



Ahsan launches national song, urges youth to lead Pakistan's transformation through 'Shaheen' spirit



Pakistan-Turkiye friendship based on brotherhood, mutual respect: Imran Shah



BISP chief warns against smear campaign; announces new digital payment system

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PM directs early roadmap for Private Equity Fund to boost investment

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Monday, directed the relevant authorities to finalize, at the earliest, a roadmap for establishing a Private Equity Fund, aimed at promoting investment in Pakistan and supporting small and medium-sized businesses. Chairing a meeting on promoting private investment and sustainable economic growth, the prime minister also called for a comprehensive roadmap to develop the country's public equity market and private equity funds to ensure greater availability of investment capital and facilitate foreign investment. He stressed promoting private investment, saying 'it is essential for the country's economic development.'

He also opined that private equity funds could serve as an effective catalyst for investment, business expansion and job creation.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani, Special Assistant to the PM Haroon Akhtar and senior officials of relevant institutions attended the meeting, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister identified minerals, agriculture, livestock, energy, information technology and other sectors as having significant potential to become key drivers of Pakistan's economic growth. He further observed that the public equity market could provide an important avenue for investment in these sectors.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on promotion of Private Equity to boost investment.

Death toll from suicide bombing near police station in Swat rises to 17

PEAK POINT



SWAT: The death toll from Sunday's suicide bombing near a police station in Swat rose to 17 on Monday, including several policemen. The suicide bombing had taken place near the

Kabal Police Station while a protest against lawlessness was under way at the adjoining public square. Police said that the suicide bomber had detonated his explosives after police personnel attempted to stop and search him at the entrance to the police station. According to a list of casualties shared by Swat police spokesperson Nasir Iqbal Karimi, seven policemen and 10 civilians have lost their lives in the incident while 18 policemen and nine civilians have been injured. Police have revised down the death toll from an earlier tally of 19, which they shared in a statement earlier in the day. Karimi said in the statement that a large-scale rescue operation had been launched immediately after the attack, in which more than 50 Rescue 1122 personnel participated. "Rescue teams provided first aid at the scene before shifting the injured to various hospitals for further treatment. Authorities are continuing relief efforts as investigations.

Iran denies negotiations with US after Trump announces talks

PEAK POINT



IRAN: Iran said on Monday that no negotiations with the United States were currently being held despite US President Donald Trump announcing earlier that the two sides were set to begin parleys later today.

"Iran is not currently holding talks with the United States and is now in discussions with Oman over a temporary safe route through the Strait of Hormuz," Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei said in a televised press conference. On Sunday, Trump said that new negotiations with Iran would begin on Monday after he decided to hold off on striking the country to pursue a deal to end the war entering its sixth month. Trump told reporters that the talks would cover the Strait of Hormuz and ultimately, the denuclearisation of Iran.

Oil prices fell on Monday at the opening of Asian trade after Trump announced the new negotiations, with West Texas Intermediate dropping 4.7 per cent to \$80.72 per barrel.

Following a return to strikes last month, fears had mounted that the fighting could escalate once again. Trump had threatened to hit Iran "very hard" and was reportedly considering renewed attacks including against energy infrastructure, with US embassies across the region on alert. Trump pulled back from that threat on Saturday, saying the "parameters" of a deal were there.

PML-N routs PPP in second phase of Azad Kashmir elections

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) has consolidated its lead over the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) as it won majority of the seats in the second phase of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) general elections.

As results were awaited from two constituencies, the PML-N has grabbed 14 seats including from refugee constituencies while the PPP won five seats in the second round of elections. Polling was originally scheduled in nine territorial constituencies — five in Muzaffarabad district and two each in Neelum and Jhelum Valley districts — besides all 12 refugee constituencies.

However, the Election Commission deferred polling in LA-27, Muzaffarabad-I (Kutla) until Tuesday after polling staff and election material could not reach the constituency because of landslides and bad weather that blocked the Neelum Valley road and its link roads.

Polling at 71 of the 174 polling stations in LA-28 Muzaffarabad-II (Lachhrat) was also postponed until Tuesday for the same reason.

