



Quaid's principles key to a strong Pakistan: Mushahid Hussain



Commerce Minister highlights Pakistan's strategic role in regional connectivity at belt, road summit



Aleem Khan represents Pakistan at funeral of Norway's King Harald V

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PM Shehbaz reaffirms commitment to eradicate polio in meeting with Gates Foundation delegation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said Pakistan was firmly committed to completely eradicating polio, as he met with a delegation from the Gates Foundation.

The delegation, which called on the prime minister, included Gates Foundation representatives Kalpana Kochhar and Anita Zaidi, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

The prime minister appreciated the Gates Foundation's continued support and partnership with Pakistan amid the country's developmental challenges. He said the National Polio Eradication Programme enjoyed patronage at the highest level, underscoring the government's resolve to eliminate the

crippling disease. PM Shehbaz said the Gates Foundation had played a commendable role in the fields of polio eradication, health, nutrition, financial inclusion, and the welfare of vulnerable segments of society.

He said key reform priorities including digital payments, food security, maternal and newborn health, poverty alleviation, and climate change were part of the government's governance reforms agenda. The prime minister noted that a cashless economy was a fundamental part of the government's transformation agenda, aimed at making life easier for ordinary citizens, enhancing transparency in government systems, and ensuring that public funds reached deserving segments of society without delay or wastage.



ISLAMABAD: High-level delegation of Gates Foundation calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

FO says Makkah defence pact 'defensive' in nature, expansion currently 'not on the cards'

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) said on Thursday that the Makkah Defence Alliance between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye was "defensive" in nature, adding

that expansion of the pact was currently "not on the cards". FO spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan made the remarks while addressing a weekly press briefing. He said that the pact was primarily a "defensive alliance to ensure regional security primarily through deterrence".

He said that expansion of the pact was currently "not on the cards", adding that "Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye must first further consolidate their organisation and cooperation". He said that following the consolidation, the agreement will be "open to all countries that share similar stances and perspectives". The spokesperson said that the three member states were holding consultations at various levels under the framework. He reiterated that the states will make a decision on the agreement's expansion at a later stage. "At this stage, there are no discussions regarding the expansion of the Makkah agreement," he said.

Saudi Arabia under fresh Houthi attack as Yemen fighting threatens to reignite

PEAK POINT



SAUDI ARABIA: The Houthis attacked the southern Saudi cities of Abha, Khamis Mushait and Jazan with ballistic missiles and drones on Wednesday, a Saudi-led coalition in Yemen said, marking the second consecutive day of Houthi attacks on the kingdom. The Iran-aligned Houthis

were continuing attacks on Saudi Arabia's national assets and infrastructure, coalition spokesperson Turki al-Malki said in a statement. Saudi Arabia's Civil Defence lifted alerts in Khamis Mushait and Abha on Wednesday, a day after Houthi attacks there and in two nearby cities wounded 73 people and set oil installations ablaze.

Al-Malki said the coalition would respond to the attacks "responsibly" to protect Saudi Arabia's sovereignty, national assets, and civilians.

Houthis struck an airbase in Khamis Mushait and oil infrastructure in nearby cities on Tuesday in one of the biggest attacks in Saudi Arabia since the start of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran in February. Fighting between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis has escalated in recent months, raising fears of a return to broader conflict after a UN-brokered truce in 2022 largely halted years of war. Saudi Arabia leads an Arab coalition that backs a government based in Yemen's south, which was driven from the capital Sanaa by the Houthis 12 years ago. The conflict has become a theatre in the wider regional war, with the Houthis close allies of Iran and Saudi Arabia an ally of the United States.

Iran war will end 'immediately' after US midterm elections: Trump

MAHPARA ZAMAN



WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said Wednesday he believes the Iran war will end "immediately" after the United States votes in midterm elections in November.

