



Finance Minister discusses economic progress and reform priorities with IMF deputy MD



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Achieving export targets essential to breaking dependency trap: Ahsan

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Thursday 15 October 2026 Jamadi-ul-Awwal 03, 1448 A.H VOL No: 06 Issue No. 221 Pages 4 Rs. 20

Timely loans provision for PM housing scheme, SMEs, agri sector, key for promoting economy: PM

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that timely provision of loans to the housing, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and agriculture sectors was essential for promoting the national economy.

Chairing a meeting regarding access to finance for Agriculture, Housing and SME sectors, the prime minister reviewed the provision of loans and access to financial resources for the Prime Minister's Aapna Ghar housing scheme, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the agriculture sector.

During the meeting, he encouraged banks actively participating in lending to these priority sectors to support national development

and progress.

He also directed banks whose performance remained unsatisfactory, to improve their performance to qualify for government encouragement and support.

The prime minister directed the relevant ministries, secretaries and the State Bank of Pakistan to consult stakeholders associated with the SME, agriculture and housing finance sectors.

He instructed the relevant authorities to seek proposals from stakeholders to make ongoing schemes more effective and result-oriented. "The consultation process should be completed by the end of the current month, with recommendations submitted accordingly."



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding access to finance for Agriculture, Housing and SME sectors.

CDF Asim resolves to deepen longstanding relations with Russia

PEAK POINT



RAWALPINDI: Vladimir Kolokol'tsev, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of

Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi. According to a press statement released by ISPR, a media wing of Pakistan Army, during the meeting, both sides discussed matters of mutual interest and the regional security environment, with particular emphasis on strengthening bilateral security cooperation. They underscored the importance of closer institutional linkages and improved coordination between the security institutions of Pakistan and Russia. COAS & CDF reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to deepen its longstanding relations with Russia and expand tangible cooperation in areas of shared interest, particularly in the security domain. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's contributions to regional peace and stability and acknowledged the professionalism and sacrifices of the Pakistan Armed Forces in the fight against terrorism.

National Assembly, Senate pass resolutions endorsing Centre's imposition of emergency in KP

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Shortly after the National Assembly passed a resolution endorsing the federal government's imposition of emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Wednesday, the Senate also gave its approval for the measure.

The Centre had imposed governor's rule and emergency in KP on Sunday, citing the provincial government's "deliberate disengagement" from the fight against terrorism.

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhry tabled the motions regarding the proclamation of emergency before both Houses.

The NA question hour session was suspended due to discussions on the emergency. The motion in the lower House of Parliament was adopted with a majority vote after a discussion opened by Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar.

"The National Assembly approves the Proclamation of Emergency issued by the President on the 11th October, 2026 in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under second proviso of clause (1) of Article 232 of the Constitution," read a post by NA's official X account.

According to Article 232, if the "president acts on his own, the proclamation of emergency shall be placed" before both Houses of the Parliament for approval by each House within 10 days. The proclamation of emergency is now pending approval by the Senate. Meanwhile, a proclamation for governor's rule issued under Article 234.

Khawaja Asif urges nation to stand with state, armed forces against terrorism

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Wednesday urged the nation to stand with the state and armed forces in the fight against terrorism, saying Pakistan's security and survival must take priority over political interests.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), saying the party should not ignore its past actions while criticising the government.

He said the armed forces were making sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the provincial government must fully support their efforts.

"Our relationship with Pakistan takes precedence over all other relationships," he said, adding that the country's security and survival were more important than political interests. Khawaja Asif said terrorists had killed innocent people, including children, and stressed that all political parties must unite to defeat them.

KP police administrative staff not entitled to risk allowance, rules FCC

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) ruled on Wednesday that the administrative staff of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police were not entitled to risk allowance. The judgement was issued by a two-member bench headed by Justice Aamer Farooq and including Justice Syed Arshad Hussain Shah. In its ruling, the bench set aside an April 10, 2025 order of the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) Mingora Bench (Dar-ul-Qaza), Swat, which had granted the police force's administrative/ministerial.

Houthis vow more attacks on Saudi airports, oil facilities after claiming they targeted Aramco

PEAK POINT

SAUDI ARABIA: Yemen's Houthi rebels said on Wednesday they had targeted facilities belonging to Saudi Aramco, after Saudi officials reported a strike on a building in an area in Riyadh housing the energy giant's operations centre.

