

Ali Pervaiz reaffirms government support for energy security, sector modernisation

NA passes motion to constitute special committee to probe PIMS fire tragedy

Religious groups appreciate govt efforts to resolve madrassa issues

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PM Shehbaz says Makkah defence pact has sent 'message of peace, unity throughout region'

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that the recent Makkah Joint Defence Agreement signed by Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan had brought the three countries "closer together" and sent a message of "unity and peace throughout the region".

The three countries signed the joint defence agreement at a trilateral summit in Makkah on August 7, pledging to strengthen collective security, deepen defence cooperation and promote peace and stability in the region and beyond.

According to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), PM Shehbaz made the remarks during a meeting with Saudi

Minister for Environment, Water and Agriculture Abdulrahman bin Abdulmohsen Al-Fadley at the Prime Minister's House in Islamabad.

In a statement, the PMO said the premier reaffirmed the "deep-rooted, fraternal ties" between the two countries and conveyed his regards for King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

He underscored that as strategic partners, both Pakistan and the kingdom must now focus their energies towards "deepening economic and agriculture ties to translate their longstanding relationship into a stronger, mutually beneficial trade and investment partnership".



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif hosts a reception for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture H.E. Engineer Abdulrahman bin Abdulmohsen al-Fadley.

Two days on, rescuers scour debris in Nepal as risk of fresh flooding grows

PEAK POINT



NEPAL: Rescue teams on Friday used heavy machinery to dig through mud and debris in Nepalese towns devastated by a flash flood two days ago, as hopes of finding survivors faded and officials worked to reduce the risk of further catastrophic flooding. Nepal's police said the devastating floods on the Nepal-Tibet border region have killed at least 547 people. Chinese state media earlier confirmed five dead, taking the total killed to at least 552.

More than 1,400 people are missing, including hundreds of foreigners.

The flood ripped through villages and valleys, destroying power stations, roads and bridges along a route that links Kathmandu with Lhasa in Tibet and is popular with trekkers and pilgrims.

Of those missing, at least 540 are foreigners. Authorities in Nepal used helicopters to search for survivors and drop emergency supplies to thousands cut off in towns and valleys while emergency services, some using sniffer dogs, recovered dozens of bodies swept down into the plains.

Peace committee member killed, 8 injured in IED blast in Upper SW market

PEAK POINT

UPPER SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: One peace committee member was killed while eight others were injured when an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded in Makeen Bazaar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Upper South Waziristan district on Friday, police said. Dera Ismail Khan Regional Police Officer (RPO) Ghulam Mubashir Makin told that the IED had been attached to a motorcycle by unidentified people. He said the device exploded at around 10:45am, injuring nine people in the busy market.

Pims fire: Mustafa Kamal says 'no one will be spared', calls for reforming health sector

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Health Minister Mustafa Kamal on Friday vowed that "no one will be spared" while talking about the fire at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) that claimed the lives of 14 infants, adding that the country's health sector needed to be reformed. Speaking in the Senate, Kamal said: "No one intends to spare or save anyone. I am saying this on behalf of the prime minister and the entire government that not a single person will be spared". He said that the tragedy cannot be an "episode lasting merely a few days," as he called for accountability and for efforts to prevent such incidents in the future. The minister warned against "suppressing the issue" and invited the

House to work towards a way forward, agreeing to a



"This is a matter of children's lives, and we are answerable to God for it.

these ministries," he remarked. At the outset of his address, the minister expressed sorrow at the lives lost in the incident. "There can be no explanation for this. I am holding myself responsible, and I have presented myself to be held accountable."

He called for a holistic approach toward investigating the incident, urging that any committee formed

to probe should not be "time-bound and should remain open".

"When you go investigate this incident, you will find so many things associated with it," he said, pointing to a larger "rot" within the sector.

Kamal held that the health sector was not "ideal". "Four hundred thousand children between the ages of one and five die every year, 1,300 die every day; they are all dying preventable deaths," he said.

He continued: "It is not possible to bring back the infants who died at Pims, but let us look at it as a test from God and prevent the next kid from dying."

Kamal maintained that there was "no point" in making speeches if the government failed to learn from the incident.

