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Public procurement reforms will further improve transparency, efficiency in govt purchasing system: Azam Nazeer



Two dams to be completed in Islamabad to address water needs: Talal

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PM Shehbaz approves key amendments to National Electricity Plan amid chairing cabinet committee on energy

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday approved a series of amendments to the National Electricity Plan 2023-2027 and a high-level design report for the Integrated Energy Plan 2027-2060. The prime minister accorded his approval for the decisions as he chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Energy here at the Prime Minister's House. While approving the amendments, the Cabinet Committee on Energy, chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, directed that further consultations be held with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) before their implementation. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reiterated his govern-

ment's commitment to reforming the energy sector, ensuring sustainable and affordable power supply, and reducing the circular debt burden through structural and policy-level interventions. The Power Division presented the proposed amendments to the National Electricity Plan, which cover integrated energy planning, enhancement of power generation, supply of renewable energy to remote areas, cross-border electricity trade, expansion of the transmission network, tariff design, electricity conservation, system and marketing operations, risk identification, and administrative matters. The amendments also address improving local capacity for fuels and technology, along with research, development and digitization in the power sector. The committee also approved the High Level Design Report for the Integrated Energy Plan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of Cabinet Committee on Energy.

SC orders moving jailed ex-PM Imran Khan to Shifa Int'l Hospital for medical checkup

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court directed the relevant authorities on Tuesday to shift jailed PTI founder Imran Khan to Islamabad's Shifa International Hospital

for a complete medical checkup in the next few days.

A three-member SC bench, headed by Justice Shahid Waheed and comprising Justices Naem Akhtar Afghan and Ishtiaq Ibrahim, issued the ruling on several petitions seeking Imran's hospitalisation as well as his meetings with family members.

Imran had approached the SC in May, seeking directions for his transfer to Shifa International Hospital, access to his personal physicians, family members and counsel, and the provision of his medical details to his family. The court today ordered the constitution of a medical board at Shifa International Hospital to examine the former premier, and directed jail authorities to ensure weekly meetings between Imran and his family members, as well as telephonic conversations with his sons. The court observed that since Imran's health was at stake, and as the right to life and access to medical facilities.

Hormuz will not open until US meets demands, says Iran's top negotiator

PEAK POINT



IRAN: Iran's top negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said on Tuesday that the strategic Strait of Hormuz will not be opened until the United States meets Tehran's demands, including lifting a naval blockade. "I want to state clearly that the Strait of Hormuz will not be opened until the

American commitments stipulated in the memorandum of understanding... are implemented," Ghalibaf said in a speech broadcast on state television. He listed the removal of the blockade, the lifting of oil sanctions and unfreezing of Iran's assets abroad among the demands. An "unknown projectile" struck a vessel transiting the Strait of Hormuz causing a crew casualty, British maritime agency UKMTO reported on Tuesday. "The impact caused damage to the engine room and resulted in a crew casualty," the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations said on X. "The remaining crew are currently being assisted by the Omani Coast Guard," the agency said.

Iran has imposed an effective blockade of the strait, frequently attacking commercial ships, and wants to charge users for passage, which the US fiercely opposes. An explosion at a petroleum products depot in eastern Iraqi Kurdistan injured 18 people, Kurdish media outlet Rudaw reported Tuesday, without specifying the cause of the blast. Hirsh Salim, deputy director general of health in Sulaimaniyah governorate, told the outlet that there were no fatalities.

Over 9 terrorists killed in Balochistan IBOs: state media

PEAK POINT



QUETTA: Security forces have killed more than nine terrorists in intelligence-based operations (IBO) in Balochistan, state media reported on Tuesday. The operations were conducted in Ziarat, Hamai and Surab under Operation Rad-ul-Fitna 3, according to Pakistan TV, which said that arms and ammunition were recovered from the slain terrorists. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi commended the security forces after the operation, according to a statement issued by his ministry on X. "The interior minister commended the professional capabilities of the security forces for sending more than nine terrorists of Fitna-al-Hindustan to hell," it added. The statement further quoted Naqvi as saying that operations against Fitna-al-Hindustan and Fitna-al-Khawarij were under way with full force and will continue. Tuesday's operations are the latest in a string of actions being taken as Balochistan continues to grapple with security challenges. The state uses the term Fitna-al-Khawarij for the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and has designated Balochistan-based groups as Fitna-al-Hindustan to highlight India's alleged role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan.