Security forces eliminate several terrorists in North Waziristan IBO

PEAK POINT

NORTH WAZIRISTAN: Several terrorists were killed during an intelligence-based operation carried out by security forces in the Khattī Kili area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district. The operation was launched as part of the ongoing intelligence-led campaign being conducted under the "Azme-Istehkam" vision over the past two months to target militant networks in the region. According to security sources, the forces successfully dismantled and destroyed multiple terrorist hideouts during the operation. A sizeable cache of weapons, ammunition, explosives.

PML-N secures simple majority to form govt in AJK, claims Sanaullah

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah on Monday claimed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) secured a simple majority to form the government in Azad Jammu and Kashmir after winning 23 of the 45 seats. Addressing a press conference alongside Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Amir Muqam in Islamabad, the senior PML-N leader claimed victory on 13 seats in the second phase of the AJK elections, including four of the seven seats in Muzaffarabad, while the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) secured three seats. According to Sanaullah, the PML-N also won 10 of the 12 refugee seats, while the PPP secured two. He said that polling in

LA-27 was postponed due to adverse weather, while constituencies declared so far, according to unofficial



voting would be held on Tuesday at 54 polling stations in LA-27 and LA-28. The PML-N's parliamentary party would meet immediately after the third phase of elections on August 10 to discuss government formation, he added. The second phase of the AJK elections was held in the Muzaffarabad division on Sunday, with the PML-N emerging as the frontrunner by securing 13 of the 18

and provisional results. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari-led PPP stands second, having won five seats so far in the second phase of the AJK elections. The elections, however, were overshadowed by allegations of electoral irregularities and incidents of violence, with the PPP claiming its leaders were attacked and at least one party worker was killed.

Addressing a press conference on Sunday, PPP

leader Raja Pervaiz Ashraf rejected the AJK election process, alleging that the mandate was "fake" and accusing the PML-N of pushing the situation towards further instability.

Raja said that the elections were neither free, fair nor impartial and would not be accepted. During today's presser, Sanaullah accused the PPP of joining hands with the banned Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) to disrupt elections in AJK, saying the party began raising allegations of rigging as soon as polling started after failing to perform well in the first phase of the elections. According to the senior PML-N leader the Bilawal-led party initially levelled allegations relating to 13 constituencies, which later narrowed to four and eventually two after it was asked to provide evidence.

Flood threat grows as monsoon intensifies



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Sunday warned that water levels in Pakistan's major rivers are expected to rise significantly between Aug 2 and 4, prompting flood alerts across several regions. The authority urged the public to avoid unnecessary travel to flood-prone areas as heavy monsoon rains continue to intensify. According to the NDMA's National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC), high-level flooding has been recorded in the Lehri River at Head Gogi, while medium-level flooding is underway in Nullah Palkhu at Wazirabad. The authority said low-level flooding continues at Kalabagh, Chashma, Guddu and Sukkur along.



SPORTS



Second Test: Chase's composed fifty lifts West Indies to 344 against Pakistan



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: An anchoring fifty by captain Roston Chase steered West Indies to a formidable first-innings total on day two of the second Test against Pakistan at Queen's Park Oval on Monday.

Resuming their first innings from 239/5, with Justin Greaves and skipper Chase at the start of the second day, the home side added valuable 105 runs to their overnight score for the remaining five wickets and were eventually bowled out for 344 in 105.4 overs.

Greaves and Chase, who dominated Pakistan's bowling attack

in the dying minutes of the opening day by putting together an unbeaten 66 runs for the fifth wicket, continued to frustrate the visitors by adding 30 more to their crucial stand.

The overnight partnership was eventually broken in the ninth over of the day, with Ali Usman dismissing Greaves, who walked back after top-scoring with 73 off 150 deliveries, laced with nine fours.

Following his dismissal, Chase put together a handy 35-run partnership for the sixth wicket with Kemar Roach until Ubaid Shah cleaned him up in the

95th over of their innings. He remained a notable run-getter for West Indies, making 126-ball 70 with the help of 11 fours.

Roach (19) was then involved in a brief 19-run partnership for the eighth wicket with Shamar Joseph (eight) before both fell victim to Sajid Khan in quick succession, resulting in the home side slipping to 326/9.