"I think the war will end immediately after the election" because Iran "can't hold out any longer," Trump told journalists, accusing Tehran of being "desperate to try and affect" the vote. Trump strongly defended the unpopular Iran war, predicting victory and linking it directly to lower oil prices -- before suggesting the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz should be renamed after him. "Food prices and almost every other item are rapidly going down. And by the way oil will be going down as soon as we win the war with Iran, which is taking place right now," Trump said. Trump also echoed other Republicans at the convention stirring up what he said was a wave of communism threatening the United States. "It's going to be a communist country if they win," he said. "Your vote will decide whether our country stumbles at the starting gate of the next 250 years or surges forward and never ever looks back," he said.

Detained PTI leader Hammad Azhar's mother, wife approach Lahore ATC over 'denial' of meetings

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: PTI leader Hammad Azhar's mother and wife on Thursday approached an anti-terrorism court (ATC) against the police for allegedly denying his family and lawyer access to him. Ishrat Azhar, the mother, and Mariam Hammad, the wife, filed a joint petition through their counsel, Abuzar Salman Niazi. The petition stated that police were not allowing Hammad's family members and lawyer to meet him even though a suspect in custody had the legal right to access his counsel and family. It contended that the police's action was contrary to law.

Pakistan receives much-needed LNG as Qatari cargo docks at Karachi port

PEAK POINT

Jordan. After a month of calm in sector, which is currently facing loadshedding of between



August, Iran and the US resumed exchanging fire in recent days, with Hormuz shipping traffic falling below the 10-day average.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards on Tuesday attacked two US vessels and eight oil tankers in the Gulf in response to the US attack on five Iranian tankers, Iranian state media reports.

The arrival of cargo is expected to provide temporary relief to Pakistan's power

LNG prices.

Meanwhile, Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) has cancelled a spot LNG tender floated on September 5, which was scheduled to be opened on September 8.

The latest Qatari shipment is particularly significant as it is reportedly the first Qatari LNG cargo to exit the Persian Gulf since tensions surrounding the Strait of Hormuz escalated in July. The worsening security situation had raised concerns over shipping disruptions and pushed up insurance costs for vessels navigating the strategic waterway. For Pakistan, the successful transit offers short-term comfort but does not remove the risks surrounding future LNG supplies. Any renewed disruption in the Strait of Hormuz could put pressure on Pakistan's energy security, LNG procurement costs and electricity generation.

ATC issues non-bailable arrest warrants for CM Afridi, eight PTI MNAs, MPAs



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad has issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi and eight other Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders in cases registered at the Ramna Police Station and Margalla Police Station.

The warrants were issued against KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, MPA Meena Khan, Shahid Khattak and MPA Shafi Jan, other PTI MNAs and MPAs. The court issued arrest warrants in Case No. 714, registered at Margalla Police Station. Anti-Terrorism Court Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra issued the arrest warrants. Arrest warrants were issued for MNAs Shahid Khattak, Maulana Naseem Ali Shah.



SPORTS



England dominate sorry Pakistan, close in on Test series sweep



PEAK POINT

BIRMINGHAM: Pakistan threatened to implode on Thursday as England moved to the brink of a crushing series whitewash with three days still remaining in a one-sided third Test at Edgbaston.

Joe Root's men have totally dominated the three-match series against the hapless tourists and did not relinquish their grip during a fast-paced second day in Birmingham. The home side raced to 453 at more than five runs an over in response to Pakistan's paltry first-innings total of 133 to make victory almost inevitable.

But worse was to come for the

much-changed visitors, who found themselves 0-2 after four balls of their second innings, with Saim Ayub and Abdullah Shafique back in the pavilion, both dismissed by Ollie Robinson.

That raised the embarrassing spectre of a two-day defeat for a side that is a pale shadow of the great Pakistan teams of the past.

But Azan Awaiss and the experienced Shan Masood ensured there were no more immediate dramas, steadying the ship to reach 52-2 after 12.4 overs as rain stopped play.

The delay proved brief but Pakistan had added just six runs to

their tally before the rain returned, forcing the players from the field as umbrellas shot up around the ground.

Earlier, England resumed their first innings at 156-4, which marked a significant recovery after they had been 39-3 on the opening day.

