired by colleagues from around the world who described their work focusing on rivers, urban and rural landscapes, informal settlements and vulnerable settings, I was frustrated that there was no representation of Pakistani scientists or policymakers (I am aware of visa challenges these days, but I also know that at the same venue Pakistani researchers have presented recently in another conference focusing on AI and computing). Pakistan continues to face serious challenges in antimicrobial resistance that has been well-documented in dozens of studies. We also have serious issues with environmental degradation in urban areas with sewage, plastics and other forms of pollution. So why are we not present at global meetings that focus on the nexus of these two areas? Shouldn't we be concerned about public welfare and focus on good scientific evidence for better policy? Somewhere towards the end of my time at the conference, I realised that I was asking myself the wrong question. Sure, there are ample reasons rooted in basic research to focus on environmental drivers of drug-resistant infections. But imagining that somehow this research would inform policy was simply naïve of me. I cannot imagine a world where someone in the policy world (think mayors, bureaucrats or ministers) would decide that they need to fix the sewage system, or have better trash collection, or reduce plastic consumption because there is strong lab and field data connecting rise of drug-resistant infections and microplastics. The reason we do not fix the environmental mess is not because we lack scientific data, it is because we simply do not think this is worth time, money and effort. Perhaps it is inertia (i.e. it has always been this way), or someone else's problem (i.e. because this happens in poorer parts, not in the affluent enclaves where the policymakers live), or simply not a priority (i.e. a tight budget with no room for actual citizen welfare).

Courtesy Tribune

Japan announces ¥350 million grant for 2026 Pakistani Human Resource Scholarship Program



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Japan has announced a grant of 350 million Japanese Yen for the 2026 Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) Program, a scheme that has already enabled more than 100 Pakistani government officers to study in Japan since its launch in 2018.

More than 80 scholars have completed their studies and returned to

Pakistan, contributing to public sector development through the knowledge and skills gained during their academic programs.

The Government of Japan formalized the grant during a signing ceremony held in Islamabad. The exchange of official documents took place between Japan's Ambassador to Pakistan, AKAMATSU Shuichi, and Muhammad Humair Karim Kidwai, Secretary of the Ministry of

Economic Affairs.

A separate grant agreement detailing the implementation of the Fiscal Year 2026 project was signed by SHINOZAKI Yusuke, Chief Representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Pakistan Office, and Miran Mohiyuddin Soomro, Senior Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The Human Resource Development Scholarship Program was launched in Pakistan in 2018 as part of Japan's support for strengthening government institutions. The initiative provides Pakistani civil servants with opportunities to pursue Master's and Ph.D. degrees at universities in Japan.

Participants are selected from government officers involved in planning and implementing social and economic development policies. The program aims to help public officials expand their professional knowledge and improve their ability.

President confers Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon CNSC General Aamer Raza



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday conferred Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon Commander National Strategic Command (CNSC), General Syed Aamer Raza amid a Special Investiture Ceremony held here at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The prestigious award was conferred in recognition of his meritorious contributions, outstanding professional acumen and

distinguished services towards the defence and security of Pakistan.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu.

Joint monitoring committee formed to resolve goods transporters' issues

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government on Tuesday decided to establish a Joint Monitoring Committee comprising Customs authorities and goods transporters to address issues faced by the transport sector.

The decision was taken during the detailed session, chaired by Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan, Convener of the Committee constituted by the Prime Minister, said a press release.

The decisions reached during two days of negotiations with the All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance in Islamabad were finalized today.

The meeting also deliberated on short- and long-term measures to address the issues being faced by transporters in dealing with Customs Authorities.

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Junaid Anwar, who participated in the meeting via video link, assured the transporters of immediate and full cooperation from his

Ministry on matters relating to the Maritime Affairs.

Speaking at the meeting, Abdul Aleem Khan directed the authorities to promptly address the complaints of Goods Transporters regarding weigh stations. He stated that state-of-the-art weigh stations with minimal human intervention would be established on all Motorways.

The delegation of the All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance lauded the efforts Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan for effectively addressing the issues.

On the directions of the Federal Minister for Communications, senior officials of the Federal Board of Revenue also presented recommendations on the proposals submitted by the Goods Transporters. Officials of the Port and Shipping Authorities and Karachi Port Trust (KPT) also briefed the meeting on relevant matters. Various proposals concerning the National Highway Authority (NHA).



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan held meeting with All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance.