Erdogan calls on Trump to prioritise diplomacy in talks with Iran

PEAK POINT

ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has called on Donald Trump in a phone call to keep diplomacy with Iran alive, as stalled negotiations and rising tensions threaten to further deepen the regional conflict, the Turkish presidency said on Tuesday. Turkey, which has NATO's second-largest army and borders Iran, has repeatedly called for an end to the war. It has maintained close contact with the United States, Iran, and mediators such as Pakistan and Qatar, while also acting as an intermediary between the parties. "Erdogan stated that it is of great.

ISPR slams India's 'Bollywood-style' documentary projecting last year's 'military blunder as a successful endeavour'

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: The military's media affairs wing on Tuesday slammed India's "Bollywood-style" documentary on its 'Operation Sindoor', saying it had "cobbled together a propaganda video to project a military blunder as a successful endeavour". In a statement, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said, "More than a year after Marka-i-Haq, India refuses to face the harsh reality. Instead of conceding defeat in a failed venture, India has decided to colour history in her preferred hues." Last year's brief military conflict with India — starting from the April 22 Pahalgam attack to the end of Operation Bunyanum Marsoos with a ceasefire between the two countries following the intervention of the United States on May 10

— has been called "Marka-i-Haq" (Battle of Truth) by

"For its lack of nuance and seriousness, the docu-



mentary can be characterised as a tragedy and a comedy at the same time. Selectively edited interviews, emotional narration and cinematic Bollywood style reconstruction have been used to alter established facts and rewrite the operational outcome," it said. The statement said that the documentary's account contained "fundamental contradictions, exposing a belated attempt to manufac-

ture a domestically palatable version of events". ISPR said the documentary attempted to establish a deliberate linkage between an address by the army chief on April 16, 2025 and the Pahalgam incident on April 22, 2025, "conjuring a conspiracy theory out of nothing". "More significantly, India subsequently claimed that the three alleged perpetrators of Pahalgam were identified and eliminated on July 28, 2025, 82 days after so-called Operation Sindoor. Yet the documentary presents so-called Operation Sindoor as the punishment for those responsible for Pahalgam. If the alleged perpetrators were eliminated on July 28, India must explain, who it claims to have punished on May 7, 2025," ISPR said. The statement further said that the claim of "100 per cent mission.

Ishaq Dar highlights positive momentum in Pak-Russia ties

PEAK POINT



RUSSIA: Russian Ambassador to Pakistan Albert Khorev was called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad on Tuesday and discussed a variety of issues with him. Deputy PM Ishaq Dar appreciated the positive momentum in bilateral ties and stressed the importance of continued cooperation in key areas, as well as sustained high-level exchanges, to further strengthen Pakistan-Russia relations. Regional developments also figured in the discussions during the meeting.

Ishaq Dar underscored Pakistan's consistent view that dialogue and diplomacy remain the only way forward for resolving.

Women caucus sounds alarm as conviction rates in honor related killings fall to 5 percent

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: Conviction rates in cases linked to honor killings were reported as low as 5 percent in some areas, prompting members of the Women Parliamentary Caucus to call for stronger investigation, better prosecution and a review of laws dealing with violence against women. The Women Parliamentary Caucus discussed honor killings, gender based violence, femicide, safety of female students and difficulties faced by women while seeking justice. Members stressed that there could be no justification for killing anyone in the name of family, social or tribal prestige. According to prosecution figures presented during the meeting, Punjab recorded 150 trials in honor related killing cases, with 38 convictions

and 112 acquittals. The conviction rate was stated to be around 25 percent. Balochistan was reported to have a 7 percent conviction rate. The meeting was told of 45 cases, with three convictions and 27 acquittals. Sindh was reported at around 12 percent, with 10 convictions among 83 cases discussed and 48 acquittals. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, such cases were registered as murder cases, with the conviction rate reported at around 5 percent. Islamabad was also reported at about 5 percent in data presented to the meeting, although officials said the Islamabad figure mainly involved sexual violence cases. Members said weaknesses can occur at several stages, including police investigation, medical evidence, prosecution and court proceedings. They stressed