Their progress under sunny skies was checked when Harry Brook needlessly ran himself out for 75 when in sight of an 11th Test century, ending a fifth-wicket partnership of 86 with Dan Lawrence.

Lawrence reached 65 before he chopped a ball from Mohammad

Imran onto his stumps shortly before lunch to give the debutant his first Test wicket.

Imran struck again to remove Gus Atkinson for 19 and Jamie Smith's fluent knock ended with a whimper when he was caught and bowled for 69 by Razaullah, who celebrated his third wicket on his Test debut with gusto.

But Robinson kept up the momentum, hitting 50 off 47 balls, and Jofra Archer smashed a quick-fire 32 to heap more pain on Pakistan. Paceman Razaullah, 21, finished as the pick of the bowlers, with figures of 4-148 in his first Test.

Girls' hockey match marks Defence Day, honours martyrs



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Wednesday attended as chief guest the "Exhibition Hockey Game on Defence Day — Prime Minister's Youth 11 vs Islamabad Sports Board 11" at the Sports Complex, Islamabad, where an exhibition hockey match was organised through the joint efforts of the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) and Islamabad Hockey Association (IHA) to honour the sacrifices of Pakistan's martyrs and veterans and promote sports among the country's youth.

Speaking on the occasion, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan highlighted the importance of sports in developing discipline, teamwork, confidence and leadership qualities among young people. He said the government is committed to providing the country's youth with greater opportunities to participate in sports and showcase their talent at national and international levels.

He paid rich tribute to the martyrs and Ghazis of Pakistan, saying their unparalleled sacrifices would always remain a source of pride and inspiration for the nation.

He stressed that the younger generation should be made aware of the sacrifices rendered for the defence and security of the country.

Rs 5.7bn sports infrastructure package major milestone for successful SAG: Wani



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC) Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani on Thursday termed the approval of a Rs5.7 billion sports infrastructure package by the Central Development Planning

Commission and the Rs5.7 billion Federal Minister for Planning, is a major step forward for the successful hosting of the South Asian Games," the Secretary IPC said.

He said the comprehensive upgradation and development of sports facilities required for the regional multi-sport event.

Mohyuddin Wani expressed appreciation for the leadership and support extended by the Prime Minister and the Planning Commission for strengthening the Pakistan's sports infrastructure and said the substantial investment would help ensure that the country was fully prepared to host the South Games. "The approval of



HYDERABAD: Girls players vie for the ball during a netball match between Government Girls High School and Hayat Girls High School at the 5th PNF Netball Cup 2026, held at Hyderabad Club Badminton Hall.

PFF conducts injury prevention workshop for punjab coaches ahead of DFC 2026

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) has conducted the first session of its Injury Prevention and Management Workshop, with Punjab-based coaches taking part in the online session ahead of the District Football Championship (DFC) 2026. The free workshop forms part of PFF's preparations for DFC 2026 and its wider efforts, supported by the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF), to strengthen player welfare, safety and safeguarding at the grassroots and district levels. The session was led by Dr Adnan Mohammed, physiotherapist for Pakistan's national football team, who discussed the importance of injury prevention, its growing adoption across the global game, and practical measures coaches can use to reduce injury risks. A key focus was pre-competition assessment, a standard practice among lead-

ing clubs and football programmes worldwide. Dr Adnan explained how medical screening before competition can identify potential injuries or other physical concerns early, allowing players to begin appropriate rehabilitation



before taking the field. He also outlined how the same principles are applied at Pakistan's national team camps, where players undergo Pre-Competition Medical Assessment (PCMA) in line with FIFA's medical assessment framework. Any injury or medical concern identified during the process can then be

addressed through a rehabilitation programme to help ensure players are fit before competition begins. "Injury prevention is not simply about treating an injury after it happens. It is about identifying risks early and taking the right steps before a player enters competition," said Dr Adnan. "That is why the world's leading clubs and football programmes place such importance on this process, and it is important that our coaches understand how to apply these principles at their own level." The workshop also highlighted how structured assessment and risk management can support player health and long-term development. As the DFC begins in Punjab, the first session focused on coaches from the province. Further sessions will be held for coaches from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and AJK, followed by Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan, ensuring coaches across the country receive the same guidance.