Powerful explosions meanwhile rattled the Saudi capital, as the coalition fighting the Houthis said it had intercepted a missile fired by the group towards Riyadh. Saudi Arabia, the world's top crude oil exporter, has in recent days come under sustained attack in a dramatic escalation in the war with the Houthis. It has hit back with strikes against the group's stronghold in the Yemeni capital Sanaa, which for years has been under their grip. Yahya

Saree, Houthi military spokesman, said their a Saudi energy ministry



forces had conducted "a high-quality military operation targeting Aramco in Dhahran" as well as strikes targeting Riyadh airport and a refinery in the capital. "This was carried out using a large number of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and drones," he said, adding that "operations toward Saudi depths will continue in the coming days, targeting Saudi enemy airports

official said a building belonging to Aramco in Dhahran was struck, resulting in a "limited fire" but "no casualties or fatalities".

Dhahran is home to Aramco's headquarters, a vast complex comprising numerous buildings and residential compounds.

"We heard an explosion" blasts were heard on Wednesday, AFP journalists in Riyadh reported, as

messages were received on phones warning of an "aerial threat" and urging people to take shelter.

The alert was lifted a few minutes later.

Most strikes on Saudi Arabia have targeted infrastructure on the outskirts of the capital, but the barrages appear to be getting closer to the city centre. In the city's downtown, residents have been seen parking their cars to stop and look up at the sky, an AFP journalist said. On Tuesday night, the white plumes of air defence missiles could be seen streaking across the sky followed by explosions. While walking down a major avenue, a witness told AFP he "saw a projectile cutting across the sky" above a mall, saying it left "a yellowish trail of light followed by a trail of smoke."

Security forces neutralise five terrorists in Balochistan's Washuk operation



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Security forces killed five terrorists while four others were injured during an operation in the Palantak area of Washuk district in Balochistan, security sources said on Wednesday. According to the sources, security forces targeted militant hideouts with modern weapons during the operation. The killed militants were involved in looting the public and spreading fear and panic in the area, security sources said, adding that modern weapons and ammunition were recovered from those killed.

The operation comes amid intensified counterterrorism operations by security forces and law enforcement agencies across Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). On October 7, security forces conducted.



SPORTS



Kusal Mendis steers Sri Lanka to consolation win as Pakistan seal series



MOHSIN ALI

RAWALPINDI: Sahibzada Farhan struck his third consecutive half-century of the series, but an unbeaten 87 from Sri Lankan captain Kusal Mendis powered the visitors to an eight-wicket victory in the third and final T20I at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. Despite the defeat, Pakistan secured the three-match series 2-1. Pakistan had won the opening match by four wickets on October 9 before registering an emphatic 82-run victory in the second encounter on October 11. Sri Lanka avoided a series whitewash with a commanding performance in the final match, chasing down a tar-

get of 169 in 17.1 overs. Batting first, Pakistan posted 168-8 in their allotted 20 overs, with captain Farhan leading the way through a fluent 76 off 47 balls, including seven fours and three sixes. Arafat Minhas provided valuable late-order support with an unbeaten 34 off 20 deliveries, striking two fours and two sixes.

Pakistan made a brisk start, but Eshan Malinga dismissed Fakhar Zaman (12) and Maaz Sadaqat (0) in the fourth over to leave the hosts at 34-2. Farhan and Hasan Nawaz then added 33 runs for the third wicket before Hasan departed for 16. Sri Lanka tightened their grip through

Dasun Shanaka, who removed Khawaja Nafay (3), Mohammad Imran (6) and Abdul Samad (15) to reduce Pakistan to 102-6. Farhan and Minhas responded with a crucial 66-run partnership for the seventh wicket, restoring momentum and lifting Pakistan to a competitive total. Farhan fell on the penultimate delivery, while Minhas remained unbeaten. Shanaka claimed 3-21, while Malinga and Nuwan Thushara took two wickets apiece. Sri Lanka's chase suffered an early setback when Mohammad Imran dismissed Lahiru Udara for one. However, Farhan's opposite number Kusal joined Sineth

Jayawardena to rebuild the innings through a 59-run second-wicket stand. Jayawardena scored 38 off 26 balls, featuring five fours and two sixes, before Arafat Minhas broke the partnership. Kusal and Kamindu Mendis subsequently took control, adding an unbeaten 98 runs for the third wicket to complete the chase comfortably. Kusal finished with 87 not out off 48 balls, striking nine fours and four sixes, while Kamindu contributed an unbeaten 40 off 27 deliveries. Pakistan and Sri Lanka will now turn their attention to the ODI tri-series, featuring England, which begins in Rawalpindi on October 18.

