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PM appreciates collective efforts as fuel sub'sidy beneficiaries cross 10m; announces national award for IT minister

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday appreciated the collective efforts of the federal and provincial governments and relevant institutions as the number of direct beneficiaries of the government's fuel subsidy scheme crossed 10 million, announcing a national award for the Information and Technology Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

Hosting a high tea to recognize ministers and government officials for their efforts in executing the landmark scheme and ensuring its transparent outreach, the prime minister said the government would also honor others with shields to acknowledge their dedication and sustained hard work.

He said the scheme had faced several challenges and concerns at the planning stage, but coordinated efforts by all stakeholders had helped it achieve significant progress.

The prime minister resolved that the programme would continue as the government had allocated Rs75 billion for the initiative.

The prime minister expressed gratitude to the provincial governments and their chief ministers for extending support to the initiative, and said its success would not have been possible without their cooperation. He said the number of people directly benefiting from the scheme had crossed 10 million, including motorcyclists, rickshaw and Qingqi operators, and owners of cars up to 800cc.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with a delegation of the Presidents/CEOs of high performing banks regarding Prime Minister's loan schemes for SMEs, Apna Ghar and Agriculture sector.

FO says Pakistan has 'substantial number of forces, resources' in Riyadh

PEAK POINT



up to the Makkah Defence Alliance to assess the threat in Saudi Arabia and make decisions accordingly.

The FO spokesperson remarks came in response to a query about the "active support" being offered by Pakistan to Saudi Arabia under the Makkah Defence Alliance amid an escalating conflict between the kingdom and Yemen-based Houthis.

The Makkah Defence Alliance is a tripartite arrangement that includes Turkey as well. It was signed on Aug 7 and aims to strengthen collective deterrence and empower its signatory states to treat an attack against one of them as an attack against all of them.

Speaking during a weekly briefing, the FO spokesperson recalled that a joint statement by the three members of the alliance was "very clear in stating that the three countries are united in ensuring deterrence and safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity.

DG ISPR says Pakistan acting as an 'honest broker' in US-Iran war

PEAK POINT



The military's spokesperson made the remarks in an interview with CNN correspondent Ivan Watson, who posted a small clip of the interview on his X account.

During the interview, Lt Gen Chaudhry was asked whether Pakistan can "still play a neutral role [in the US-Iran war] when Iran has targeted Saudi Arabia in the past, with the Makkah alliance, and now you have an Iranian ally — the Houthis — attacking Saudi Arabia". "Can Pakistan be a neutral broker?" Watson asked.

In response, Lt Gen Chaudhry said: "Pakistan has been exhibiting that we are a very honest broker... everything stems from honesty. We have been very clear on where Pakistan stands with all our partners".

He recalled that when the US-Iran war began, Pakistan had openly condemned Israeli attacks on Iran and also condemned Iran's retaliatory campaign in the Gulf.

"So we have been honest about that. We don't mince our words; we have a stake in regional peace and stability. We tell all that nobody benefits from expanding this war," he said.

Talks with Iran can only succeed without threats, president says

PEAK POINT



Friday, amid deadlocked efforts to end months of fighting in the Middle East.

Diplomatic efforts to end the seven-month conflict, which began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran in February, have been at an impasse since the summer.

The United States and Iran agreed a memorandum of understanding in June that spelled out a framework for ending the conflict, but Iranian attacks on ships in the Strait of Hormuz prompted a resumption of US military operations.

Recent indirect talks between Washington and Tehran on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly failed to produce a breakthrough.

"Dialogue holds meaning and a chance of success only when based on mutual respect and mutual commitments, and when devoid of pressure and threat," Pezeshkian said at a summit of the Commonwealth.

PIA temporarily suspends Riyadh flights, confirms PAA

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has temporarily suspended flights to Riyadh, the Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) confirmed, clarifying that other flight operations to Saudi Arabia continue as usual.

"Flight operations to Saudi Arabia are continuing as usual, PIA has temporarily suspended flights only to Riyadh," the PAA said in a statement. It also rejected speculation circulating on social media, saying such claims were "not true".

The clarification comes amid heightened concerns.