Saudi Minister calls on Field Marshal, discuss matters of mutual interest

PEAK POINT



According to an ISPR press release, during the meeting, matters of mutual interest were discussed. The COAS & CDF highlighted the deep-rooted brotherly relations between Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening the longstanding strategic partnership between the two brotherly countries. The dignitary appreciated Pakistan's positive role in promoting regional peace and stability and expressed his desire to enhance cooperation between the two brotherly countries, particularly in the areas of agriculture and environmental sustainability.

PML-N's Syed Iftikhar Ali Gillani elected new AJK prime minister

PEAK POINT



His sole contender was PPP's Sardar Mukhtar Ahmed Abbasi, who bagged 14 votes in the contest for the top office. The AJK Assembly comprises 53 members, but its present strength is 46 — PML-N's being 32, including its allies, and PPP's 14 — because elections to seven seats in Poonch and Sudhnoti districts have yet to be held.

However, 44 votes were polled in Friday's elections as the speaker did not cast his vote and PML-N regional president Shah Ghulam Qadir was not present in the assembly. After the votes were counted, Speaker Chaudhry Tariq Farooq announced the result, declaring Gillani as the winner amid clapping and slogans from the galleries. Gillani has succeeded PPP's Rathore, who was elected as the prime minister in November 2025. Qadir, along with former AJK premier Raja Farooq Haider, had previously opposed Gillani's nomination for the post.

IMF mission to visit Pakistan next month for fourth EFF review



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) review mission is scheduled to visit Pakistan next month to conduct the fourth review of the country's \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF). The News reported on Friday. The review mission will inquire about the proposed legislation on the Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF). The government has introduced the Pakistan Sovereign Wealth Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2026 in the Senate to revise governance and increase fiscal safeguards in order to fulfil IMF conditions.

A top official in the Finance Division told The News on Thursday that the IMF review was expected to visit Pakistan in September 2026, as exact dates have not yet been confirmed. Pakistani high-ups have proposed six amendments.

SPORTS

Last-wicket duo take England to 290 all out in 2nd Test against Pakistan

National Ranking Tennis set to begin



MOHTSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: The 1st Meinhardt Grade A+ National Ranking Tennis Championship will begin on Saturday (today) at the PTF Tennis Complex Islamabad. The country's leading players will feature in the event. Some of the top seeds are: Aqeel Khan, Muzammil Murtaza, Muhammad Shoaib, Barkatullah, Mudassir Murtaza, Hamza Roman, Abubakar Talha, Ahmad Nael Qureshi, Ushna Suhail, Mahin Afab Qureshi, Esha Jawad, Labika Durab, Hajra Suhail, Romaisa Malik, Bismal, Shayan Afridi, Zohaib Afzal Malik, Amir Mazari and Hassan Usmani will compete in the championship. The event has received an overwhelming response, with more than 400 entries across 11 different categories, including men's singles, men's doubles, ladies' singles, ladies' doubles, boys' 18 and under, singles boys under-14, singles girls under-14, singles boys 12 and under, singles girls 12 and under, singles seniors 40+ and doubles seniors 50+. A cash award of Rs2 million will be distributed among the participating players. Pakistan Tennis Federation's (PTF) president Asim-ul-Haq Qureshi and Secretary General Col Zia Uddin Tufail extended their best wishes to all the participating players and expressed hope that the championships would provide a highly competitive platform for players across the country.

PEAK POINT

LONDON: England No 11 Josh Tongue frustrated Pakistan with a Test-best 30 not out before the hosts were dismissed for 290 in their first innings on the second day of the second Test at Lord's on Friday.

Gus Atkinson, who has a Test century at Lord's to his credit, was last man out for a near run-a-ball 45 after adding 47 for the tenth wicket with fellow paceman Tongue.

Muhammad Abbas led Pakistan's attack with 4-73 in 20

overs. England had been in dire straits at 36-3 on Thursday, with veteran seamer Abbas taking three wickets for four runs in 16 balls after Pakistan won the toss.

But fifties from Jamie Smith (61) and Jordan Cox (55) helped England recover to 248-9 when bad light ended play for the day.

The match resumed Friday beneath sunny skies with Atkinson 34 not out and Tongue unbeaten on one.

Tongue, belying his status as a tailender, expertly glanced Mohammad Ali for four down to fine leg and drilled Abbas through

the covers for another boundary. Pakistan turned to left-arm spinner Ali Usman in the hope of ending the stubborn stand.

Atkinson drove his third ball for a four through long-on but holed out off the next to end a 46-ball innings featuring six fours.