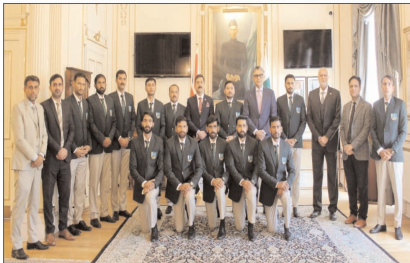
Pakistan Hockey League 2027 launched



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday launched Pakistan Hockey League (PHL) at a ceremony in Islamabad in a bid to revive the country's national sport. Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) said that it is a joint initiative of the federation and Media Cast, designed to bring together international players, Pakistani talent, corporate sponsors and team owners under a professional competition structure. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme and chief guest at the launch ceremony, reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting hockey's revival and encouraging investment in the sport. He welcomed efforts to bring the government, private sector and hockey community together, expressing confidence that the league and other development initiatives would help restore Pakistan's standing in international hockey. Khan said the government would continue to support initiatives aimed at developing the sport, nurturing young talent and creating new opportunities for Pakistani players. PHF President Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani said the federation was committed to sustained reforms, investment and institutional development to strengthen the sport's foundations.

Pakistan Army team wins silver at exercise cambrian patrol 2026



PEAK POINT

LONDON: High Commissioner of Pakistan to UK, Tipu Usman on Wednesday hosted Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026 Silver Medal winning team of Pakistan Army at the High Commission.

The High Commission dis-

cussed their experience of the exercise and congratulated them on their achievement, according to a press statement issued by the Pakistan High Commission in London.

The Exercise Cambrian Patrol was consisted of one officer and seven soldiers, and earned

a Silver Medal.

The result adds to Pakistan Army's consistent record at the event. Its teams won Silver in 2022 and 2023, followed by Gold in 2024 and 2025. With this year's Silver, Pakistan has now medalled in five consecutive years.

The visit to the High Commission gave the team a chance to share their experience with mission staff and to be recognised for their efforts. Their performance reflects the professionalism and fitness of Pakistan Army personnel and adds to the country's standing in international military engagement.

Ciotte, Laskutova advance at Islamabad W-15 tournament



Dragon Boat Associations established in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

PEAK POINT

PSHAWAR/LAHORE: Dragon boat associations have been established in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, marking a step towards organising and promoting the sport across Pakistan. Prominent political and social figure Ameer Bahadur Khan Hoti will serve as president of the Punjab Dragon Boat Association (PDBA), while a notification has been issued confirming the election of former bureaucrat Javed Marwat as president of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dragon Boat Association (KPDDBA). At a meeting in Lahore, prominent sports journalist Muhammad Yousuf was elected secretary general of the Punjab association. Uzma Zaidi will serve as senior vice president and Naveed Akhtar Malik as treasurer. At a separate meeting in Peshawar, Javed Marwat, who previously held several

senior administrative positions in the province, was unanimously elected president of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa association, while renowned sports organiser Naeem Gul was elected secretary general. Shamim

needed to establish a Pakistan Dragon Boat Federation to coordinate training, organise competitions and support athletes. Dragon boat associations would be established in all four provinces and the federal capital, Islamabad, before



Akhtar Jadoon will serve as senior vice president, Junaid Khan vice president and Bilal Aslam as treasurer. Newly elected Punjab association president Ameer Bahadur Khan Hoti said Pakistan's first dragon boat festival and competitions on the Kabul River had opened new avenues for the sport's development. He said the enthusiasm shown by participants and the sport's promising prospects had highlighted the

the formal announcement of the national federation, he added. Newly elected Khyber Pakhtunkhwa association president Javed Marwat said efforts would focus on introducing the sport at the provincial level and providing athletes with opportunities to compete nationally and demonstrate their abilities. Teams would also be sent to represent Pakistan in international competitions.