Lower-order batters Jayden Seales (eight) and Jonel Warrican (five not out) further added to Pakistan's frustration by adding 18 runs for the final wicket, which Sajid claimed by dismissing the former in the 105th

over. Sajid remained the standout bowler for Pakistan as he picked up four wickets for 85 runs in his 32.4 overs, while Mohammad Ali, Usman and Shah chipped in with two scalps each.

Earlier, West Indies ended the opening day on 239-5 in 74 overs, with Greaves unbeaten on 63 and Chase on 36 not out after an unbroken partnership guided the hosts into a commanding position. After opting to bat first, the West Indies reached 49-1 in a rain-hit opening session limited to 9.5 overs. Mohammad Ali struck early by dismissing Tagenarine Chanderpaul for 15.

Nasir Iqbal in finals of PN Fleet Club Squash Open



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Nasir Iqbal is through to the finals of the PN Fleet Club Squash Open 2026 at Karachi. Pakistan was represented by six players in the tournament including Noor Zaman, Muhammad Asim Khan, Muhammad Hamza Khan, Nasir Iqbal, Anas Khan and Saeed Abdul, said a press release. Nasir Iqbal is through to the finals of the PN Fleet Club Squash Open 2026. Noor Zaman and Muhammad Hamza Khan reached the quarterfinals. Saeed Abdul and Anas Khan lost in the 1st Round. Semifinal: Nasir Iqbal (PAK) beat Yassin Elshafei (EGY) 3-0 11-5, 11-7, 11-5 (24min); Salman Khalil (EGY) beat Muhammad Asim Khan (PAK) 3-1 11-7, 11-5, 7-11, 11-5 (57min).

PCF announces annual event calendar 2026-27

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The President of the Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF), Syed Azhar Ali Shah, has announced that the Pakistan Cycling Federation has released its annual event calendar for 2026-27. According to the calendar, the National Road Cycling Championship will be held in Karachi in October 2026. The championship will feature participation from all affiliated units of the Pakistan Cycling Federation.

Pakistan's taekwondo tiger Umar clinches Gold medal at Malaysia international championship



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's taekwondo athlete, Muhammad Umar, achieved gold medal by showing a distinguishing perfor-

mance at the Malaysia International Taekwondo Championship, held from July 31 to August 2, bringing laurels to the country. Representing success to Pakistan

Pakistan, Muhammad Umar defeated a South Korean opponent in his opening bout before overcoming Malaysia's athlete in the final to secure the championship title.

The victory adds to his growing list of international achievements. Muhammad Umar has previously represented Pakistan in international taekwondo events held in Qatar and Malaysia. He also secured first position at a tournament in Malaysia last year.

Pakistan's taekwondo tiger Umar clinches Gold medal at Malaysia international championship representing Pakistan with dedication and bringing more glory to the national flag.

He thanked Deputy Inspector General Larkana Range, Nasir Aftab for his continuous support, encouragement and patronage, saying it played a significant role in his success.

Muhammad Umar also expressed heartfelt gratitude to his parents, coaches, teammates, friends and well-wishers for their prayers and unwavering support, reaffirming his commitment to continue representing Pakistan with dedication and bringing more glory to the national flag.

Cristiano Ronaldo to marry Georgina Rodríguez on August 8 in Madeira



Babar Azam opens up on omission of Mohammad Abbas from second WI Test

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan captain Babar Azam said the decision to leave experienced fast bowler Mohammad Abbas out of the playing XI for the second and final Test against the West Indies was based solely on the playing conditions at Queen's Park Oval.

Abbas' omission came as the biggest surprise when Pakistan announced four changes for the series decider, despite the right-arm seamer being the visitors' standout performer in the opening Test.

The experienced pacer claimed eight wickets in the first Test, including the seventh five-wicket haul of his Test career, making his exclusion one of the most talked-about selection decisions.

Speaking to former West Indies captain Ian Bishop at the toss, Babar dismissed speculation that Abbas had picked up an injury and con-

firmed the move was purely tactical.

"It was down to conditions," Babar said, suggesting Pakistan opted for a bowling attack better suited to the slow surface in Port of Spain.

The visitors strengthened

returning to the Test side in December 2024. The 35-year-old has taken 28 wickets in five Tests at an average of 20.32, making him Pakistan's leading pace wicket-taker during that period.