that Pakistan already has many laws and the bigger challenge is proper implementation. The caucus also called for a review of the term honor killing, saying the use of the word honor could wrongly give the impression that such crimes have some justification. Members said every such killing should be treated as a serious criminal offence. The Ministry of Human Rights told the meeting that it was working with experts, prosecutors, judges and police officials to identify practices that could improve investigation and conviction rates. Officials said an 18 month work plan had been circulated to provinces and a National Action Plan had also been launched with indicators to measure progress. The ministry also referred to a strategy dealing with technology

facilitated gender based violence, noting that technology and social media are increasingly becoming part of cases involving women and adolescent girls. Participants also discussed the need for specialized judicial arrangements, a national femicide strategy and a digital case tracking system. Concern was raised that crime data collected by different institutions does not always match. Members were told that police data can also be incomplete because many cases are never reported. They called for a more reliable and independent national system for collecting information. The Ministry of Human Rights also highlighted its 1099 helpline, which receives complaints and can connect people with legal, medical and other assistance. The meeting also raised

the shortage of safe accommodation for female students and working women. Members said the lack of affordable and secure hostels could prevent women from continuing education or taking jobs away from their home areas. They called for legislation to regulate girls' hostels and proposed public private partnership models for new accommodation and improvement of existing facilities. Members said better laws alone would not be enough. Police, prosecutors, medical authorities, courts and protection institutions must work together if victims are to receive timely justice. During the Women Parliamentary Caucus discussion, WPC Secretary Dr. Shahida Rehmani referred to a harassment case that had also been discussed at an earlier human rights meeting.

According to her account, the woman succeeded at several stages of the case but spent around Rs 10 million during the process. The participant presented the case as an example of the financial and emotional burden a person pursuing a harassment complaint through different legal forums can face. Another sensitive point was raised when Farah Naz Akbar identified herself in the discussion as having personally experienced harassment in Parliament. No alleged harasser was named and no specific incident or official finding was provided in the discussion. Her statement therefore stands as her personal account before the forum and not as an established finding against any individual.

PM&DC denies irregularities in service regulations, Promotions; Documentary record still sought

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical & Dental Council (PM&DC) has rejected allegations of irregularities in its service regulations, promotions, constitution of Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs), creation of posts and preparation of committee minutes, terming the reports 'misleading, factually incorrect and based on incomplete information.' In its

written response to questions raised regarding the Council's administrative and promotion matters, PM&DC maintained that amendments to its Service Regulations were made after following the prescribed legal process. The Council said that the non availability of a particular notification on its website does not by itself render an otherwise duly approved administrative instrument unlawful or invalid.

Regarding the promotion of officers, PM&DC categorically denied that employees had been promoted against posts that were not sanctioned or vacant. According to the Council, the promotions were made against duly vacant posts after completion of the prescribed process, on the recommendations of the DPC and with the approval of the Council. PM&DC further stated that the prescribed eligibility criteria for promotion

required either seven years of service in SPS 10 or ten years of service in SPS 09, along with a Master's degree or equivalent qualification recognised by PM&DC. The Council said both officers concerned had more than 15 years of service in SPS 09 and fulfilled the prescribed educational and service requirements. The Council also rejected the argument that a three year interval applicable to time scale upgradation was

relevant to the promotions in question. PM&DC clarified that the officers were not granted time scale upgradation but were promoted against vacant posts through the prescribed promotion process. It further stated that the previous round of promotions had taken place more than three years earlier. PM&DC also dismissed the suggestion that promotion notifications were deliberately withheld. It maintained that departmental

promotion notifications are administrative and service documents and that their non publication on a public platform does not invalidate a promotion that has been duly approved and notified through the competent departmental channel. On questions concerning the reported grant of Grade 21 benefits to the Registrar and the constitution of the DPC, PM&DC termed the allegations incorrect.