Pilot among 3 Saudi nationals killed in attacks on Riyadh airport, authorities say

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia's civil aviation authority said on Friday that three Saudi nationals were killed and several people were injured in two attacks on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh on Thursday.

In a statement on X, the General Authority of Civil Aviation said the first attack targeted airport facilities, while the second struck an aircraft belonging to Saudi state carrier Saudia.

The injuries ranged from minor to severe, and the attacks caused material damage, it said, adding that airport operations had resumed and air traffic had returned to normal. Separately, the kingdom's national carrier confirmed that a Saudia Airlines pilot

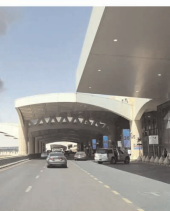
was killed, and an aircraft was damaged at Riyadh airport.



port. "It is with profound sadness that Saudia announces the passing of Captain Hamoud Ali Alkhalthami," the Saudi flag-carrier said in a statement, citing an "incident" at King Khalid International Airport. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) also temporarily suspended its flight

operations to Riyadh, citing the "situation in the

Middle East". PIA's decision follows



similar moves by several other airlines, including Lufthansa Group and three Indian carriers, which suspended flights to Riyadh on Thursday. A Lufthansa spokesperson told Reuters that the German group's airlines would suspend flights to the Saudi capital until October 16, citing "current developments in the Middle East".

India's largest airline, IndiGo, said it had can-

celled all flights to and from Riyadh until Oct 9. Air India and Akasa Air also told Reuters that they had cancelled flights to and from the Saudi capital until October 10.

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis said on Thursday they had attacked the airport with two cruise missiles.

The group also said it had targeted an airport in the southwestern city of Najran, a claim Saudi authorities have not confirmed, and an airbase in Khamis Mushait with ballistic missiles. The Houthis say they are targeting the kingdom over its support for government forces in Yemen's reigned civil war. Saudi Arabia says it is backing an offensive by Yemen's UN-recognised government to take back territory from the Houthis.

Security forces neutralise seven India-backed terrorists in NW IBO: sources



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Security forces have killed seven Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district, security sources said on Friday.

The IBO was carried out against India-backed militants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the Azm-e-Istehkam vision, with several hideouts also destroyed, they said. Weapons and ammunition were recovered from the militants during the operation, the security sources said. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif lauded the security forces for killing seven terrorists in North Waziristan. The latest operation comes a day after forces killed nine Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists.



SPORTS



First T20I: Farhan, Sadaqat power Pakistan to four-wicket win over Sri Lanka



MOHSIN ALI

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan defeated Sri Lanka by four wickets in the first T20I, with captain Sahibzada Farhan's 89 and Maaz Sadaqat's half-century powering the hosts to a successful chase of 183 at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday.

Chasing a target of 183 runs, Pakistan got off to a blistering start as openers Sahibzada Farhan and Fakhar Zaman smashed 54 runs in the first five overs.

With Pakistan at 54-1, Farhan was joined by Maaz Sadaqat after Fakhar (21 off 13 balls) was dismissed by Eshan Malinga. The

pair added 92 runs for the second wicket, with both batters scoring freely.

Sadaqat scored 50 off 29 balls, hitting three sixes and four fours before being trapped lbw by Maheesh Theekshana.

Sri Lanka struck back with three quick wickets as Pakistan slipped from 144-1 to 156-4 in the 16th over.

Hasan Nawaz and Saim Ayub failed to make an impact, falling to Dushmantha Chameera and Theekshana, respectively.

Farhan, who brought up his half-century off 33 balls, went on to score 89 off 53 deliveries, steer-

ing Pakistan towards victory in the 19th over. The skipper struck four sixes and 10 fours before being dismissed with just four runs needed.

Shadab Khan, who came in at number seven, was also dismissed before Khawaja Nafay and Mohammad Imran guided Pakistan to victory.

For Sri Lanka, Maheesh Theekshana and Eshan Malinga claimed two wickets each, while Dushmantha Chameera and Nuwan Thushara took one wicket apiece.

Pakistan took a 1-0 lead in the three-match T20I series, with the

remaining matches scheduled to be played at the same venue on October 11 and 13.