Saud Shakeel says 'difficult conditions' contributing to Pakistan's batting woes



MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan batter Saud Shakeel believes the "difficult conditions" encountered by his side in England have contributed to their repeated batting col-

lapses, saying the amount of lateral movement on offer has made batting considerably harder than it appeared from the outside. Pakistan were bowled out for 133 in just 33.5 overs on the opening day of the third Test at Edgbaston on Wednesday, their fifth consecutive innings in the series in which they failed to reach 200. England finished the day on 156-4, taking a 23-run lead after the first two Tests," Saud Pakistan had briefly threatened a fightback look at the New Zealand series that took place here earlier this year and the pitches they played on, and then compare them with the two pitches we have played on, there has been a lot more lateral movement here.



PHA officers residencia row: 33 new plots proposed on green areas

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: A fresh dispute has emerged over the proposed creation of 33 additional residential plots or houses in the PHA Officers Residencia on Kurri Road which was a closed case in the year 2018 after interference by the Public Accounts Committee and Wafaqi Mohtasib decisions. The 588 allottees say they already paid more than Rs. 501.5 million to preserve the scheme's green areas in addition to the originally agreed cost of grey structure houses. The housing scheme was approved in 2006 and 2007 for senior government officers on a self financing basis, according to the available document. The project had an estimated cost of about Rs. 6 billion, and the houses were completed in 2020 and handed over to the allottees. The present dispute goes back to an earlier proposal for 40 additional plots on green areas. That proposal was taken up by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in 2018 after concerns were raised about changes to the approved layout. Following a site inspection, the committee directed that no changes

be made to the original CDA approved layout plan. The Federal Ombudsman later endorsed the PAC directions, while the PHA Foundation Board also accepted the position, according to the available record. After several years, PHA Foundation again moved the matter. On March 17, 2023, it sent a proposal to the CDA seeking an amendment to the original 2012 layout plan for the creation of 33 additional residential plots on green and open areas. The case remained pending at the CDA until August 2025. It was then followed up again, and a CDA letter dated August 11, 2025 asked for publication of public notices regarding the proposed additional plots. Residents say the new proposal affects land that had long been shown as green or open space in the approved plan. They argue that these areas were part of the basis on which people bought and occupied their houses. PHA Foundation has stated that about 19 percent of the total scheme area, covering around 727 kanals, has been allocated for green and open spaces, compared with the 15 percent minimum

requirement mentioned in the available record. Residents dispute the calculation. According to the residents, around 24 kanals consist of small and scattered pieces of land that cannot realistically be used as proper parks or meaningful community spaces. They also say around 10 kanals outside the boundary wall have been included in the calculation even though the land is occupied by local villagers and is not under the scheme's actual control and the allottees had paid for the said 10 kanals to CDA through PHA F. The residents further say that most of the existing green areas were developed through contributions made by the residents themselves. They argue that these spaces should remain available for the community and should not be replaced by additional houses. The proposed plots have also raised concerns among owners of corner houses and properties facing parks. The available record says residents who were allotted corner houses had paid 10 percent premium in 2010-11, while some original owners reportedly sold their houses at a much higher price because their houses

were facing green areas or had corner locations. Residents say new plots near these properties could change the character and openness of those locations. Environmental concerns are another part of the dispute. Residents say some of the proposed locations are close to natural drainage channels, rainwater nullahs and low lying areas. They fear that construction could affect the natural movement of rainwater during heavy monsoon rains and cloud-bursts. The available document also raises a question about whether a fresh environmental assessment or clearance had been obtained before such a major change to the approved layout plan. It appears that no fresh Environmental Impact Assessment or new environmental clearance has been submitted or shared with the revised layout plan. Residents are also concerned about the capacity of existing roads, sewerage, drainage and water supply systems. They say these services were designed around the population and density shown in the original approved layout and that 33 more houses could place additional pressure on the system. The dispute