Opinion & Editorial



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Endorsing violence

Under international humanitarian law, no healthcare facility or personnel, wounded or sick persons, and transport facilities such as ambulances and medical supply vans should be attacked or harmed during an armed conflict. Yet, reality tells a devastatingly different story. The WHO reports that despite these enshrined protections, more than 10,000 attacks on healthcare have been documented since 2018. Most damning of all, however, is the complete lack of accountability - not a single one of these cases has culminated in a just outcome for the victims. While unfortunate, it is also unsurprising that a majority of these attacks were carried out in Palestine, Ukraine and Lebanon. Regions engaged in conflict often experience greater violence against their healthcare systems and patients, as such attacks are increasingly being seen as viable tactics in a war. A primary reason for this is a lack of accountability that plagues these cases, inadvertently encouraging such heinous acts. In over 10,000 attacks across eight years, almost 5,700 people have lost their lives, and 8,500 people have sustained injuries. In any legal system of a functioning society, even a single wrongful death is brought to justice, let alone 5,700 deaths that never make it past documentation and towards accountability.

Burning Injustice: Pakistan's Unfinished Fight Against Acid Violence

By Waleed Saidullah

In a quiet evening last year, a young woman in Karachi answered the door and had her life destroyed in seconds. Her crime? Refusing a marriage proposal. Her attacker emptied a container of acid on her face. Her mother later described watching her daughter's skin melt like wax. This was not an isolated incident. It is a pattern that has repeated itself across Pakistan for decades — and it demands far more than what our institutions have so far been willing to deliver.

Between 2005 and 2023, researchers confirmed 836 victims from 625 documented acid attacks across Pakistan. Between 2007 and 2018 alone, the Pulitzer Center reported 1,485 cases. The Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) and the Smile Again Foundation both estimate that approximately 200 acid attacks occur in Pakistan every year most of them unreported. In 2024, Sindh police officially recorded only 12 cases in the province, a figure that barely scratches the surface of actual incidence. South Punjab, where acid is commercially used to clean cotton seeds and is therefore freely available in local markets, accounts for over half of all reported cases nationally.

The victims are overwhelmingly women and girls targeted for refusing marriage proposals, for seeking divorce, for inheriting property, or simply for existing on terms that offended a man's sense of entitlement. Their suffering does not end with the attack. Survivors face extensive burns, blindness, respiratory complications, and permanent disfigurement, followed by depression, social stigmatisation, loss of livelihood, and the crushing weight of a legal system that moves too slowly to deliver justice.

Pakistan enacted the Criminal Law (Second Amendment) Act, 2011, also known as the Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act on December 26, 2011, prompted in part by suo motu proceedings of the Supreme Court. The legislation inserted Sections 336-A and 336-B

into the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860, defining hurt caused by corrosive substances and prescribing punishment of imprisonment for not less than fourteen years, extendable to life, along with a minimum fine of Rs. 1,000,000. The offence was made non-bailable and non-compoundable under the Second Schedule of the Code of Criminal Procedure. A subsequent amendment further enabled courts to award the death penalty in cases of acid violence.

Importantly, Section 336-B(2) empowers courts to direct accused persons to pay monetary compensation to victims covering medical expenses and loss of earnings. Acid crimes are also listed in the Third Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 theoretically enabling trial before Anti-Terrorism Courts for speedy disposal.

These are not insignificant provisions. Yet the legislation has not delivered the deterrence it promised. The highest number of reported cases in a single year 43 was recorded in 2016, five years after the law was enacted. The reason is straightforward: a law on paper is only as effective as the system that enforces it.

The 2011 law addressed punishment but left the supply chain of acid almost entirely unregulated at the federal level. Battery acid can be purchased in informal markets across Pakistan for as little as fifty rupees. Sulphuric acid, hydrochloric acid, and nitric acid are readily available through chemical shops and automotive markets with virtually no documentation requirements. Punjab's Hazardous Substances Rules, 2018 set some labelling and storage standards, but enforcement in informal retail settings remains negligible.

In a welcome development, the Punjab Assembly's Standing Committee on Home Affairs approved the draft Punjab Acid Control Act, 2025 in April of this year. This is the first comprehensive provincial legislation focused exclusively on regulating the sale, distribution, and use of acid. It mandates licensing for the sale of thirty highly corrosive chemicals, imposes liability

on negligent sellers whose products are used in attacks, and provides for automatic cancellation of licences upon conviction under the relevant PPC provisions. This is precisely the kind of supply-side control that has been missing for over a decade, and it should be replicated federally and in all other provinces without delay.