Top Pakistan Open fighters set sights on gold at World Championship





Provinces still await equal Oil and Gas rights 16 years After 18th Amendment

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Functional Committee on Devolution has expressed serious concern over the lack of a clear system to ensure provincial representation in federal government jobs and to give provinces their promised role in the joint management of oil and gas resources, even after 16 years of the 18th Constitutional Amendment. The committee questioned why Sindh and Balochistan continued to face low representation in federal services despite earlier directions to ministries and the Federal Public Service Commission to fill vacant posts from these provinces on a priority basis. It also issued show cause notices to provincial energy secretaries and the Federal Public Service Commission over their absence from the meeting and warned that strict action could follow. The committee, chaired by Senator Zamir Hussain Ghumro, directed the Establishment Division to prepare a proper mechanism for protecting provincial control of natural

resources. Members reviewed compliance reports submitted by federal divisions and the Federal Public Service Commission in response to directions issued by the Establishment Division. The chairman said special meetings had already been held to address the issue, yet representation from provinces, particularly Balochistan, remained very low at senior levels across the 38 divisions of the federal government. The committee stressed that recruitment and promotions must follow constitutional requirements and be based on merit and fair representation across federal ministries, departments, corporations and statutory bodies. The Secretary Establishment Division assured the committee that the constitutional provisions would be followed. He said all employees drawing salaries from the Government of Pakistan fell within the framework governing provincial representation and that the shares of provinces, particularly Balochistan, would be calculated so

that jobs could be provided accordingly. However, Senator Zamir Hussain Ghumro said the Establishment Division had already sent letters to all ministries, divisions and the Federal Public Service Commission to fill posts allocated to Sindh and Balochistan on a priority basis because of their weak representation. He regretted that the required compliance reports had not been submitted. The committee constituted a subcommittee to examine provincial representation in federal services across all grades, including jobs in corporations, institutions and statutory bodies. It directed the Establishment Division to prepare a system covering all forms of appointments, including promotions, and report back within two weeks. Members also expressed concern over the absence of Federal Public Service Commission representatives, saying the commission had an important role in recruitment and therefore needed to explain the steps being taken to protect provincial shares. The committee then examined

the implementation of Article 172(3), which concerns the joint and equal control of the federal government and provinces over oil and natural gas resources. Senator Ghumro expressed concern over the absence of the Secretary Petroleum Division and the lack of a complete operating framework for sharing control and benefits from these resources. Members said repeated referrals of the issue to the Council of Common Interests had not produced the concrete progress expected under the constitutional provision. The committee directed the Petroleum Division to consult all relevant provincial stakeholders and prepare a practical mechanism for joint and equal control of oil and gas resources within 15 days. During the discussion, the committee said the provinces could be given half of the profits earned by oil and gas companies or be handed control of half of the oil and gas wellheads. The options were raised as possible ways to give practical effect to the

constitutional principle of equal provincial and federal control. The committee called for a clear proposal rather than further procedural delays. The committee also discussed the financial effects of devolved subjects and the 7th National Finance Commission Award, while reviewing the financial pressures faced by the federal and provincial governments. Senator Ghumro expressed concern that federal expenditure stood at around Rs19 trillion while the country's total tax and non tax revenue was approximately Rs20 trillion. He said the figures should concern policymakers and called for a substantial reduction in government spending. The committee said parliamentary oversight was necessary to ensure that constitutional provisions were implemented and provincial rights were protected. It stressed that provinces must take their responsibilities seriously in seeking representation in federal services and their rightful role in the management of oil and gas resources.

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K-P's terror surge

Terrorist incidents in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa surged by almost 200% between March 2024 and September 2026, with police and security personnel targeted in 73% of attacks recorded this year. One of the most concerning findings in the government security reports recently shared with the federal cabinet was that terrorist drone attacks more than doubled in the past year, reaching 170 in 2026.

The federal government and security forces responded to the security situation with increased intelligence-based operations, eliminating hundreds of terrorists and disrupting militant networks across K-P. If only all parts of the government were working together, the results might have been even better. Unfortunately, the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government, especially its top leadership, has been preoccupied with political activity and rallies in other parts of the country, rather than governing. Even late in the game, when the federal cabinet was considering emergency measures, the provincial government seemed more focused on planning rallies. Even the security reports explicitly blamed the K-P government's "flawed policies and its soft approach towards militants" for enabling terrorist elements to establish a foothold. More than 9,000 police posts remain vacant.

A perfect storm

SOME statements by the ruling party leaders hailing the decision to impose a state of emergency and governor's rule in KP bring to mind the words of a political leader following the military operation in East Pakistan in 1971: "Thank God, Pakistan is saved." In fact, that action led to the separation of the eastern wing. Indeed, comparing the two situations may not be correct. Still, such reckless action against a provincial government that holds a two-thirds majority in the assembly could provoke a combustible environment, further destabilising a country that is facing multiple challenges on both the internal and external fronts.