Earlier batting first after winning the toss, the visitors made a shaky start, losing two wickets for just 18 runs in the fourth over. Naseem Shah struck in the opening over, dismissing Kusal Mendis for just one run.

Kamil Mishara also fell cheaply, scoring six runs before debutant Muhammad Imran sent him back to the pavilion.

Opener Lahiru Udara and Kamindu Mendis then steadied the innings with a 60-run partnership for the third wicket.

NW's T20 tournament 2026-27 to commence in Faisalabad on today



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The five-team National Women's T20 Tournament 2026-27 will commence on Saturday, 10 October with Invincibles taking on Challengers in the opening match at the Bohranwali Ground in Faisalabad. On the same day, Conquerors will face Stars at the Jawad Club Ground in Faisalabad.

Both matches will begin at 10am, with the toss scheduled for 9.30am.

Strikers, the fifth team in the tournament, will play their opening match against Challengers at the Jawad Club Ground on Sunday, 11 October.

Defending champions Stars will continue to be led by leg-spinner Tuba Hassan, while last edition's runners-up Invincibles will be captained by right-handed opening batter Gull Feroza. Challengers will be led by middle-order batter Ayesha Zafar, while wicketkeeper-batter Muneeba Ali will captain Conquerors.

Pakistan women's team captain Fatima Sana will lead Strikers. A total of 75 players will feature in the tournament, with each of the five teams comprising a 15-member squad. Of these, six players are currently part of the Pakistan U19 squad participating.

Abbas Afridi to lead Pakistan at Hong Kong Sixes 2026



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday announced the squad for the Hong Kong Sixes, with Abbas Afridi named captain for the six-a-side tournament.

The tournament will be held at Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground in Hong Kong from October 30 to November 1. Pakistan

will depart for Hong Kong on October 28, sixth overall, by

Pakistan will compete alongside 11 other teams in the three-day tournament, featuring 12 sides in total.

The participating teams have been divided into four pools of three teams each, with Pakistan placed in Pool C. The tournament will be held at Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground in Hong Kong from October 30 to November 1. Pakistan

Group D.

The opening day will feature nine matches, with the first game between Australia and Hong Kong, China scheduled for 5:45am as per Pakistan Standard Time (PST), followed by Bangladesh's clash against Scotland at 6:40am.

Holders Pakistan will kick off their campaign against the UAE at 7:35am PST on Friday, October 30, before taking on arch-rivals India at 11:15am on the same day. The remaining group-stage fixtures will be completed on Saturday, October 31, with the first match between Oman and Afghanistan scheduled for 5:45am PST. The knockout stage of the Hong Kong.

Cricket teams of Pakistan and Sri Lanka stand at attention as their national anthems are played before the start of the T20 International cricket match between the two sides at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium



Bangladesh to replace Pakistan in Asian Hockey Champions Trophy

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Bangladesh have accepted an invitation from the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) to replace Pakistan in the Men's Asian Hockey Champions Trophy 2026, scheduled to be held in India from October 27 to November 5.

The AHF on Friday announced the revised schedule for the tournament without Pakistan following the country's decision to withdraw from the event after its request for a neutral venue was rejected.

The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) had formally approached the continental body, seeking either the relocation of the entire tournament or the staging of Pakistan's matches at a neutral venue, citing the sensitive bilateral situation between Pakistan and India and concerns over the safety and dignity of players and officials.

Hockey India and the AHF turned down the proposal, insisting that the tournament would be held as scheduled at the designated venues in Jalandhar and Mohali. Following the decision, the PHF informed the

China, Malaysia, South Korea and Bangladesh. All league-stage matches will be played at the Olympian Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium in Jalandhar from October 27 to November 2, with the opening ceremony also scheduled



AHF that Pakistan would not travel to India under the existing arrangements.

Bangladesh, named as one of the two reserve teams alongside Oman, were subsequently invited to fill the vacant slot and accepted the offer.

The revised six-team lineup comprises India, Japan,

at the venue.

The semi-finals will be held in Mohali on November 4, while the final is scheduled for November 5 at the Olympian Balbir Singh Senior International Hockey Stadium. Defending champions India, who won the title in Chennai in 2023 and Hulanbuir, China.