The experience of Bangladesh is instructive. Once among the worst-affected countries in the world for acid violence, Bangladesh enacted the Acid Crime Control Act, 2002 and the Acid Control Act, 2002 simultaneously addressing both the criminal and regulatory dimensions of the problem. Special tribunals were established for speedy trials. The result was a dramatic, sustained decline in attacks. Pakistan enacted its criminal law eleven years later but has yet to enact a comparable federal regulatory framework. The parallel is uncomfortable. The United Kingdom, confronting a surge in corrosive substance attacks in recent years, responded with specific legislation criminalising the possession of corrosive substances in public places, imposing age restrictions on purchase, and mandating identification at the point of sale. The lesson is consistent across jurisdictions: criminal penalties alone do not deter; access must be restricted upstream. Reform must proceed on four fronts simultaneously: First, regulate the supply chain. The Punjab Acid Control Act, 2025 must be passed into law without further delay, and the federal government must enact equivalent legislation covering all provinces and the Islamabad Capital Territory. Every sale of a concentrated corrosive substance must be documented, licensed, and traceable.

Second, enforce the law that already exists. Section 336-B has been on the books since 2011, yet conviction rates remain dishearteningly low. Police training in evidence collection for acid crime cases must be standardised. Prosecutors must be equipped to handle the forensic and medical dimensions of these cases. The jurisdictional confusion between ordinary criminal courts and Anti-

Terrorism Courts, which forces preliminary legal battles before any trial on merits can begin must be resolved by clear legislative guidance assigning exclusive jurisdiction.

Third, protect and rehabilitate survivors. The state's obligation does not end with punishing the offender. Survivors require free emergency medical treatment, reconstructive surgery, psychological counselling, legal aid, vocational training, and reintegration support. A dedicated national fund, financed through fines collected under Section 336-B and mandatory contributions from acid manufacturers, should be established for this purpose. The Acid and Burn Crime Bill, 2018, applicable to the Islamabad Capital Territory provides a partial model by imposing obligations on hospitals to treat acid crime victims; this approach must be expanded nationally.

Fourth, transform social attitudes. Legislation cannot reach the interior of a culture that normalises the use of violence to punish women for the exercise of choice. Religious scholars, educators, community leaders, and media organisations must be active partners in dismantling the patriarchal attitudes that treat acid as an instrument of control.

Fourteen years have passed since Pakistan took its first serious legislative step against acid violence. The law that was passed was meaningful. But the woman in Karachi whose skin melted like wax is evidence that it has not been enough. What is required now is not incremental adjustment but systemic reform: stricter regulation, faster trials, robust victim support, and a culture that does not produce men who believe a woman's face is a legitimate target for their grievances.

A state that is serious about Articles 9, 14, and 25 of its own Constitution cannot afford to treat acid violence as a residual concern. It must treat it as what it is — an ongoing emergency.

By Waleed Saidullah,
Advocate High Court, Rawalpindi



SPORTS



National Women's U19 Tournament to begin from Thursday



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board has announced the dates and squads of the upcoming National Women's U19 Tournament 2026-27 which is set to take place from Thursday, August 20 to, September 4 at NBP Sports Complex and HPC Oval Ground in Karachi. A cohort of 75 U19 players from across the country is set to take part in the tournament comprising of five teams – Conquerors, Challengers, Strikers, Stars and Invincibles. Pakistan women's U19 captain Fizza Fiaz along with Samiya Afsar, Ravail Farhan, Komal Khan and

Zoofishan Ayyaz are set to lead the teams, said a press release.

The teams assembled in Karachi on Sunday, August 16 and will train on August 17, 18 and 19. In order to increase competitive game time for the U19 players, the PCB has divided the tournament into two legs with the first comprising of 30-over games with teams playing four each. The second leg will be of 20-over games with the final also set to be a T20.

Each team will play a total of eight games in the double-league round robin stage before the top two meet in the September 4 final. The venue for the final will be

announced in due course. A number of players were selected via trials conducted by the women's national selection committee across the country, while the players who were part of the Pakistan women's U19 squad in the five-match T20 series against South Africa will also be in action during the tournament. The tournament will prove beneficial in developing the next crop of professional women's cricketers in Pakistan but will also help finalise the pool for the upcoming important assignments that include the ACC women's U19 Asia Cup and the ICC women's U19 World Cup.