For some time, it had been apparent that the hybrid set-up had opted for what is sometimes described as the 'nuclear option', as tensions between Islamabad and Peshawar heightened over the PTI's threat to march on Islamabad. The capital was sealed off with containers, and the highways leading to the city were blocked. Hopes of ending the stand-off arose earlier this month when the government and the opposition agreed to talk. But even a marathon meeting and back-channel contacts failed to break the stalemate.

Despite the blame game, it was clear the powers that be were not prepared to agree to the PTI's major demand — a meeting with Imran Khan — or to implement the orders of

the Islamabad High Court and the Supreme Court. While the differences were purely political, the government maintained that the talks broke down over the PTI provincial government's refusal to cooperate on counterterrorism operations. Some federal ministers declared the PTI government to be an extension of the TTP. The PTI and the provincial government indeed have no clear view regarding the rising cases of terrorism in the province. Still, the party was willing to cooperate provided it was allowed to give its input in any policy. None of it was beyond resolution once the political issues were settled.

According to Maulana Fazlur Rahman, who was asked to mediate at the last moment, the PTI was ready to call off its protest march if the government allowed it a meeting with its detained leader. But before his shuttle diplomacy could reach any conclusion, the government imposed a state of emergency in KP, shutting the door on any political solution. The talks seem to have been a mere cover for the crack-down. The protest march that paralysed the province, along with defiant speeches by a novice chief minister, gave the centre justification for the extreme action it took. Without a popular political base, it will not be easy to run a volatile region. In fact, the province was already under unannounced governor's rule before the formal announcement. While the chief minis-

ter led the protest march, the chief secretary and police chief took orders from the governor and Islamabad. Some KP cabinet members and legislators were picked up without the provincial government's permission.

The governor now rules the province, and an indefinite state of emergency has been declared. The provincial government is dissolved, and the non-functional chief minister, Sohail Afridi, and some of his cabinet colleagues have been detained. Indications are that Afridi and some other local PTI leaders could be tried for their alleged involvement in the May 9 attacks and disqualified. Meanwhile, an 11-member advisory council, comprising mostly technocrats, has been installed to run the administration, overseen by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar. But the real power, though, lies with the establishment.

This isn't the first time an elected provincial government has been sent packing. Still, such sweeping action against a government that enjoyed a two-thirds majority in the assembly has not been seen in recent history. Without a popular political base, it will not be easy to run the administration of a highly volatile region in the midst of resurgent terrorism and a hostile border. There may have been no immediate public reaction to the government's removal and the crackdown on its leaders, but the tension is palpable.

Courtesy Dawn

Elite suction machine

Naem Sadiq

It was an arduous task ploughing through the tundra and at places questionable list of names selected for the national awards this year. Absent from this list was the name of the person who deserved this award the most — Espen Barth Eide, the Norwegian Foreign Minister. He taught us how to disembark from a commercial flight (and not a Gulfstream), walk down the passenger boarding bridge, carry our own luggage and not have an entourage of a dozen friends and family members. This event happened at about the same time when two government officials were being royally chauffeured in a four-horse-drawn buggy, escorted by seven minions — four mounted on horseback, two holding an umbrella and one serving as a hanger-on. Perhaps history will remember this as one of the most decadent and disgusting visuals of coloniality. Whether it is a victory in war, a diplomatic triumph, a pact with another country, a national day or simply receiving a foreign dignitary, restraint quickly gives way to vicious extravagance, wastefulness and frenzy. Ceremonies and medals proliferate, banners and hoardings multiply and billboards and bunting mushroom. Simplicity, modesty, austerity, dignity and humility are tossed overboard. The gates of the dwindling state treasury are flung wide open, and the taxpayers' money is brutally squandered — for media campaigns, immodest personal publicity and unabashed self-projection. The ruling elite of Pakistan has invented a rare and rapacious machinery that relentlessly pulverises the poor and sucks out every morsel from their meagre existence. Called the 'Elite Suction Machine' (ESM), it must not be mistaken for the real suction machines that remain idly parked as show pieces in our sewerage departments: machines whose dormancy sends 100 sanitation workers to their deaths in raw sewage gutters every year. On the contrary, the ESM is at work 24/7, constantly inventing fresh opportunities to plunder resources from the poor and diverting them to the already privileged.