Tongue's undefeated 30, off 48 balls including four boundaries, surpassed his previous highest Test score of 19 against Australia at Lord's three years ago.

Friday's runs were all the more valuable given Pakistan had been dismissed for just 171 and 135 as England won last week's first Test

at Headingley by the huge margin of an innings and 103 runs.

Pakistan, however, were buoyed at Lord's by the return of captain Babar Azam after the experienced batsman missed the first of a three-match series with a finger injury.

But opener Imam-ul-Haq continued to be off the field on Friday because of a left calf muscle strain suffered while fielding Thursday.

Shan Masood opened in Imam's place alongside Azan Awaish when Pakistan began their reply.

Pakistan beat South Africa to finish 11th at FIH Hockey World Cup



PEAK POINT

AMSTELVEEN: Pakistan finished 11th at the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026 on Friday after beating South Africa 4-3 on penalties in the classification match at Wagener Stadium.

The 11th-place finish marked the Green Shirts' best in 20 years as they secured 12th spot in the 2010 and 2018 editions of the mega event, while failing to qualify for the World Cup in 2014 and 2023. Their previous best finish came at the 2006 edition, when they secured sixth place.

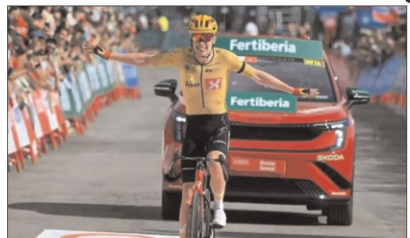
The enthralling fixture got off to a contrasting start as the South Africa took an early lead in the eighth minute through Ashraf

Pakistan ahead in the second minute of the penultimate quarter, which, however, concluded with the scoreboard reading 3-3 as Mustapha Cassiem struck for South Africa in the 40th minute.

The final quarter saw both teams make desperate attempts to net the tie-breaker, and South Africa ultimately succeeded when Mustapha converted a penalty corner in the 55th minute.

But Pakistan staged a sensational comeback as Muhammad Hammaddin struck in the final minute to make it 4-4 and ultimately forced the match into the penalty shootout.

Leknessund Takes Emotional Vuelta Stage Win



MUHAMMAD HARIS

SPAIN: Norway's Andreas Leknessund celebrated his first Grand Tour stage victory after a brilliant solo ride on stage climb riding the last seven of the Vuelta a España. The 27 year alone. He finished 34 old broke away early seconds ahead of fellow and made his decisive low Norwegian Tobias move on the final Halland Johannessen.

while Wout van Aert took third. "It really hurt today. The Norwegian one two was especially meaningful as both riders wore black armbands in memory of Norway's King Harald. Meanwhile Tadej Pogacar strengthened his overall lead despite finishing 19th, while Britain's Oscar Onley moved up to sixth in the general classification and extended his advantage in the younger rider competition.

World Championship of Legends season 3 to begin in Dubai, Sharjah on October 3



Brasil Game Show 2026: Latin America's biggest Gaming Event returns to São Paulo in October

MUHAMMAD USMAN

SÃO PAULO: Brasil Game Show (BGS), one of the world's largest gaming events and the biggest of its kind in Latin America, is set to return to São Paulo from October 9 to 12, 2026, bringing together major gaming companies, developers, esports competitors, content creators, journalists and gaming enthusiasts. The 2026 edition will take place at Distrito Anhembi, marking the 17th edition of the event. Over the years, BGS has evolved from a relatively small gaming exhibition into one of the most significant events on the international gaming calendar. From Rio Game Show to a Global Gaming Event, Brasil Game Show traces its origins to 2009, when the event was launched in Rio de Janeiro under the name Rio Game Show. The event later moved to São Paulo and adopted the

Brasil Game Show name as its audience and international profile continued to grow. Since then, BGS has established itself as a major meeting point for the gaming industry in Brazil, providing a platform where companies

can showcase games, hardware and new technologies while developers and gaming communities interact directly with the industry. The scale of the event has increased significantly over the years. According to the organisers, the 2025 edition attracted 306,798 visitors, taking cumulative atten-



exhibits, independent game projects, esports competitions and activities for the wider gaming community. Major international and Brazilian companies have historically used BGS as a platform to present games and products to one of the world's largest gaming markets.

tions, independent game projects, esports competitions and activities for the wider gaming community. Major international and Brazilian companies have historically used BGS as a platform to present games and products to one of the world's largest gaming markets.