National Women's U19

Tournament 2026-27 squads- Conquerors: Samiya Afsar (captain), Naseen Ashraf (vice-captain), Abeer Riaz, Areeqa Fatima, Amna Shahnawaz, Eashal Emaan, Eeshal Saif (wk), Hadia Mina, Mah Noor, Malaika Suhani, Maryam Sajjad, Narjis Bibi, Noor-e-Sahar, Syeda Batool Fatima, Zainab Irfan. Challengers: Fizza Fiaz (captain), Memoona Khalid (vice-captain), Aleena Aslam Shah, Esha Tir Razia, Farya Sadaqat, Huba Nadeem, Laiba Karim, Mahnoor, Mahnoor Zeb, Maryam Ahmed, Pakeeza Shabbir, Sualeha Haroon (wk), Urooj Gul, Zainab Fatima (wk), Zala Ali.

Babar Azam to miss first Test against England, confirms Pakistan coach



MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan captain and star batter Babar Azam will miss the opening Test of the three-match away series against England, set to commence on Wednesday at Leeds, head coach Sarfaraz Ahmed confirmed on Tuesday. Salman Ali Agha will captain the national side in the first Test in the absence of Babar, Ahmed said in a statement.

Speaking at a pre-match press conference, Sarfaraz said Babar is being assessed by the medical team and he is currently experiencing pain. "He is feeling pain, and the medical team is assessing him. Hopefully, he will be available for the second Test," Sarfaraz said.

The development comes after Babar sustained a finger injury during Pakistan's three-day practice match against the Professional County Club (PCC) Select XI in Beckenham last week. The incident occurred on the final delivery of the 39th over when pacer Manny Lumsden bowled a sharp delivery that struck Babar on the finger. He immediately appeared to be in pain, dropped his bat and received attention from the medical staff before walking off the field after scoring five runs from 17 deliveries. Notably, the blow marked the second time in a month Babar had been struck on the hand, following a similar incident during Pakistan's Test series against the West Indies.

Pakistan face India in must-win World Cup clash



PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Pakistan face arch-rivals India in a decisive FIH Hockey World Cup Group D encounter on Wednesday, knowing only victory will ensure their progression to the tournament's next stage.

The match at the Wagener Hockey Stadium in

while Pakistan have one point from a 3-3 draw against Wales. Pakistan have no other option but to draw against India," Nasir said.

Pakistan began their campaign with a 4-1 defeat by England before recovering to earn a point against Wales. Their performance against Wales offered encouragement after Pakistan had surrendered a lead late in the match, but captain and 1984 Los Angeles Olympics gold medalist Nasir believes they must be more clinical against India.

"It is a big tournament and you cannot afford to miss chances," he said, pointing to opportunities wasted against England, including Rana Waheed's effort that struck the post.

Nasir nevertheless believes Pakistan's performances indicate they progress from their recent displays in the Pro League.

"Both nations feel pressure when they play against each other," Nasir told The media persons. "India will have an advantage as they have three points and even a draw will take them through."

Islam Makhachev edges Garry to retain UFC welterweight title



India close on victory in first Test against Sri Lanka



Karachi Kings captain David Warner convicted, fined by Australian court for drink-driving

PEAK POINT

SYDNEY: Former Australia batsman and Karachi Kings captain David Warner was convicted and fined A\$1,500 (\$1,065) for drink-driving by a Sydney court on Tuesday after being arrested in April.

Warner, one of Australia's most decorated cricketers, pleaded guilty after failing a breath-test on the Easter weekend when driving his family home in Sydney's eastern suburbs after a social function. Warner captained Karachi Kings in the Pakistan Super League in 2025 and 2026. The 39-year-old's blood-alcohol reading was more than twice the legal limit. Waverley Local Court heard Warner stopped his car when he saw the roadside breath-testing site and attempted to swap seats with a female passenger.

"I accept Mr Warner is unlikely to re-offend," Judge Clare Farnan told the court in comments published by

Australian media.

"(But) regrettably, drink-driving is still a significant factor in many crashes in New South Wales."