Courtesy Tribune

Finance Minister discusses economic progress and reform priorities with IMF deputy MD



PEAK POINT

BANGKOK: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, met with IMF Deputy Managing Director Nigel Clarke on the sidelines of the World Bank Group-IMF Annual Meetings 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand, to discuss Pakistan's economic progress and reform priorities.

The Finance Minister appreciated the Fund's partnership and emphasized strong political ownership and sustained implementation of reforms. He highlighted Pakistan's return to international capital markets and robust investor participation. He out-

lined targeted fuel subsidies to protect vulnerable groups and preserve social cohesion.

The Finance Minister further highlighted stronger reserves, three consecutive years of primary surpluses and a declining debt-to-GDP ratio. Discussions covered sustainable growth, policy consistency and safeguarding health and education spending alongside fiscal discipline. The Finance Minister also noted Mr. Clarke's emphasis on adequate reserve buffers and stronger revenues to support investment in human capital, infrastructure and public services.

Earlier, Federal Minister for

Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, met with AIIB President Ms. Zou Jiayi on the sidelines of the World Bank Group-IMF Annual Meetings 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand, to discuss infrastructure financing and economic resilience.

He identified power transmission and railway modernization as priorities, with AIIB targeting transmission project approval before year-end.

Discussions also covered the ML-1's Karachi-Rohri section and possible cofinancing with ADB or parallel financing for other sections. The Finance Minister emphasized a multi-year lending programme, timely project execution and greater private sector participation through public-private partnerships. The meeting also explored emergency budget support to address energy and food security pressures, and potential climate-focused policy financing.

The Finance Minister appreciated AIIB's Panda bond guarantee support and outlined financing diversification, longer maturities.

Pakistan, Oman reaffirm commitment to strengthen multi-sphere ties, including trade, connectivity

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Oman on Wednesday reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen bilateral cooperation across a broad spectrum of fields, including trade, investment, connectivity, logistics, energy, food security, tourism, and technology.

The bilateral ties and cooperation were discussed during the 8th session of the Pakistan-Oman Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC), co-chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of Oman Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi here.

Addressing a joint press stakeout following the meeting, the two leaders told the media that a key outcome of the session was the strengthening of the



institutional framework through the establishment and operationalisation of several joint working groups on trade and investment, agriculture, oil and gas, and labour and human resource development, with a view to ensuring regular engagement.

They welcomed closer engagement between the business communities of both countries and encouraged greater investment in special economic zones and free zones, besides agreeing to hold a business-to-business investment forum.

Achieving export targets essential to breaking dependency trap: Ahsan

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said achieving the \$100 billion export target by 2035 was essential for Pakistan to break the cycle of economic dependency, ensure sustainable growth and strengthen its economic independence.

Addressing the inaugural session of the 39th International Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE), themed "Mission \$100 Billion: The National Race for Sustainable Export-led Prosperity," he said Pakistan must shift from consumption-driven growth to production- and export-led growth to avoid recurring economic crises.

"If Pakistan succeeds in exporting \$100 billion by 2035, then we will reach the level of economic independence. But if we fail to do this, then we will never be able to break the cycle of dependency traps," he said.

The minister said a country unable to generate sufficient income to meet its needs

had to rely on borrowing, which eventually constrained its decision-making, slowed development and left the aspirations of its youth vulnerable to recurring balance-of-payments crises.

Comparing Pakistan's export performance with that of other countries, he said its goods exports stood at approximately \$32 billion in calendar year 2024, compared with \$47 billion for Bangladesh, \$330 billion for Malaysia and \$404 billion for Vietnam.

He said Pakistan's goods exports stood at around \$6 billion in 1990, compared with \$2.5 billion for Vietnam. By 2024, Vietnam's exports had surged to \$404 billion, underscoring the need for Pakistan to reassess its economic choices and production strategy. Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan had repeatedly experienced a cycle in which economic growth increased imports, put pressure on the exchange rate and eventually necessitated restrictive measures to restore stability. Referring to the 6 per cent economic growth recorded in 2022, he said it was accompanied by record imports.

PTI Chairman Gohar moves PHC against emergency, governor's rule in KP

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Wednesday moved the Peshawar High Court (PHC) against the imposition of emergency and governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, requesting the court to declare the move unconstitutional.