Abbas has also proved



their spin department by bringing Sajid Khan into the side while handing a Test debut to young fast bowler Ubaid Shah. Mohammad Ali retained his place as the other specialist seamer.

Pakistan's decision raised eyebrows given Abbas' impressive record since

effective on slower pitches throughout his career.

In six Tests in the UAE, he has claimed 27 wickets at an outstanding average of 17.55, while he was Pakistan's leading wicket-taker during their recent Test series in Bangladesh with 10 scalps at 23.80.

Amazon Warriors defend GSL crown after historic low-score thriller





Drug threat in Educational Institutions sparks senate alarm as committee demands strong action against supply networks

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The growing spread of narcotics in educational institutions has raised serious concerns in Parliament. Lawmakers warned that disciplinary action against students alone cannot solve the problem and demanded a stronger crackdown against those supplying drugs on campuses. The National Assembly Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training stressed that educational institutions, law enforcement agencies and regulatory bodies must work together to create a safe and drug free environment for students. The committee said criminal networks supplying narcotics to students must be identified and punished through intelligence-based operations by the Anti Narcotics Force, police and educational authorities. The committee observed that simply taking action against students is not enough because the real challenge is stopping the supply chain

behind drug availability in educational institutions. Members emphasized that awareness campaigns, better monitoring systems and effective security measures are necessary to protect students from drug related harm. The issue was discussed during the 25th meeting of the committee held at Parliament House. Islamabad explained the acting chairmanship of Mahtab Akbar Rashdi, MNA. During the meeting, the committee also reviewed several important education sector matters, including vocational training, out of school children, nursing programmes and governance issues at Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology. The National Commission for Human Development informed the committee that a door to door campaign was launched in 36 Union Councils of Islamabad Capital Territory to identify children who are currently out of school. Officials informed the commit-

tee that around 26,000 out of school children were identified, while nearly 18,000 children had already enrolled in non-formal education programmes. The committee was informed that three tent schools were established in Jogi near Faizabad to provide education opportunities for children living in the settlement. Officials explained that students completing the non formal education programme and receiving required certification could later enter the formal education system. However, the committee raised concerns over the lack of a clear plan to ensure these children successfully move from non formal education into regular schools. Members directed authorities to develop a proper monitoring system to track students' progress and prevent children from leaving education again. The committee was also informed that NCHD programme workers are not daily wage employees. They are working on a voluntary basis and

receive a monthly stipend of Rs. 15,000 according to the Finance Division approved framework. The committee also questioned the NCLEX Nursing Training Programme and expressed concerns regarding the transparency of its implementation. Members questioned the selection process for the organisation involved in the programme, stating that the initiative was not publicly advertised and that the Institute of Contemporary Studies was selected without an open competitive process. The committee emphasized that programmes funded through public money must follow transparent procedures and provide equal opportunities to candidates from all regions of Pakistan. The committee decided to invite the Pakistan Nursing and Midwifery Council to the next meeting to review the programme design, accreditation and compliance with national nursing standards. NAVTTC officials defended the

programme, stating that the NCLEX Nursing Training Programme aims to improve the professional skills of Pakistani nurses and create opportunities for international employment. The committee also reviewed issues related to the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology. Members expressed dissatisfaction over continued delays in resolving the university's administrative and governance problems. The committee was informed that the Higher Education Commission had formed a new committee to examine previous inquiry findings and further review issues affecting the university. However, lawmakers questioned why another committee was created when recommendations from the earlier inquiry had still not been fully implemented. The committee said repeated formation of committees without practical action creates further delays and affects the academic environment of the

institution. The committee directed HEC to ensure that the newly formed committee completes its work within two months and submits a detailed report with clear recommendations and a timeline for implementation. The meeting also reviewed the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission's activities. Officials informed the committee that 4,000 square feet of land had been recovered from the Haza Institute out of a total 20,000 square feet previously allocated. The committee was informed that the institute aims to provide market based vocational training to Pakistani youth, especially to prepare skilled workers for employment opportunities in Saudi Arabia. NAVTTC officials said discussions are underway to revise the existing agreement to improve transparency, accountability and public interest safeguards.