Pakistan announce squad for Hong Kong Sixes, Abbas Afridi to lead

PAKISTAN SQUAD FOR HONG KONG SIXES 2026

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Pakistan, Sweden explore enhanced investment cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Board of Investment (BOI) Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Friday said that the government was placing greater emphasis on value-added exports, industrial development and the removal of barriers to investment, with interest emerging from international investors, including Chinese and American companies.

The minister said this in a meeting with Alexandra Berg von Linde, Ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan and discussed strengthening bilateral economic relations, enhancing investment cooperation and exploring new opportunities for Swedish companies in Pakistan. Senior BOI officials, including Director General Abdul Samie and Asif Khan, along with other officials, attended the meeting, said a press release.

The minister underscored the longstanding and friendly relations between Pakistan and Sweden and acknowledged Sweden's strengths in education, governance, technology and innovation. He observed that the two



countries had considerable potential to expand their economic partnership, particularly by translating their longstanding ties into greater investment, technology transfer and business-to-business collaboration.

Pakistan was actively working to attract international investors and strengthen its position as an investment destination, he said and highlighted improvements in key eco-

nomic indicators, the country's external-sector position and sovereign credit assessments.

The minister identified agriculture, mining and minerals, information technology, digital services, engineering, manufacturing and other productive sectors as promising areas for Swedish investment. He particularly encouraged Swedish businesses to explore opportunities in sectors where Swedish

expertise could support Pakistan's economic transformation through technology transfer, innovation, modern production methods and sustainable industrial development.

Briefing the Ambassador on Pakistan's Special Economic Zones (SEZs), the minister outlined the incentives available to eligible investors under the applicable legal and policy framework, including income-tax exemptions extending up to 2035 and exemptions on import duties and taxes on eligible machinery, subject to the relevant conditions. He explained that these incentives, together with investment facilitation measures, were intended to support industrial development, attract new capital and encourage export-oriented production. Ambassador Alexandra Berg von Linde highlighted the longstanding connections between the two countries. She noted the presence of an active Pakistani diaspora in Sweden and the growing interest among Pakistani students in pursuing higher education there, providing further avenues for people-to-people contacts and institutional collaboration.

PNRA and IAEA conclude National Workshop on Commercial Grade Item Dedication for Nuclear Safety

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA), in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has successfully concluded a five-day National Workshop on Commercial Grade Item Dedication (CGD) for nuclear safety-related applications. The workshop was held at

PNRA headquarters, from Oct 05 to 09, 2026.

The workshop was organized by the National Institute of Safety and Security (NISAS), as it serves as an IAEA Collaboration Centre in the areas of nuclear safety and radiation protection. The workshop brought together regulatory staff, nuclear installation operators and other stakeholders involved



in the nuclear supply chain.

Commercial Grade Item Dedication is an important process used in the nuclear industry when a commercial-

ly manufactured item may be considered for a safety-related application. It involves identifying important safety characteristics and verifying

them through appropriate inspection, testing, analysis or other means to provide confidence that the item can perform its intended safety function safely and reliably.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Shahid Rashid, Member (Executive) PNRA, emphasized the importance of reliable and qualified equipment for the safe operation of nuclear installations. He stated that, "Factors such as

technological advancement, equipment obsolescence and the evolving global supply chain can affect the availability of specialized nuclear-grade components, and Commercial Grade Item Dedication provides an important mechanism for establishing confidence that commercially available items can meet the requirements for intended use in nuclear installations."

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New tranche

Pakistan pulled out all the stops to clinch its next \$1.2 billion IMF tranche under the combined \$7 billion EFF and \$1.4 billion RSF frameworks. The breakthrough comes as little surprise; the government has consistently walked the talk by stringently complying with the lender's directives. By prioritising macroeconomic stability, stabilising the energy sector and driving deep structural reforms, Islamabad has successfully kept its economic programme on track. This latest tranche brings cumulative inflows under the programme to \$5.7 billion, providing crucial breathing room as the government considers entering a subsequent programme next year.

The staff-level agreement is highly likely to receive approval from the IMF Executive Board, as Pakistan has met all its prior conditions. However, the discussions regarding the Article IV consultation proved delicate, as they directly tie into structural reforms aimed at transitioning the economy toward higher value-added activities. Looking ahead, Islamabad faces the steep challenge of enhancing competition, dismantling regulatory and trade barriers, accelerating privatisation and strengthening governance alongside anti-corruption institutions. The government's austerity drive has proven to be a facade, failing to provide any meaningful relief.