The offence was aggravated because children were in the car at the time, Farnan

immediate comment when contacted by Reuters on Tuesday.

Before Farnan's decision, Warner's lawyer told the court his client should be spared conviction because he had suffered extra punishment as a



said. Warner, who played 112 tests and over 250 limited-overs internationals for Australia, will need to fit an interlock device in his car which will prevent it from starting if it detects alcohol in his system. He left the court without commenting to a large media pack. Warner's management did not provide

result of media coverage. "Commercial opportunities (are) being affected," Australian media quoted Awais Ahmad as saying. Warner works for Fox Sports Australia as a commentator and was part of the local broadcaster's team covering the recent Australia-Bangladesh test in Darwin.

Tarar calls for political consensus to ensure continuity of counter-terrorism policies



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Tuesday said terrorists had no colour, race or religion and that imposing ideologies through violence was unacceptable under any circumstances.

Pakistan had sacrificed 90,000 precious lives in the war against terrorism, while the Pakistani nation, armed forces and entire society were a strong shield between terrorists and the rest of the world, he said.

Addressing a capacity-building workshop organised by the Sustainable Social Development Organisation (SSDO) for parliamentarians from Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh on the counter-terrorism framework and legislative responsibilities, the minister said effective measures had been taken to eliminate terrorism through joint efforts of state institutions, federal and provincial governments and the people.

He said terrorism had been eliminated from the country to a large extent by 2017. At that time, he said, the state had introduced the National Action Plan in view of security challenges including the law-and-order situation in Karachi, terrorist activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a wave of terrorism in some areas of Balochistan and growing militancy from southern towards central Punjab.

He said all relevant stakeholders responded to the National Action Plan and federal and provincial governments, armed forces and other institutions jointly worked against terrorism, resulting in its elimination to a large extent. An effective

narrative also played an important role in the successful struggle against terrorism, he added.

Tarar said the elimination of terrorism in 2017 improved the law-and-order situation from Karachi to Khyber and investment started in the country. However, he said, a subsequent policy change, including developing sympathy for terrorists and their facilitators and adopting a policy of resetting and negotiating with them, seriously undermined four years of national efforts against terrorism. He said political parties had not been taken into confidence over the decision to change the policy, although political consensus was necessary on important issues such as national security and terrorism. The current terrorism situation in the country, he added, was a consequence of the policy change after 2017. The minister said that, significant improvement had been witnessed in several areas under the National Action Plan during the last two-and-a-half to three years.

Public procurement reforms will further improve transparency, efficiency in Govt purchasing system: Azam Nazeer

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law & Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar has said that transparency, institutional independence and effective accountability must be ensured in the public procurement process, while public procurement reforms will further improve transparency and efficiency in the government purchasing system. He expressed these views while addressing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases (CCLC) here on Tuesday. The meeting of the Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases (CCLC) was held at the Cabinet Division and reviewed important legislative and regulatory matters relating to various sectors. The meeting held detailed discussions on the proposed amendments to the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Ordinance, 2002, and the draft Public Procurement Rules, 2025.

The Federal Minister said that the existing legal framework for public procurement

requires greater clarity, responsibility and effective accountability mechanisms. He emphasized the need for an effective mechanism for independent grievance redressal and prevention of conflicts of interest in the public procurement process. He said that transparency, accountability and effective oversight in the public procurement system must be further strengthened to improve institutional confidence and efficiency in government procurement. The meeting reviewed various proposals concerning independent grievance redressal, strengthening of third-party review and oversight mechanisms, prevention of conflicts of interest and ensuring institutional independence in public procurement. The Federal Minister said that the role and powers of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority should be made more effective, while the use of centralized e-procurement platforms should be promoted. The meeting also reviewed proposed amendments to the National Tariff Commission Act.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law & Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar chairs a meeting of the Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative cases (CCLC) at the Cabinet Division.

Masood Khan terms Makkah Pact a historic step towards collective deterrence, regional stability

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The signing of the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye is a historic development, said Sardar Masood Khan, Former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, China and the United Nations, and former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir here on Tuesday.

In a statement issued here, he said the pact was

a long-awaited collective defence mechanism for Muslim countries and a significant step towards strengthening regional deterrence and stability.