is also linked to a financial contribution made by the allottees. According to the residents, 588 allottees paid more than Rs. 501.5 million during 2018 and 2019, in addition to the earlier cost of their houses, to protect and preserve the scheme's green areas. Residents say PHA Foundation had earlier considered allowing 40 additional plots in return for avoiding extra charges, while another proposal involved construction of high rise apartments on land reserved for a graveyard. They say both proposals were later dropped following the 2018 decisions of the Public Accounts Committee and the Federal Ombudsman. The residents now want the CDA to look at the proposed revision in the context of the original 2012 layout, the earlier decisions of the relevant forums, the actual availability of usable green space, drainage conditions and the capacity of existing public services. The available document records that residents have questioned whether a matter addressed several years ago should now be reopened in away that could affect community

open spaces, property values and the existing planning arrangement of the housing scheme. They have urged the CDA to carefully review the proposal before any change is approved. PHA Foundation was contacted for its official position. PHA F Director Fateh Khan said, "This is not my domain. It pertains to the Planning Wing." The Planning Wing Deputy Director, Mr Kashif, did not reply to the request for comment before filing the story. CDA was also contacted for its official position on the proposed revision, the original approved layout, earlier decisions and environmental and infrastructure concerns. The Media Department did not reply. CDA Director Ejaz ul Hassan said the land had been inserted at the expense of PHA, residents had objected and PHA had denied those objections. He said residents had now submitted their objections again to CDA and added that the questions raised could be sought from PHA, while CDA would follow its procedure and all relevant regulations.

Opinion & Editorial

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Power and impunity

There are few things more comotivo to the rule of law than the belief that power brings immunity. In Pakistan, people with money and influence can often exercise an authority far greater than that granted to them by the law. A recent confrontation involving a Karachi University professor shows how quickly an ordinary dispute can become an exercise in intimidation when one side believes it has the power to impose its will on the other. The professor had reportedly intervened after a delivery rider's vehicle was damaged in a minor collision. For speaking up for the common man, the professor himself was beaten — with scant regard for his rightful dignified status in society as a teacher. Several suspects have been arrested, while the main suspect named in the case remains at large. Such disputes that should be settled through ordinary legal channels can quickly turn into contests of influence. Fear has become one of the most effective tools of the powerful, and too often there is little to suggest that they have anything to fear from the state. This is how impunity works. For millions of Pakistanis, this imbalance is familiar. A poor driver confronted by an influential motorist, a tenant dealing with a powerful landlord, a labourer demanding his wages or an ordinary citizen challenging an official can all find themselves calculating the personal cost of insisting on their rights.

Message from Nepal

Ali Tauqeer Sheikh

THREE features of the catastrophic flood that tore through Nepal on Aug 16, 2026, do not fit Pakistan's mountain disaster strategy: it started without rains; it originated across the border; it had huge compounding factors. None of these three is a one-off. They describe a disaster category that has been forming across the region for over a decade, growing more frequent, widespread and severe. But Pakistan's climate planning has stayed focused almost entirely on the monsoon.

A mass of rock and glacier ice broke away from an altitude of about 5,200 metres in the upper mountain range, generating seismic energy equivalent to a 5.2-magnitude earthquake. The fall produced enough friction to melt the ice on the way down, turning a dry avalanche into a slurry of mud, ice and boulders moving at up to 167 kilometres an hour at a height of 9m. The debris choked the river and formed a dam. When that gave way, a second surge followed; both hit settlements and the hydropower works below.

It started above the cloud levels. Slopes at this altitude are held up by permafrost gluing the rock and glacial ice buttressing the valley walls. Warming removes both: thawing permafrost raises pore pressure and cuts shear strength, while retreating glaciers stop bracing the slopes from outside. The rock

fails on temperature's schedule, not the monsoon's, which is why Chamoli in Uttarakhand in India went down under clear skies in 2021 and Langtang followed five years later.