Frustration Is the Core Basis of Negativity

By RJ Shah Nawaz Khan

Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness."

Desmond Tutu Frustration is one of the quietest but most powerful forces that can change a person from within. It usually begins in small ways—an expectation that goes unmet, a dream that feels further away than before, effort that seems to lead nowhere, a life that refuses to move the way we want it to. When hope starts to fade, frustration slowly settles into the mind. Left unattended, it can grow into negativity, resentment, jealousy and a general numbness towards others. What starts as a private disappointment can, over time, shape the way a person sees life—and the people around them. A frustrated person often finds even small, everyday things irritating. The success of others, instead of inspiring them, can start to feel uncomfortable. Constant comparison breeds a sense of not being good enough, especially when someone begins to believe they are simply incapable of achieving anything worthwhile. At that point, another person's success can start to feel like a mirror reflecting one's own failures—and this is often where frustration quietly turns into jealousy. But it helps to remember something simple: someone else's achievement does not take anything away from ours, and someone else's happiness does not shrink our own. Frustration also breeds carelessness. When hope runs low, responsibilities can start to feel heavy, and the future can seem to matter less. A person may stop caring about consequences, relationships, even opportunities right in front



never be treated as the end of the story. As Confucius is widely quoted as saying, "Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." How we recover from a setback often matters far more than the setback itself. Prolonged frustration can also lead to emotional numbness. When someone becomes so wrapped up in their own disappointments that there is little room left for anyone else's feelings, compassion begins to fade. The ability to feel happy for someone else, to understand another person's pain, or to appreciate what someone else is going through, can slowly disappear. At this point, frustration is no longer just an inner struggle—it starts to spill into relationships and into how a person treats the world around them. Even so, frustration does not have to decide the direction of a person's life. It can also be a signal—a sign that something needs to change. A disappointed person needs hope. A struggling person needs encouragement. A person who has failed needs another chance to try again. Instead of letting disappointment turn into jealousy, we can turn it into determination. Instead of letting failure turn into despair, we can turn it into a lesson. As William James once observed, our greatest weapon against stress is the ability to choose one thought over another. We may not always control our circumstances, but how we respond to them is

almost always within our power. It also helps to remember the difference between our own struggles and other people's happiness. Someone else's success does not make us any less successful. Life is not a race where one person's win requires another person's loss—each of us is on a different path, moving at a different pace, growing at a different time. The moment we stop measuring ourselves against others and start focusing on our own growth, much of the frustration that feeds negativity begins to lose its grip. The real danger, then, is not frustration itself—it is frustration left unchecked. Left alone, disappointment can grow into negativity; negativity into resentment; resentment into jealousy; and jealousy, slowly, into a loss of inner peace. The answer is not to pretend frustration doesn't exist, but to understand where it comes from, to be honest about how we feel, and to choose, deliberately, a healthier way forward. Life makes no promise that every dream will come true, or that every effort will pay off right away. But every setback carries within it the seed of a new beginning. A closed door does not mean there are no other doors left to open. Often, the very experience that frustrates us today becomes the lesson that makes us stronger tomorrow. In the end, frustration may find its way into our lives—but it does not have to define who we become. We can let disappointment make us bitter, or we can let it make us wiser. We can grow jealous of someone else's light, or we can let it remind us that light is possible for us too. The choice is ours.

Public good and spaces

Faisal Bari

NINETY-FOUR per cent of youth had no access to a library, 93pc to a sports facility, and 78pc to a park. Ninety-seven per cent had never been to a live music event, 94pc to a sports event, and 97pc to the cinema. A whopping 71pc had no access to any of the above.

These figures are from a survey conducted for UNDP's Pakistan National Human Development Report 2017: Unleashing the potential of a young Pakistan, of which Dr Adil Najam and I were the lead authors. It was a national survey that highlighted a youth population with few opportunities for positive engagement outside their home.