Khan said Muslim countries had aspired for decades to develop a collective defence mechanism but had been unable to translate that aspiration into a practical arrangement. He said the realisation of vulnerability intensified after Israel's attack on Palestinian negotiators in Doha last year, prompting

Gulf countries to recognise the need for an effective deterrence capability. He said the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement signed between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in September 2025 subsequently served as the nucleus for the expansion of the mechanism, with Türkiye joining the pact this year while Egypt has also expressed interest in becoming part of it.

Khan emphasised that the Makkah Pact should

not be viewed as an attempt to disrupt the existing regional power structure or target any particular country. Rather, he said, its fundamental purpose was defensive with an objective to ensure that Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye are protected against aggression through collective deterrence. Masood Khan said the pact was not against any specific country and noted that the United States has welcomed its establishment.

Health ministry employees must get tested for hepatitis C or will not receive salaries from next month: Kamal

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Health Minister Mustafa Kamal on Tuesday said that hepatitis C screening had been made compulsory for all employees of his ministry and the salaries of untested employees would be withheld next month onwards. Kamal was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Prime Minister's Hepatitis C Elimination Programme in Islamabad, where he too got tested for hepatitis C, with his result coming out negative. The programme was jointly launched by the World Health Organisation and the health ministry in May with the aim of ending the disease by 2030. Kamal said on the occasion that hepatitis C screening was being made



mandatory for the employees of other ministries as well, adding that letters would be sent in this regard. He said the programme for the elimination of hepatitis C would be rolled out in phases, beginning with Islamabad where the government had set up 17 centres for screening. Meanwhile, testing facilities would also be made available at private hospitals, he said, according to state broadcaster Radio Pakistan.

Two dams to be completed in Islamabad to address water needs: Talal

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry informed the National Assembly on Tuesday that two new dams would be completed within four years to help address Islamabad's growing water shortage. Responding to a calling-attention notice on water scarcity and the need for water purification and recycling plants in Islamabad Capital Territory, he said the capital needed 240 million gallons of water a day. However, only 80 million gallons were currently available. He said feasibility studies for the Shahdara and Dohara dams were



being conducted through the Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda). The minister said the two projects would be completed within three to four years. They would meet Islamabad's water needs for the next 30 to 40 years, he added. The minister said the government had amended laws to promote rainwater harvesting.

Annual Urs of Bari Imam Sarkar concludes with special prayers for national security and stability

Ishaq Dar, Hanif Abbasi among prominent political, social, religious and business personalities in attendance

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The three-day annual Urs celebrations of the revered spiritual figure of the subcontinent, Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif, popularly known as Bari Imam Sarkar (RA), have concluded. The spiritually uplifting and dignified concluding ceremony was held in Noor Pur Shahaan, Islamabad, and was attended by prominent political, social, religious and business personalities, along with a large number of devotees and pilgrims. The concluding ceremony was marked by a deeply spiritual and religious atmosphere, with participants paying rich tribute to Hazrat Bari



Imam Sarkar (RA) and recalling his teachings and services for humanity. The ceremony was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Custodian of Bari Imam Sarkar Shrine and Baba Kalu Sarkar, Raja Sarfraz Akram, Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Safdar, Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi, Anjum Aqeel Khan.

Transporters oppose govt's new weight policy for vehicles

PEAK POINT

BANNU: Transporters across the country have termed the government's new weight policy for vehicles unfair and contrary to ground realities, and have called upon the Prime Minister and other relevant authorities to intervene immediately and review the policy. Speaking to the media, President of the Goods Transport Association, Kp Malik Roohullah, said that under the new policy, the permissible weight limit for 10-wheeler vehicles has been increased from 27 tonnes to 35 tonnes, while the weight limit for 22-wheeler vehicles has been set at only 58 tonnes. He termed the decision incomprehensible and disproportionate for transporters. He said that if weight limits were determined according to the number of wheels and the



overall structure of the vehicles, 22-wheeler vehicles should be allowed to carry at least 80 tonnes. He added that while the weight limit for 10-wheelers had been significantly increased, an unreasonable limit had been imposed on vehicles with more wheels, creating serious difficulties for the transport sector. The President of the Transport Association said that the new weight policy could adversely affect the movement of freight vehicles and the transportation of goods.