The record before both confirms a trend, not two isolated events. The 2015 avalanche off Langtang Lirung, the 2016 Gongbatongsha outburst crossing from the Tibet area into Nepal, and the 2024 Thame outburst in the Everest region struck without warning, each widening the geography of a hazard.

High-altitude disasters underscore the need for Pakistan to go beyond monsoon planning.

In Pakistan, the 2010 Attabad collapse dammed the Hunza River and submerged 24 kilometres of the Karakoram Highway. The Shisper Glacier's ice-dammed lake breached without rain in 2022 and destroyed the highway bridge at Hassanabad. Each event has moved higher in elevation, wider in geography, and heavier in what it destroys, from one buried village in 2015 to a cascading event spread over several kilometres.

Pakistan keeps no comparable dataset on its own landslide activity. But a study in the National Science Review, covering more than 8,000 landslides across the eastern Himalayas, found a five-fold increase in high-elevation slope failures over three decades, tracking a doubling

of Hindu Kush Himalaya glacier mass loss since 2000. Failures are also rising and entering the 5,000m-6,000m band that was once too frozen to fail.

The Langtang collapse struck Ghyrong Port, before the debris continued into Nepal's own river systems. The direction of travel is not new. Nearly half of the more than 25 major glacial lake outburst floods recorded in Nepal since the mid-20th century have originated across the same border, arriving from a stretch neither country monitors jointly. This event was not itself a Glor — no lake burst before the collapse — but the debris dam it left behind and the discharge that followed sit inside the same unmonitored corridor.

Pakistan belongs to the same geography, through the Kyagar Glacier's periodic surges in the Shaksam Valley. But China is not just Nepal's or Pakistan's upstream neighbour. It is South Asia's upper riparian. It is the source plateau for the Indus, the Sutlej and the Brahmaputra — the headwaters of most of South Asia's major rivers.

That makes bilateral arrangements structurally insufficient. What this event calls for is a South Asia-wide early warning architecture, built and shared across every state whose rivers begin on that plateau, not a patchwork of separate deals each covering one border and missing the rest.

Courtesy Tribune

When science learns to smile

Dr Intikhab Ulfat

Recently, while delivering a lecture at a science club, I found myself discussing something that does not usually appear in the conventional image of a science classroom: humour. We are accustomed to imagining science as a serious enterprise i.e. labs, equations, instruments, measurements and researchers wearing appropriately grave expressions. Humour, by contrast, is placed in the domain of entertainment and literature. Yet the two are not as distant as they appear.

Science begins with a question. Humour often does too. A scientist looks at an ordinary phenomenon and asks why it behaves as it does. A humorist looks at ordinary human behaviour and asks why we behave as though something absurd were perfectly normal. Both require observation, imagination and the willingness to challenge accepted assumptions. The relationship between scientific curiosity and humour was one of the central themes of my lecture.

Unfortunately, generations of students have been taught to associate intellectual seriousness with intellectual difficulty. Physics must appear frightening, chemistry complicated and mathematics almost deliberately unfriendly. The more incomprehensible the explanation, the more "scientific" it seems. This is a serious educational mistake.

Science itself is full of ideas stranger than fiction. Matter may behave as both particle and wave. Time is not absolute. Two quantum systems may display correlations across enormous distances. The atoms in our bodies originated in ancient stars. There is nothing inherently dull about such concepts; what often makes them dull is the manner in which we teach them. Humour can help.

Imagine teaching heat transfer by saying that heat, rather like certain government directives, tends to move from a higher level to a lower one. The student may smile, but the scientific principle is remembered.

Courtesy Tribune

Commerce Minister highlights Pakistan's strategic role in regional connectivity at belt, road summit



PEAK POINT

HONG KONG: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, addressing the 11th Belt and Road Summit in Hong Kong, reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and highlighted the country's growing role as a regional hub for trade, investment and connectivity.