D-8 webinar explores Malaysia's experience to boost industrial cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) Secretariat, in collaboration with Malaysia's Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI), convened the D-8 Webinar on Industrial Cooperation under the theme "Leveraging Malaysia's Industrial Experience for D-8 Cooperation." The Webinar brought together over 70 participants from across D-8 member states, including senior government officials and representatives of investment and export promotion agencies, SME bodies, chambers of commerce, and the private sector, said a press release issued on Friday.

The strong and interactive participation testified to deep

interest across the D-8 in advancing practical industrial partnerships and learning from successful experiences within the Organization.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Secretary-General of the D-8, highlighted Malaysia's transformation into a diversified, manufacturing and export-oriented economy and the relevance of its experience in industrial planning, investment, exports, technology, human-capital development and private-sector engagement for wider D-8 cooperation. Highlighting the immense economic potential of the nine D-8 Member States, with a combined GDP of over US\$5.19 trillion and merchandise exports of over US\$1.09 trillion, the Secretary-General stressed the



need to better connect their markets, productive capacities, investment opportunities, technologies and private sectors to advance the US\$500 billion intra-D-8 trade target by 2030. Against the backdrop of changing global supply chains, the green transition and rapid technological transformation, he identified three priorities: (i) technology, innovation and industrial transformation; (ii) investment, trade and value-chain integration, with a central role for the private sector; and (iii) youth, skills and human-capital development. As practical ways forward, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood proposed developing joint industrial and investment initiatives in priority sectors; strengthening cooperation in technology transfer, innovation, skills and

emerging technologies; and building stronger linkages among D-8 industries, SMEs, research institutions and the private sector to support regional value chains. He also called for more effective use of existing and emerging D-8 mechanisms, including D-8 NPRI and D-8 TTEP for technology and innovation, D-8 CCI for business linkages, and the proposed D-8 Halal Economy Cooperation Platform for collaboration in the Halal sector. The Webinar focused on four inter-connected areas: industrial transformation and Malaysia's New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030); investment promotion and FDI attraction; export development and market access; and Halal industry development as a high-growth sector. Senior Experts from

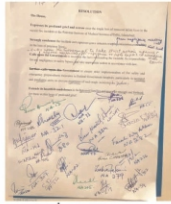
the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI), Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA), Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) and Halal Development Corporation (HDC) made comprehensive and insightful presentations – sharing Malaysia's policies, institutional experience and good practices across these areas.

The presentations offered sharp insights into Malaysia's mission-based approach under NIMP 2030 to industrial upgrading and technological transformation; strategies for attracting quality and high-value investment; measures to strengthen export readiness, market access and the internationalization of Malaysian enterprises.

NA unanimously adopts resolution to expresses grief over loss of innocent infant lives in PIMS fire incident, calls for strict action against negligence

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly has unanimously adopted resolution to express profound grief and sorrow over the tragic loss of innocent infant lives in the recent fire incident at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), Islamabad. The resolution strongly condemned the tragic incident and



expressed grave concern over

the circumstances surrounding the loss of precious lives. The House also observed that any negligence or safety lapses resulting in such a tragic incident were a matter of serious concern and called upon the Government to take strict action against those responsible, in accordance with the law. The Resolution, further, called upon the Government to

ascertain the facts surrounding the incident, fix responsibility for any negligence or safety lapses, and take appropriate legal action against those found responsible. The House stressed that accountability must be ensured in cases where negligence or failure to observe prescribed safety measures has contributed to the loss of innocent lives. The House also

called upon the Government to ensure strict implementation of fire safety protocols and emergency preparedness measures in Federal Government hospitals, particularly in neonatal and paediatric units, so as to strengthen safety arrangements and prevent the recurrence of such tragic incidents in the future. The House extended heartfelt condolences to the

bereaved families and prayed for strength and fortitude for them to bear this irreparable loss. The resolution was moved by MNA Mr. Daniyal Chaudhary, Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting & Federal Coordinator. For Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights during today's Session of the National Assembly.

Opinion & Editorial

A polity or petri dish?