Chehlum procession moves along traditional routes, DC reviews arrangements

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Deputy Commissioner Irfan Memon reviewed security, traffic and administrative arrangements for the Chehlum mourning procession, while all Assistant Commissioners provided individual briefings on preparations and route management. Authorities said real-time monitoring is being carried out through Safe City and CCTV cameras to ensure smooth movement of the procession and maintain public safety.

The Chehlum mourning procession in the federal capital continued along its traditional routes under a security plan put in place by the district administration and law enforcement agencies. Deputy Commissioner Irfan Memon visited various procession routes to assess on-ground arrangements and review measures taken for the event.

Opinion & Editorial

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Damage assessment

Malecha Lodhi

President Donald Trump's approval rating has hit an all-time low according to the latest Economist/YouGov poll. The survey found 62 per cent of Americans disapprove of the president's performance while 63pc say the country is headed in the wrong direction. These are Trump's worst numbers since he returned to the White House last year. The results align with findings of other polls, which show he has fallen out of favour with the majority of Americans. The slide isn't just about an unpopular war with Iran. Trump's management of the economy is also driving public discontent.

The first 18 months of the mercurial leader's second term have been defined by disruption at home and abroad. His 'America First' unilateralism has meant military strikes on multiple countries and upending of the global trading system. It reflects contempt for international law and other nations' sovereignty. For a president who promised to end wars, not start them, his record is the opposite. Trump assumed American power could browbeat other countries into compliance at no cost to the US. That was a miscalculation. His overreliance on force also failed to produce the results he wanted.

Trump may be extreme in his imperious, unilateralist ways but there is continuity with past US conduct in an important respect.

Throughout its history of dealing with other nations, the US has underestimated the power of nationalism and the resistance it would meet in trying to force its will on others. It found that in its interventions in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq, which entangled Washington in unwinnable wars, produced strategic blunders and doomed its military adventures. Today, it is finding that again in the war against Iran. Trump also doesn't seem to understand that the unipolar world long passed into history. In today's multipolar world, countries will not so easily bend to Washington's will. Indeed, the more Trump makes blusterous claims and tweets about how he has the power to get what he wants, the more it exposes his inability to secure his goals.

There is no shortage of commentary on Donald Trump's personality and record. Two of the latest books are worth noting. Regime Change by Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Swan and Betrayed: America didn't vote for this by Ira Shapiro and Anne Kim. Both cover the first year plus of Trump's second presidency and deliver stinging indictments of his performance. Betrayed is written by a broad coalition of distinguished bipartisan experts from among former government officials, lawyers, scholars and journalists. They are members of what is called the Common Sense Coalition. They chronicle the

damage Trump has done to his country and to America's standing in the world. This damage assessment is undertaken across multiple areas — economy, foreign policy, democracy and free speech, judiciary, voting system, education and climate. The book's main point is that Americans did not vote for what Trump is doing and the disorder he is producing. His abuses of power must be stopped and his team members held accountable if America's crisis is to end.

With his approval ratings having plunged Trump's conduct has hardened global attitudes towards the US.

Though brief the chapters are pointed. The one on a weaker America is especially sharp. It argues that Trump has fractured the foundations for global stability. His costly and impetuous military adventures without a strategy or respect for international law and his contempt for traditional allies have endangered US security. The authors describe an unchecked president dragging the country into multiple conflicts with scant regard for the fallout. The attack on Iran, they argue, lays bare the hallmarks of his foreign policy decision making — impulsiveness, prioritising force over diplomacy, failure to take rational decisions based on their likely impact and trashing the concerns of allies. They frame his National Security Strategy as a reversal of eight decades of US foreign policy.

Courtesy Tribune

More units: a panacea or a can of worms?

Ali Hassan Bangwar

Experiment. Experience. Fail. Rename. Repeat. This has been the recurring tale of the country since its inception. Every panacea tried proved to be a Pandora's box. The country has experienced totalitarianism, one-unit systems, coups, hybrid regimes, and now, authoritarian democracy - not because these systems promised inclusive prosperity, but because true democracy does. Therefore, the people have always backed the wrong horse. All this has rarely been without design. The power elite always artfully present the malady as a remedy, exonerate themselves of their wrongdoings, and strengthen their stakes. Predictably enough, the incumbent regime has made a diagnosis that goes beyond the real ailments.

