



Pakistan pressing ahead with economic reforms agenda, Aurangzeb briefs IMF chief



Naqvi says govt exhausted efforts to secure K-P's cooperation on terrorism



DPM Dar underscores importance of continued diplomatic ties with global partners

Founded By:
(Late) Rehmat Khan

ABC CERTIFIED

Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com
Website: www.peakpoint.pk

Executive Group Editor
Arif Mehmood Khan



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At least 34 children, teacher killed as school roof collapses in Peshawar

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: At least 34 schoolchildren and one teacher were killed on Thursday morning when the roof of a school collapsed during morning classes in Peshawar, police and rescue officials said, prompting widespread grief across the country.

Rescue workers spent hours pulling children from the rubble of the privately run education centre, which is located in a residential area, while panicked parents and relatives gathered outside the building seeking news of their loved ones.

Of the students killed were under 13. At least 45 people suffered major and minor injuries, said Arif Khattak, regional director of the Rescue Department.

A higher-floor roof collapsed onto students in classrooms below, crumpling two storeys of the building, a rescue official said.

The administration of Lady Reading Hospital (LRH), which initially reported four deaths, later said that 33 bodies were brought to the hospital. Two bodies were shifted to Naseerullah Khan Babar Memorial Hospital in the provincial capital, it added.

Among the victims were also 12 girls, according to the LRH administration. The body of a female teacher was also brought to the hospital following the incident, the LRH administration said. Peshawar deputy commissioner said that all people trapped beneath the debris have been rescued. The incident took place at 8:48am local time.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday attended the collective funeral prayer of 33 children and a female teacher.

Saudi-led coalition intercepts cruise missile over Madinah region

PEAK POINT



SAUDI ARABIA: The Saudi-led coalition in Yemen said on Thursday that it intercepted and destroyed a cruise missile over the Madinah region in western Saudi Arabia.

Coalition spokesman Major General Turki al-Maliki announced the interception in a brief statement on US social media platform X.

The statement did not identify who launched the missile or its intended target, and provided no details on possible casualties or damage. It came amid intensified Houthi missile and drone attacks on Saudi Arabia, including strikes targeting airports and energy facilities. The coalition accused the Houthis of carrying out a drone attack on the Taibah electricity distribution station in Madinah on September 29.

The attack knocked a transformer out of service but did not disrupt the electricity grid, according to al-Maliki. The facility supplies electricity to the Prophet's Mosque, one of Islam's holiest sites. Yemen's Houthis said they did not carry out any attack on the Medina region.

Joint sitting of Parliament endorses emergency, governor's rule in KP amid opposition outcry

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: A joint sitting of Parliament on Thursday gave its approval to the Centre's imposition of emergency and governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa amid a strong protest from the opposition.

The joint session had been summoned to discuss separate resolutions on the imposition of emergency and governor's rule in KP, where the opposition's PTI was in power. During the session, which was addressed by both members of the treasury and opposition benches, the government justified its decision while the PTI lambasted the Centre and the allegations levelled against the party. The Centre took the measures on Oct 11, citing the provincial government's "deliberate disengagement" from the fight against terrorism. The move followed weeks of political tensions between the Centre and the PTI — as well as negotiations to bridge their differences — after the latter announced a long march to Islamabad to demand the release of its jailed founder, Imran Khan. During Thursday's joint sitting, opposition members turned up carrying placards inscribed with slogans, such as "emergency na manzoor (emergency is unacceptable)". PM Shehbaz, who attended part of the session, shook hands with opposition leaders of both the Senate and the NA, pictures and footage showed. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry tabled the two proclamations and separate resolutions regarding the emergency and governor's rule.

Security forces kill five India-backed terrorists in Balochistan IBO: ISPR

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Security forces killed five terrorists affiliated with the Indian proxy, Fitna al-Hindistan, during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted in Balochistan's Washuk district, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday.