Since 2017, the economy has not been doing well. We have not had any significant positive changes in national human development outcomes, and the impact of Covid and global slowdown has hardly been encouraging. So, one would expect that since conditions have not changed much, a similar survey carried out today would show numbers that are not very different from those reported then. I have been staying in London for the last couple of months. There is a large park about 400 metres away from our place. The park is managed by the local council (local government). It has a walking/jogging track running along its almost kilometre-long perimeter. The park has two multipurpose fields. I saw them being used as cricket fields in August and they were converted into football and rugby fields in September. There are three hard-surface tennis courts on one side. There is a children's play area with lots of structures to climb, swing from, and slide on. The play area is full most evenings. The park is utilised well. Hundreds of children, parents, and dogs visit it every day. Walkers, dog-walkers—most of whom pick up their pet's poop themselves—and joggers are there round the clock. The tennis courts, play area, and fields get busy in the afternoon after school on weekdays.

Courtesy Dawn

PPAF, PBM chiefs brief media on global poverty alleviation conference



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) Chief Executive Officer Nadir Gul Barech and Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) Managing Director Syed Imran Shah on Friday briefed media representatives at Pakistan Television (PTV) Headquarters about the two day International Conference on Inclusive and Resilient Economic Empowerment and Growth, scheduled for October 13-14 in Islamabad, where around 400 participants from 12 countries are expected to explore sustainable solutions to poverty, promote inclusive economic growth and strengthen livelihood resilience

through policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and cross sector collaboration.

PPAF, PBM chiefs brief media on global poverty alleviation conference Being held under the theme "Poverty to Prosperity", the two-day conference is being organised by PPAF in collaboration with the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, the Centre of Excellence for National Cohesion and Outreach, and Paigham-e-Pakistan ahead of the United Nations' International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on October 17.

Addressing the press conference, CEO Nadir Gul Barech said sustainable poverty alleviation required an integrated approach extending beyond short-term assistance to encompass social protection, skills development, productive assets, access to finance and stronger links with markets.

He said vulnerable households remained exposed to economic shocks, including floods, illness and income losses, making resilient liveli-

hoods essential to sustaining progress.

Outlining PPAF's development initiatives, Barech said the organisation operated in 157 districts through 164 partner organisations and had facilitated 3.69 million interest-free loans worth Rs149.61 billion since 2014, with a reported recovery rate of 98 per cent.

He added that PPAF-supported initiatives had contributed to the creation of more than 88,000 jobs, while 501,500 people had received skills and vocational training.

The organisation had also supported 35,290 community infrastructure schemes, benefiting approximately 17.57 million people. Speaking at the briefing, MD PBM briefed that the conference aligned with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's "Uraan Pakistan" vision of advancing public welfare and inclusive economic development, particularly for disadvantaged and economically vulnerable communities. He said the conference would provide a platform to assess progress in poverty.

Gilani highlights peace initiatives, regional priorities

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani actively advanced Pakistan's parliamentary diplomacy on the sidelines of the 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), engaging parliamentary leaders from across the world to strengthen international partnerships, articulate Pakistan's perspective on key regional and global developments, and promote dialogue as a means of resolving conflicts and fostering lasting peace.

Through a series of engagements with the Speaker of the Parliament of Australia, the Speaker of the Parliament of Tanzania, members of the Iranian parliamentary delegation and representatives from Cambodia, Uzbekistan, Uruguay, Bangladesh and other countries, Chairman Gilani exchanged views on bilateral relations, parliamentary cooperation and matters of regional and international importance.

Emphasizing the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in complementing traditional diplomatic channels, Gilani highlighted Pakistan's commitment to peace, dialogue

and constructive international engagement.

He underscored the importance of sustained diplomatic efforts, mutual respect and multilateral cooperation in preventing conflicts, addressing tensions and advancing peaceful solutions to regional and global challenges.

Chairman Senate also highlighted Pakistan's peacemaking efforts and stressed the need for the international community to pursue peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter and relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

He underscored the importance of a just and lasting resolution of the Palestine issue, in line with relevant United Nations resolutions, and reaffirmed the need for a peaceful settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. During his interactions, Gilani shared Pakistan's parliamentary perspective and priorities, while emphasising that sustained engagement among nations and their elected representatives.



Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani in a Group photo with Parliamentary delegation from Iran on the sidelines of the 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary union (IPU) held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania.

Finance Minister reviews progress on retailers' Tax Scheme, Emphasizes facilitation and Broadening of Tax Base

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chaired a meeting at the Finance Division to review progress on the retailers' tax scheme and discuss measures to facilitate registration and broaden the tax base. The meeting was attended by the Minister of State for Finance, Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), and senior FBR officials. The Finance Minister said the Government is

making efforts to simplify tax procedures and facilitate retailers in fulfilling their tax obligations. He emphasized that the scheme provides a simplified route for retailers to become part of the formal tax system and contribute to the country's economic development. The meeting reviewed progress on registrations and tax returns under the scheme, including the participation of existing taxpayers and the applicable requirements for tax payments. The Finance Minister emphasized the need to assess



implementation experience and address operational matters to make it a success. The meeting also discussed efforts to identify and map unregistered retailers through available data and relevant identification records. The FBR briefed the meeting on data validation and the need to ensure that registration

Dare and cross Swabi, Kundi challenges PTI long march participants

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi challenged PTI protesters on Friday to dare and cross Swabi, a KP district that borders Punjab's Attock and which the opposition party in the Centre has announced as the eventual destination of its long march.

The route plan for the march, being carried out to demand the release of jailed PTI founder Imran Khan, has undergone multiple changes since its launch on Oct 4. While the party initially vowed to march towards Islamabad, its final destination seemingly remains tentative as the KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi has yet to announce the plan for the trek beyond Swabi.

So far, the march has remained within KP, where the



PTI is in power.

The protesters were in Peshawar on Thursday and are expected to reach Charsadda today, as political temperatures between the PTI and the federal government remain high.

As tensions remained high, Kundi raised doubt on the realisation on the PTI's plan to reach Swabi on Oct 11.

"They are probably going to Charsadda today, then they might go to Mardan, and after that they might end up reaching Afghanistan through Dir," he said while addressing.

Lack of cooperation would be key reason if emergency is imposed in KP: Tariq Fazal

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhry has said that the government has dealt with PTI long marches before, and this long march will also be effectively neutralized as all arrangements it have been finalized to handle it.

Law and order situation is worsening in KP. If a state of emergency is imposed, it will not be linked to the long march. A lack of cooperation from the provincial government could become the reason for imposing an emergency.

Tariq Fazal Ch said PTI Secretary General states that he will not be part of any course of action that leads to the shedding of innocent blood. "I would point



out to him that the blood of our armed forces, police personnel, and unarmed civilians is indeed being shed. Measures are being taken to address this, and the perpetrators are being brought to justice".

He said that this was the very cooperation the federal government is seeking from the provincial government.

Tariq Fazal Ch, "Terrorism was not imposed upon you; rather, you imposed it yourselves".

Kamal stresses effective HIV/AIDS awareness campaign

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Health Syed Mustafa Kamal has emphasized the need for clear, accessible and effective public awareness material to educate people about HIV/AIDS, preventive measures and the importance of timely diagnosis.

The minister expressed these views during a meeting with representatives of Human Design Firm, where they discussed the development of awareness content, creative designs and communication strategies to strengthen public understanding of HIV/AIDS.

The meeting explored the use of innovative and creative com-



munication tools to convey messages about HIV/AIDS prevention, early detection and timely access to healthcare services.

Syed Mustafa Kamal stressed that awareness material for public health campaigns should be comprehensive, informative and easy to understand to ensure that essential health messages reach a wider audience effectively. He highlighted the importance.

records accurately reflect the businesses concerned. Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb emphasized a balanced approach combining taxpayer facilitation in targeted and well-documented way. Emphasizing the scheme's longer-term purpose, the Finance Minister noted that the Retailers' Tax Scheme should not be viewed as a one-year arrangement limited to 2026. It is intended to provide a simplified route for small retailers to enter and remain within the formal

tax system in the years ahead. The meeting further reviewed filing procedures, deadlines and related operational matters. The meeting reaffirmed the importance of making tax compliance simpler and more accessible for small retailers while progressively documenting economic activity and broadening the tax base. The Finance Minister emphasized that sustained progress would require effective facilitation and consistent approach.