Mohsin Naqvi's assertion of the system's collapse might have invoked hope; however, it is worrying for two reasons. First, the system is not collapsing yet. Second, the suggested remedy - more units - is actually a malignant disease. To him, both the system and governance have collapsed, and the way forward lies in creating more units. The ISPR has voiced the need to deliberate on this. One might wonder if the quagmire engulfing the country stems solely from a lack of administrative units, or if the true failure lies in never genuinely implementing essential pillars of governance - the constitution, democracy, transparency, accountability, the separation of powers, freedom of expression, free elections, education, equitable resources, and political harmony. Having exhausted all brute-force options, the ruling class is now floating a new experiment: creating more units to salvage its collapsing interests. For decades, the architects and abettors have sustained this system via coercion, false narratives, and the backing of political dynasties, courtier clergy, intelligentsia, a passive judiciary, and a courted media.

Courtesy Tribune

National Paigham-e-Aman Committee condemns Swat suicide attack, reaffirms united stand against terrorism



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Religious scholars and spiritual leaders representing all schools of thought under the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee have strongly condemned the suicide attack in Swat, describing it as a heinous act that stands in complete contradiction to the teachings of Islam.

In a joint statement, the committee expressed profound grief over

the tragic incident, praying for the elevation of the ranks of those who embraced martyrdom, the swift and complete recovery of the injured, and patience and fortitude for the bereaved families.

The statement was jointly issued by Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Mufti Abdul Rahim, Allama Arif Wahidi, Allama Syed Ziaullah Shah Bukhari, Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology Dr. Raghieb Hussain

Naeemi, Pir Nageeb-ur-Rehman, Dr. Asif Mir, Mufti Muhammad Karim Khan, Allama Taufiq Abbas, Allama Muhammad Hussain Akbar, Maulana Mufti Nauman Naeem, Maulana Hafiz Maqbool Ahmed, Maulana Zubair Faheem, Maulana Mufti Abdul Latif, Maulana Muhammad Yousaf Kashmiri, Maulana Zahid Mansoor, Maulana Anwar-ul-Haq, and Maulana Hafiz Muhammad Tariq Mahmood.

The scholars emphasized that Islam is a religion of peace, moderation, and compassion. They cited the Holy Quran, which states: "And do not kill yourselves" (Surah An-Nisa, 29), and the divine command: "Whoever kills a person—unless in retribution for murder or for spreading corruption in the land—it is as if he has killed all mankind" (Surah Al-Maidah, 32). They said the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) strongly condemned both suicide and the unlawful.

Ahsan launches national song, urges youth to lead Pakistan's transformation through 'Shaheen' spirit

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday launched the national song "Tu Shaheen Hai" under the URAAN Pakistan vision, urging the country's youth to embrace Allama Muhammad Iqbal's philosophy of Khudi (selfhood) and become agents of national transformation through knowledge, innovation, character and hope.

Addressing the launching ceremony of the song, organised to commemorate the birth anniversaries of the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and national poet Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the minister said true development was measured not by skyscrapers, roads or vehicles but by the quality of a nation's human resources. He said Pakistan had historically neglected investments in health, education and population welfare, resulting in poor social indicators compared with many coun-

tries.

Under the URAAN Pakistan vision, he said, these sectors had been elevated to the forefront of the national development agenda through institutional reforms, including the National Population Council and coordinated action under the National Economic Council.

Ahsan said Independence Day should not merely be celebrated as a historical event but should inspire the nation to strive for excellence in knowledge, character and national dignity. He described Allama Iqbal as the thinker who provided Pakistan with a complete philosophy of life, teaching that nations were built on character, vision and self-belief rather than geography or natural resources.

Referring to Iqbal's concept of Shaheen, the minister said the national song sought to reconnect the younger generation with the ideals of courage, self-confidence, freedom, perseverance and continuous progress. He urged young Pakistanis to become problem-solvers instead of critics.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, addresses the launch ceremony of a national Anthem commemorating Pakistan's 79th Independence Day and the 150th birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

BISP chief warns against smear campaign; announces new digital payment system

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Monday warned that spreading false allegations against the programme for political point-scoring is a criminal offence under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA).