Advocate Shah Faisal Ilyas submitted the petition on behalf of the PTI chairman. The petitioner requested the PHC to declare the Oct 11 emergency proclamation as "unconstitutional, ultra vires, coram non iudice, tainted with malice in law and fact, devoid of objective material, and of no legal effect"; and urged it to set the proclamation aside. Barrister Gohar is represented by a panel of lawyers, including Barrister Sameer Khosa, Salman Akram Raja, Ali Zaman, Sardar Haseeb Ahmad and Zainab Shahid. Filed under Article 199 (Jurisdiction of High Court) of the Constitution of Pakistan, the petition named the Federation of Pakistan (through the secretaries of the Cabinet, law ministry, interior ministry and defence ministry).

Tarar criticizes PTI leadership over KP security situation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday criticized the PTI-led government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for lack of commitment to counter-terrorism, saying that the provincial leadership had failed to demonstrate the maturity required to address the security challenges facing the province.

Talking to reporters outside the Parliament, Atta Tarar said PTI leaders who had participated in negotiations congratulated another following their apparent outcome. However, he said, Chief Minister Sohail Afridi subsequently refused to commit to taking action against terrorism.

"On the one hand, people are



being killed and attacks are taking place in Dera Ismail Khan, Hangu and Kohat, while terrorists are moving around freely. On the other hand, the chief minister is staging a sit-in and saying that he cannot commit to taking action against terrorists," he said.

Describing the situation as regrettable, Atta Tarar endorsed the remarks of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on the issue and criticized the immaturity of the PTI's provincial leadership.

Awards Presented to Individuals for outstanding performance



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Young Doctors Leadership Summit was organized by HBS Medical and Dental College, the Academy for Cambridge Professional Development Pakistan, and Vision Areas Pakistan. The objective of the summit was to highlight leadership skills among young doctors, promote professional competencies, and encourage them to bring positive change to the healthcare sector. The summit was attended

by prominent figures associated with the medical profession, healthcare experts, and other distinguished guests. The chief guest was Professor Dr. Shehzad Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor of the Health Services Academy. Other distinguished guests included Raja Riaz Shahbaz Janjua, Chairman of HBS, Dr. Haider Riaz Janjua, and several other personalities. During the event, the importance of professional development for young doctors, effective leadership principles.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal addresses the opening session of the 39th Annual Conference of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE) at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE).

Rural Women Face Barriers to Education, Healthcare and Property Rights, Says Ayaz Sadiq

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Rural women continue to face barriers to education, healthcare, financial support and better job opportunities, National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said on Wednesday, calling for stronger protection of their property and inheritance rights to improve their lives. In his message ahead of the International Day of Rural Women on October 15, Ayaz Sadiq said women in rural areas make major contributions to farming, livestock

care, household income and community development, but still face serious challenges in accessing basic services and economic resources. He said improving their access to education, healthcare, vocational training, financial services and modern farming technology was essential for Pakistan's development and food security. He also stressed that rural women must be protected under the law, including their rights to own property and receive inheritance, and must have a meaningful role in decisions affecting their lives. The

Speaker said Parliament had an important responsibility to promote gender equality through effective laws and oversight. He called for coordinated efforts by government institutions and other organisations to improve the social and economic conditions of rural women. He said recognising their work and investing in their abilities would help reduce poverty, support agricultural growth and strengthen Pakistan's rural economy. In a separate development, Ayaz Sadiq praised members of the government, its allied parties and

the opposition for their role in recent political talks, expressing hope that dialogue between the two sides would continue despite their failure to reach an agreement. Speaking while presiding over a National Assembly session, he said the participants had shown patience, mutual respect and political responsibility by listening to one another in a cordial atmosphere. He said their conduct was encouraging and deserved appreciation. The Speaker recalled that government representatives had been sitting in his chamber

while opposition members were in an adjoining room during the negotiations. At the time, there had been hope that an agreement would soon be signed and matters would move towards improvement. However, Senate Opposition Leader Allama Nasir Abbas later approached him and expressed regret that no agreement had been reached. Ayaz Sadiq said he had made it clear that the failure to reach an agreement on that occasion should not bring the dialogue process to an end. He said opposition com-

mittee members had left, but Barrister Gohar Khan later returned and also supported continuing the talks. The government's negotiating team shared the same position, according to the Speaker. Addressing Barrister Gohar, Ayaz Sadiq said the opposition had initially come with a mandate to make decisions, but consultations had affected the position it could take. He urged members to avoid unnecessary discussion on the issue and to speak only what was correct in the House. The Speaker praised Federal Ministers Ameer.