Shahab Uslo

CONTRARY to the interior minister's recent claim, bad governance is not the cause of the recurring collapse of political systems. It is only a symptom of a deeper systemic malaise — an undemocratic dispensation that allows the rulers to escape political and institutional accountability for their ills and excesses. The minister's panacea for bad governance — the creation of more provinces — is also misconceived, if not potentially disastrous for a country already riddled with multiple fault lines. Enforcing central authority over multiple sub-national units has become increasingly difficult for authoritarian states or contested governments. Nigeria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Somalia are some of the many countries that have a large number of provinces; yet they are perennially afflicted with bad governance, fractious territories, economic meltdowns, civil wars, armed insurgencies and institutional breakdowns.

The genesis of our systemic maladies can also be traced to a combination of undemocratic and authoritarian models that have been tried for decades on various pretexts — ideology, faith, stability, security, integrity, development, etc — to elude a legitimate federal democracy. Therefore, the answer to key political questions regarding the state's foundational objectives, system of governance, people's rights and liberties, and the distribution of

resources within the federation and among the people has never been attempted. These are basic questions that the first generation of a political leadership must respond to, by way of a social compact that secures legitimacy, recognition, order and cohesion for the newborn state. Else, these questions hover over regime, fratricide and every revolt or revolution. The common thread running through all successful social compacts is the 'will of the people'. The people are the bedrock of modern states. They constitute the foundation of the state and work and sustain it with their blood and sweat. No polity can stand, let alone perform, without the people as the object and drivers of state-building. But it is unfortunate that right after independence, a small coterie of elites — political, business, landed and the civil-military establishment — captured power and diverted resources towards their own political and institutional interests. Constitution-making remained stalled for many years. And then in 1954, a mentally incapacitated governor-general dissolved the first elected constituent assembly, which had just finished the draft of the constitution, because he feared losing his arbitrary powers.

The common man has borne the crushing burden of failed experiments. The constitution that was finally enforced in 1956 was neither democratic nor federal. It artificially created a 'parity' between the numerically divergent eastern and western wings of the coun-

try, denying the Bengalis their democratic right to rule based on the principle of majoritarianism. It also arbitrarily erased the western wing's ethno-cultural diversity by forging a single province (One Unit), to weaken federalism. But neither scheme worked. The ensuing political instability and palace intrigues toppled as many as five governments in just two-and-a-half years, making it easier for a scheming and ambitious president to fold up the entire system, putting the country under the first martial law in 1958. The second exercise in political engineering was no less disastrous. The 1962 constitution was conceived by Gen Ayub Khan. He was ably assisted, among others, by a bevy of ambitious technocrats and unscrupulous judges. Retaining the ill-conceived One Unit and parity, he introduced a presidential system that denied universal adult franchise and sought 'legitimacy' from local governments — the basic democrats — which being malfeasible elected him and his loyalists to the federal and provincial legislatures. Interestingly, believing that it went against the 'genius' of the people, he dispensed with parliamentary democracy — something that India had successfully instituted years before in 1950. No wonder, the so-called 'decade of development' sowed most of the ills that continue to bedevil the political system to this day in the form of authoritarian masquerades, judicial kowtowing, electoral manipulation.

Courtesy Dawn

Türkiye-the next target

Anela Shahzad

Despite the ongoing and volatile nature of the war in Iran, it is striking that US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has initiated an 'economic D-Day', unveiling the nation's toughest financial sanctions yet to enforce complete economic isolation. Perhaps Bessent forgot that sanctions come before war, and war is waged only after all diplomatic, political and economic pressures have failed. But the real fear hidden behind the glee on the treasury secretary's face is the terrifying fact that the world is ditching US treasury bonds to the point that just to control the bond's yields he has had to announce \$1 trillion for buying them back. The trust on the dollar and on America's ability to keep its promises has broken. And the irony is that if the Treasury keeps those bonds, it will be paying interest to itself on bonds issued by itself. So, can it be said that before the Iran war is over, the US is defeated both militarily and economically, not on the bilateral front but on the global front. Israel, however, is a different ballgame. Already facing steep economic and social isolation in the East, and increasingly in the West now, due to the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, the country has very little remaining trust or reputation to lose. This isolation has deepened significantly following the ICC's arrest warrant for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over alleged war crimes in Gaza. Furthermore, far-right ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich are now barred from entering several European states, while a reported 60% of Americans hold an unfavourable view of Israel, up from 42% in 2022. Rather, Israel's domestic and foreign policy concerns are both existential and urgent. Its long-standing doctrine of keeping the Middle East divided and fractious ultimately collapsed with the Saudi-Iran rapprochement. The recent war with Iran appeared to be a last-ditch effort to pit regional powers against one another and drive a permanent wedge through the region - theoretically dividing it into pro- and anti-Abraham Accords camps.