The Minister said Pakistan takes immense pride in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is transforming the country's economic landscape through enhanced cooperation in infrastructure, energy and industrialisation, said a release issued here on Thursday. He said CPEC is positioning Pakistan as a major connectivity hub by linking landlocked Central Asia and Western China with

warm-water ports and international markets. "Pakistan is emerging as a vital bridge between West, Central and East Asia," Jam Kamal Khan said, highlighting expanding rail and road links with China and transit-trade arrangements with neighbouring Central Asian states.

He noted that these connections provide access to a vast regional market of approximately 1.5 billion people. Port reforms, digital customs systems and modern logistics are reducing costs and transit times, strengthening Pakistan's potential as an emerging transshipment hub. The Minister said regional cooperation is undergoing a structural transformation, moving beyond transport corridors towards integrated value chains. He stressed the importance of incorporating digital innovation, sustainability and skilled employment into regional trade architecture to ensure inclusive and people-centred prosperity. Highlighting Pakistan's improving,

Quaid's principles key to a strong Pakistan: Mushahid Hussain

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Renowned politician, Mushahid Hussain Syed has stressed the urgent need for Pakistan to reconnect with Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision, saying that adherence to constitutional supremacy, the rule of law, equality, social justice, human rights and education is vital to addressing the country's present challenges and securing a stronger, more democratic and prosperous future. Addressing a symposium on "Quaid-e-Azam's Vision and Present-Day Pakistan" at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), he said Quaid-e-Azam envisioned a sovereign, strong, democratic and prosperous Pakistan where the Constitution and law prevailed and every citizen enjoyed equality, dignity, human rights and religious freedom. Mushahid Hussain Syed

said that education, protection of human rights, empowerment and meaningful participation of women and the elimination of corruption must be made national priorities to translate Quaid-e-Azam's vision into reality.

He emphasized that Pakistan's strength, stability and progress depend on sincerely implementing the principles laid down by its founder. Speaking at the symposium, Prof. Dr Riaz Ahmad said that Quaid-e-Azam united the Muslims of the subcontinent and paved the way for the creation of an independent homeland.

Aleem Khan represents Pakistan at funeral of Norway's King Harald V

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan arrived in Oslo to represent Pakistan at the state funeral of King Harald V of Norway.

He attended the official funeral ceremony and conveyed condolences and sympathies on behalf of the President, Prime Minister and people of Pakistan to the Royal Family and people of Norway, said a press release received here on Thursday. On the occasion, the minister also met Norway's new King, King Haakon VIII and conveyed condolences and best wishes on behalf of Pakistan's leadership and people.

Aleem Khan represents Pakistan at funeral of Norway's King Harald V

During a condolence ceremony held at Oslo City Hall, Abdul Aleem Khan also held meeting with Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide, Finance Minister and former NATO Secretary

General Jens Stoltenberg, Minister of Culture Ms. Lubna Jaffery and Minister of International Development Asmund Aukrust. He expressed heartfelt sympathies and solidarity with the Norwegian leadership and people during this time of grief.

The meetings also provided an opportunity to discuss Pakistan-Norway bilateral relations, mutual cooperation and matters of common interest.

Among those who met Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan were State Secretary Andreas Motzfeldt Kravik and Mayor of Oslo Anne Lindboe. Discussions focused on Pakistan-Norway relations and ways to further enhance cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan and Norway enjoy longstanding friendly relations based on mutual respect, trust and cooperation.

Young population Pakistan's greatest asset: Syedaal

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Acting Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar has said Pakistan is fortunate to have a young population, with nearly 60 per cent of its people being youth. He described young people as the country's greatest asset and a source of hope for its future. Speaking as chief guest at the launch of a Transnational Education Partnership between the University of Lahore and the University of Plymouth, UK, at a local hotel on Thursday evening, he said investing in youth could lead Pakistan towards greater development and prosperity. He said providing young people with quality education, modern skills and access to global opportunities could promote development, prosperity and stability in Pakistan and the region. He congratulated both universities on the partnership, saying it would further strengthen academic and educational ties between Pakistan and the United Kingdom. He said such partnerships would enable Pakistani students to access world-class education, gain international exposure and acquire modern skills.