The chairperson also announced that beneficiaries would soon be able to receive payments through a new digital wallet system, and directed officials to ensure the immediate resolution of pub-

lic complaints received during a live E-Katcheri at BISP Headquarters.

During the E-Katcheri, 37 callers from across the country shared their complaints and concerns over the telephone.

The chairperson instructed the relevant officers to accord top priority to all complaints, resolve them without delay and submit an immediate compliance report.

Addressing participants, Senator Rubina Khalid said President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz



Sharif had expressed full confidence in the performance, transparency and public service of BISP.

She said the programme is serving poor and deserving families across Pakistan

without any discrimination and helping low-income households meet their essential expenses.

She expressed concern over what she described as attempts by certain elements

Pakistan-Turkiye friendship based on brotherhood, mutual respect: Imran Shah

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Syed Imran Ahmad Shah Monday said Pakistan and Türkiye enjoyed an enduring friendship based on brotherhood, mutual respect and shared affection, and that cultural festivals played an important role in bringing the people of the two countries closer.

The minister made these remarks while speaking to the media during his visit to the Third Turkish Heritage Festival, organised by the Zakat Foundation of America in Chicago.

Earlier, Imran Shah visited various cultural and informational stalls at the festival and appreciated the organisers for successfully holding the event.

He praised the arrangements and said the festival reflected the



rich cultural heritage of Türkiye while promoting understanding among diverse communities.

He said it is an honour for him to represent Pakistan at the festival and expressed gratitude to the Zakat Foundation of America for inviting him to the event. The minister said the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and the Zakat Foundation of America shared a common commitment to poverty alleviation, adding that both institutions were working to improve the lives of vulnerable communities. He said the festival.

Governor Kundi, Ghulam Bilour discuss political situation, public issues

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday called on former federal minister and senior Awami National Party (ANP) leader Haji Ghulam Ahmad Bilour, during which they discussed the overall political situation in the country, public issues, promotion of democratic traditions and matters of mutual interest. Former Governor KP Shaukatullah Khan was also present during the meeting.

Governor Kundi paid tribute to Bilour's longstanding services to national politics, democracy and public welfare, saying that he had played a significant role in strengthening democratic values, safeguarding public rights and contributing to the development of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through



his long political struggle.

He said Bilour had remained committed throughout his political career to the philosophy of non-violence, peace, tolerance and public service espoused by Bacha Khan. The Governor said Bilour's efforts for promoting principled politics, tolerance, dialogue and public service were commendable, adding that his contribution to democratic values and national harmony would always be remembered. Governor Kundi also praised Bilour's welfare services, close association with the people.

Wildlife Rangers in Lahore recovered a live leopard

WAJIIHA TAMSEEL MIRZA

LAHORE: In a major operation, Wildlife Rangers in Lahore recovered a live leopard that was illegally kept. The operation was carried out on the basis of a tip-off and a court search warrant, while a case was also registered against the accused. On the instructions of ACWR Lahore Muhammad Waseem, Wildlife Rangers raided a breeding farm in Suay Asal area of Tehsil Model Town with a court search warrant after receiving a tip-off. During the operation, an illegally kept



leopard was recovered. Later, with the help of the Safari Zoo's veterinary team, the leopard was safely shifted to the Safari Zoo. A case has been registered against the accused at Kahna Police Station, while according to wildlife officials, further legal action is underway.

to damage the reputation of BISP for personal and political interests, emphasizing that the programme operates above political, religious, linguistic and regional affiliations and is solely dedicated to serving deserving citizens. The chairperson said derogatory remarks against the national institution and its more than 10 million beneficiary households are unacceptable and highly condemnable.

She warned that spreading baseless allegations, false information or attempting to undermine the credibility of

BISP for political gains constituted a criminal offence, adding that the programme had the authority to initiate legal proceedings under PECA.

Referring to a World Bank study, Senator Rubina Khalid said BISP had not only improved the socio-economic conditions of deserving beneficiaries but had also generated positive economic impacts for local shopkeepers, industries and the broader economy.

Highlighting the programme's upcoming digital payment system.