Courtesy Tribune

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Hina Javed case

Hina Javed lived a happy, successful and independent life up until the age of 45. She held a master's degree in communications, had a well-paying job and was a career-oriented and ambitious soul, according to her cousin. For her, the price of this contentment came in the form of marriage when her life drastically changed after her wedding to Faisal Asghar in November 2025. Hina Javed was allegedly murdered in her own house by her husband, only after nine months of her marriage. In this land of the free, many Hina Javeds exist. Some, we do not know about, while others have not yet met their fate. Only in recent history, Pakistan has accumulated a showcase full of domestic and gender-based violence cases. The legal language, the media frenzy and the outcomes are rarely on the victim's side - even now, the facts of the matter remain unclear. The precise cause of death is still awaiting forensic analysis, and a key witness, a domestic worker named Zeeshan, is reportedly giving conflicting evidence. The immediate priority right now must be a forensic reconstruction of Hina's final hours, and an understanding of the role of every person connected to this crime. Currently, what this case lacks is certainty. There are suspects, allegations and multiple accounts but what's needed to pin the nail in the coffin is still missing and that uncertainty must not be filled by media speculation.

Ali Pervaiz reaffirms government support for energy security, sector modernisation



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Ali Pervaiz Malik on Friday visited Pakistan State Oil (PSO), the nation's largest energy company, and reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening national energy readiness amid heightened global uncertainty and PSO's central role in securing the country's fuel supply. The minister, Secretary Petroleum Hamed Yaqoob Sheikh and Additional Secretary (Policy) Zafar Abbas were received by PSO Chief Executive Officer Jawwad Ahmed

Cheema, along with members of the executive management team. Jawwad Ahmed Cheema briefed the delegation on PSO's financial results, recent operational milestones and plans for the years ahead. The minister reviewed the company's work on energy security and retail modernisation and commended PSO for its resilience in maintaining an uninterrupted nationwide fuel supply chain amid complex geopolitical headwinds.

Discussions addressed the evolving international environment, including volatile global fuel prices and dis-

ruptions to key maritime corridors. The minister and PSO leadership explored a coordinated set of measures to safeguard the domestic market, including proactive international procurement, long-term diversification of supply sources and strengthening of strategic buffer reserves.

Responding to the operational updates, the minister assured PSO of the government's full support in fostering a balanced energy ecosystem that places consumer interests and economic stability at its core. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to expanding storage infrastructure, accelerating digitisation and automation, enhancing supply chain resilience and continually improving the customer experience. The minister emphasised that all sector stakeholders must work together under a shared vision to build a modern and resilient energy sector for Pakistan. PSO, as the country's national oil marketing company, remains committed to raising industry standards and delivering reliable and sustainable energy to support Pakistan's growth.

No compromise on axle load regime, heavy fines for violators: Aleem Khan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Friday said there would be no compromise on enforcement of the Axle Load Control Regime (ALCR), announcing heavy fines for vehicles and factories found involved in overloading. No compromise on axle load regime, heavy fines for violators: Aleem Khan

Chairing a high-level meeting to review the implementation of the axle load regime, the minister directed the relevant authorities to strengthen monitoring through artificial intelligence (AI), modern cameras and an automated weigh-station system.

The meeting was attended by Federal Secretary for Communications, Chairman National Highway Authority (NHA), Inspector General Motorway Police, and Director General of National Logistics Corporation (NLC) and Frontier Works Organization (FWO), who provided briefings on relevant matters.

During the briefing, it was highlighted that overloading severely damages road

infrastructure, with 30,000 axle load violations reported over the past six months. It was also shared that a state-of-the-art model weigh station of international standards in Sangiani will be completed soon.

Abdul Aleem Khan issued clear directives during the meeting, ordering necessary amendments to the NHA's legal framework within one week to immediately eliminate legal and operational hurdles regarding the axle load regime. He instructed that transporters be provided clear guidance on vehicle body manufacturing and advised against installing unnecessary heavy decorative accessories that increase overall weight. The minister firmly announced that fines will now be imposed not only on vehicle owners but also on factories identified for overloading trucks. He made it mandatory for 100 percent of freight vehicles to pass through weigh stations and directed the complete automation of the weigh station system.