Pakistan, Gates Foundation agree to deepen cooperation in key development areas

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the Gates Foundation on Thursday agreed to deepen cooperation in human capital, health, financial inclusion and digital innovation, as Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held discussions with a high-level Foundation delegation. The delegation was led by Dr. Anita Zaidi, President, Gender Equality Division, along with Ms. Kalpana Kochhar, Interim President, Global Policy and Advocacy Division. They thoroughly discussed economic reforms, human capital development, health, financial inclusion, digital innovation and private-sector investment, with both sides agreeing to deepen cooperation in support of Pakistan's development

priorities. Ms. Kalpana Kochhar briefed the Finance Minister on the Gates Foundation's growing engagement in Pakistan in human capital, child and maternal health, nutrition and women's economic participation.

She highlighted a South Khyber Pakhtunkhwa programme combining cash transfers, nutrition support and livelihoods training, expected to benefit around 170,000 women and 450,000 children this year.

Active digital payment merchants rise to 2.03 mln: Kiyani

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The active merchants using digital payments in Pakistan have surged to 2.03 million from just 0.5 million, already exceeding the government's target of 2 million by June 2026. State Minister for Finance Bilal Azhar Kiyani said here Thursday. Talking to high-level delegation of Gates Foundation, the state minister attributed the rapid growth to measures aimed at encouraging digital payment adoption, including a PKR 3.5 billion government subsidy for Raast QR, which he said has helped drive wider adoption and behavioural change. The delegation comprising Dr Anita Zaidi, President of the Gender Equality Division and

Dr Kalpana Kochhar, Interim President of the Global Policy & Advocacy Division and other senior officials, called on minister to review progress on Pakistan's digital transformation agenda. Kiyani highlighted the progress on Cashless Pakistan initiative, launched under the Prime Minister's direct supervision, highlighting the rapid scale-up in digital payments and merchant adoption of Raast QR.



ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani is presenting an award to Asiya Jahangir, former provincial minister and leader of the Pakistan People's Party's Women's Wing on the sidelines of the 'Pakistan Women Leadership and Policy Summit 2026' seminar held at the ICCI.

The 5th European Film Festival returns to Pakistan-A celebration of stories, culture and connection

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The 5th European Film Festival (EUFF) returns to Pakistan this weekend, with events scheduled across Islamabad, Sialkot and Jamshoro/Hyderabad. The festival brings audiences together through European and Pakistani cinema, live performances, interactive experiences and cultural exchange. Presented by the European Union and curated by Olomopolo Media, the festival will feature European feature films, documentaries and experimental

shorts, alongside a curated selection of Pakistani short films. The program will also include live performances, a children's segment, interactive installations and an industry session for filmmakers. The European Film Festival was first held in Pakistan in 2021 and since then, the travelling festival has been held in Gilgit, Quetta, Peshawar, Gujrat, Faisalabad, Multan, Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad, with a focus on cultural exchange and dialogue through cinema. The 2026 edition will take place in Islamabad on



12 and 13 September at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). In addition to film screenings, the program will include a Stand-up Comedy & Improv

Showcase and a Children's Segment featuring a family-friendly European film with a storytelling and music session. The festival will then travel to Sialkot on 16 and

17 September, with events taking place at Government College Women University and GRID by BLCK, before concluding in Jamshoro/Hyderabad on 29 and 30 September at SABS University of Art, Design & Heritages. A live musical performance will form part of the closing program. Alongside the screenings, audiences will have access to immersive experiences which will be an integral part of this year's festival, with installations including EUFF-Pakistan Express - a train installation, Wall of

Fame, Human Slot Game alongside a Reading Nook and Kids' Corner. This year's program will also include the Filmmakers' Mixer, a new Industry Program session. The festival is aimed at young audiences, families, members of the film fraternity, film enthusiasts and diplomats. Its objectives include expanding cinematic experiences and conversations, using cinema as a means of connecting cultures, and creating spaces for collective activities and engagement.