Federal Minister hails new National Housing Policy 2026 as historic milestone

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada termed the new approved National Housing Policy 2026 a significant achievement and a historic milestone for the Ministry, particularly as Pakistan had been without an updated national housing policy for almost a quarter of a century.

Federal Minister and the Secretary, Ministry of Housing & Works, congratulated the Policy & Planning Wing of the Ministry for its dedicated efforts in preparing the policy document. They appreciated the team's extensive work and emphasized that efforts had been made to take all major stakeholders on board during the policy formulation process. Federal Cabinet in its last meeting has approved the National Housing Policy 2026, marking a major milestone for Pakistan's housing and urban development sector. The approval comes after nearly 25 years, as the country's previous National Housing Policy was approved in 2001. The approval of the National.

Makkah Accord matter of pride for Muslim Ummah: Atta Tarar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has praised the historic defense pact among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkiye, describing it as a matter of immense pride for both the Pakistani people and the entire Muslim Ummah.

Tarar, in an exclusive talk with media, expressed his profound gratitude to the Almighty for the blessed agreement, noting that this partnership among the three brotherly nations is a special blessing for the global Muslim community. The minister highlighted that the entire nation is celebrating the Makkah Accord with great fervor. He pointed out that the flags of Pakistan, Saudi



Arabia, and Turkiye are proudly displayed across the country, and the public is overwhelmed with joy by this landmark development.

He commended the crucial role played by the country's leadership including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for their dedicated efforts in signing the agreement. Through this trilateral partnership, Tarar noted that Pakistan has finally achieved a prestigious status it has dreamed.

Minority community's contributions, achievements vital part of Pakistan's progress story: Asifa

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Bibi Asifa Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday, appreciating the contributions of the minority communities in education, healthcare, law, public service, business, the armed forces, arts, sports and many other fields, said that their achievements were an important part of Pakistan's story of progress and development.

The first lady, in her message on National Minorities Day annually observed on August 11, extended her warm greetings to all minority communities across Pakistan, and said that Pakistan's progress was strengthened by the contributions of citizens from all



faiths. She said that the Day was an opportunity to recognise their valuable contributions to the country and to reaffirm the principle that every citizen was an equal member of the national community.

"Equality must be reflected in the rights and opportunities available to every citizen. The law must protect all citizens.

Governor Kundi calls for stronger Pakistan-China ties, greater Chinese investment in KP

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday said Pakistan and China shared a time-tested friendship spanning decades, expressing confidence that bilateral relations would grow even stronger in the years ahead.

Addressing a ceremony held at the Governor House to mark the 75th anniversary of Pakistan-China friendship and the inauguration of a new Urdu anthem produced by China Window and PTV Peshawar, the Governor said China had always stood by Pakistan in difficult times and remained its trusted partner. The ceremony was attended

by China Window founder Amjad Aziz Malik, former world squash champion Qamar Zaman, senior journalist Arshad Aziz Malik, China Culture Centre Adviser Bai Jie, Chinese representative Chen Tiantang, officials of the Chinese Embassy, recipients of Presidential Awards, players, students and other distinguished guests. During the event, a new Urdu anthem titled "China Pakistan" was also unveiled. Students of Peshawar Model School presented a tableau on the national anthem. He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa possessed vast mineral resources, immense tourism potential and a strategic geographical location,



adding that there was a need to further promote bilateral cooperation, trade and Chinese investment in the province. The Governor said efforts should be made to introduce Chinese tourists to the province's natural beauty

and cultural heritage. He appreciated the role of China Window in promoting people-to-people contacts and assured full support from the Governor House. Kundi said information technology, trade, culture and youth exchanges

would play a vital role in strengthening future Pakistan-China relations. He stressed the need to create more scholarship opportunities for KP students in China and provide greater educational, sports and employment opportunities to the province's youth. Highlighting the role of sports in projecting a positive image of the province, he proposed holding Dragon Boat competitions at Khanpur Dam next year to further strengthen sports and cultural links between Pakistan and China.

He also welcomed Chinese investors to explore investment opportunities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Later, talking to media, the Governor claimed the Pakistan Peoples Party candidates had won the third phase of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir elections and alleged that evidence of electoral irregularities would be presented before the Election Commission.

Responding to a question about the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's planned protest on September 27, he said the provincial government would focus on maintaining law and order instead of protests, adding that dialogue was possible only when PTI acted as a political party and used parliamentary forums instead of taking issues.