He stated that shifting to an automated system would eliminate long queues and prevent lost time, while also ordering the establishment of weigh stations on GT Roads.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan presiding over a meeting regarding Axle Load control regime at the Ministry of communications.

Ahsan chairs meeting on financing of ML-1 Rohri-Multan section

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal on Friday chaired a meeting of a committee constituted on the directives of Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif to explore financing options for the Rohri-Multan section of the Main Line-1 (ML-1) railways project.

The meeting was briefed that during the last 10 years, 399 train derailments and 158 accidents had occurred due to the deteriorating condition of the railway lines, highlighting the urgent need for its upgradation, a news release said.

"Upgrading the ML-1 railways line is our priority," Ahsan Iqbal said, adding that work on the Karachi-Rohri section would commence during the current fiscal year.

The Director General, Frontier Works Organization (FWO) briefed the meeting on



the construction of the Rohri-Multan section through private-sector investment. The estimated cost of the section was stated to be

more than Rs 450 billion.

The Minister directed that a feasibility study of the project should be conducted

Religious groups appreciate govt efforts to resolve madrasa issues

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Religious educational boards, seminaries and religious organizations across the country observed Youm-e-Tashakur (Day of Gratitude) on Friday, appreciating the government's efforts to resolve longstanding issues concerning madrasas. The Pakistan Ulama Council, Mutahida Madaris Council, Mutahida Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith and other religious organizations welcomed progress on madrasa registration, access to banking facilities and greater transparency in financial and administrative matters. The religious leadership expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Syed Asim Munir for supporting efforts to address madrasa-related issues through



consultation and institutional mechanisms, said a press release. They said the recent progress would help strengthen cooperation between religious seminaries and state institutions. National Paigham-e-Aman Committee Coordinator and Pakistan Ulama Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Mufti Abdul Rahim, Syed Ziaullah Shah Bukhari, Allama Arif Wahidi, Dr Asif Mir, Mufti Muhammad Karim Khan, Allama Taugeer Abbas, Allama Muhammad Hussain Akbar and other religious scholars.

NA passes motion to constitute special committee to probe PIMS fire tragedy

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Friday passed a motion to constitute a special parliamentary committee to investigate and inquire into the tragic PIMS fire incident and formulate proposals for the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) to prevent such incidents in the future.

The motion was moved by Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Azam Nazeer Tarar, who said that the Speaker of the National Assembly, in consultation with the Chairman Senate, may constitute a special committee to investigate and inquire into the tragic incident. Tarar said the committee should have representation from all political parties.

He said the National



Assembly Speaker should be authorised to formulate and make changes to its terms of reference (ToRs), as well as review and amend its composition, if required. He said such changes were part of the parliamentary process and the House could authorise the Speaker accordingly. While responding to points raised by some lawmakers, Azam Nazeer Tarar said the government would treat the tragic PIMS fire incident as a test case and assured that necessary action.

Pervaiz Ashraf calls for parliamentary probe into PIMS fire tragedy

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and PPP leader Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Friday called for a thorough parliamentary investigation into the tragic fire incident at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), in which newborn babies lost their lives.

Speaking in the National Assembly, Ashraf urged the National Assembly speaker to constitute a parliamentary committee comprising members from both the government and opposition to investigate the incident. Earlier, the motion was passed to discuss the PIMS fire tragedy by suspending the ret-



inue agenda of the house.

He also proposed that the committee visit PIMS, examine the situation on the ground and hear from the hospital administration, parents of the deceased babies, nurses, doctors and other staff. Ashraf said the committee should determine whether any doctor, nurse or security official was injured while 14 newborn babies lost their lives.

through a credible third party to ensure an objective assessment of its technical and financial viability.

He also directed the Ministry of Railways to complete its homework regarding the financing requirements for locomotives, cargo rolling stock and passenger coaches.

"How much financing will be required for locomotives, cargo rolling stock and coaches?" the minister asked, directing the ministry to work out comprehensive financing requirements for the railway's rolling stock needs.

Ahsan Iqbal observed that continued cuts in the development budget were adversely affecting projects of national and public importance.

He stressed the need for exploring innovative financing options and greater private-sector participation to ensure timely implementation of strategically important railways infrastructure projects.