The military's media wing said in a statement that security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) on the night of October 12-13, 2026, following reports of the presence of terrorists belonging to the Indian proxy. "During the conduct of the operation, a terrorist hideout was busted by security forces through swift and decisive action," the ISPR said, adding that a huge cache of weapons, ammunition and explosives was also recovered from terrorists. Sanitisation operations are being conducted to eliminate any other India-sponsored terrorist found in the area, it added.

The military said that under the vision of Azm-e-Istehkam, approved by the Federal Apex Committee on the National Action Plan, Pakistan's security forces and law enforcement agencies would continue operations.

US considers hitting Iran with 'Mother of All Bombs'

PEAK POINT

NEW YORK: The United States is considering using its biggest non-nuclear bomb against Iran if President Donald Trump should decide to renew combat in the war that has hit a deadlock.

The military is planning for the potential use of the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB) bomb — better known by its nickname, the "Mother Of All Bombs" — to target Iranian energy infrastructure and nuclear sites, according to the news outlet, which quoted officials familiar with the matter.

TTAP says 'no talks' with govt until meeting with Imran Khan is arranged, health details are provided

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Tehreek-i-Tahafuz Ayin-i-Pakistan (TTAP) on Thursday announced that it was suspending all negotiations with the government, saying there would be "no talks" until a meeting with PTI founder Imran Khan was arranged and information about his health was provided.

The alliance, in a statement, said all negotiating authority would rest solely with its chairman, Mehmood Khan Achakzai. The announcement was made at a leadership meeting held at Achakzai's residence, where the political situation arising from the imposition of governor's rule and an emergency in KP, as well as the situation in the province, was reviewed in detail.

In the days preceding

the development, political tensions between the feder-

condemned the imposition of governor's rule and an

Peshawar High Court (PHC).



al government and the opposition, mainly the PTI, had remained high after the party announced a long march to demand the release of its jailed founder, Imran Khan. However, the march, initially planned for Islamabad, remained confined to KP until it fizzled out with the imposition of governor's rule in the province.

The alliance strongly

emergency in KP, describing the move as a "robbery" and a midnight assault on the Constitution and the people's mandate.

It demanded that the decision be withdrawn immediately, saying the step was not only an insult to the people of one province but to those of all provinces. The statement added that the alliance would also file a petition against the decision in the

FCC declares plea against KP CM's appointment infructuous after governor's rule

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) on Thursday disposed of a challenge to the appointment of non-functional Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, deeming it infructuous after the imposition of governor's rule and an emergency in the province.

Governor's rule and emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were imposed on Sunday. The federal government cited the provincial government's "deliberate disengagement" from the fight against terrorism as the reason for the measures. At present, Afridi remains in preventative custody along with some of his cabinet members. The PTI had reported their detention shortly after the Centre.



SPORTS



Maaz Sadaqat sets sights on 2027 World Cup after ODI snub



MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: Maaz Sadaqat may have missed out on selection for Pakistan's upcoming One-day International (ODI) tri-series featuring England and Sri Lanka, but the swashbuckling left-hander has his sights firmly set on next year's World Cup. The 21-year-old made a strong impression on the international stage in the recently concluded three-match T20I series against Sri Lanka, scoring consecutive half-centuries in the first two matches to help Pakistan clinch the series. His performances were more than just individual milestones, signalling a shift towards a

more aggressive batting approach in T20 cricket, with Maaz emerging as a key figure in the change.

He scored 50 off 29 balls in the opening match, helping Pakistan recover from an underwhelming powerplay alongside captain Sahibzada Farhan.

In the second T20I, Maaz took the attack to the Sri Lankan bowlers, smashing 96 off 51 balls, including seven sixes and six fours, to come close to a maiden international century.

His impressive run, however, will have to wait for another opportunity to continue in Pakistan colours, with the batter

left out of the ODI squad despite having featured in six matches in the format, including his debut, earlier this year. Maaz had made an immediate impact in only his second ODI against Bangladesh, scoring 75 and taking three wickets with his left-arm spin.

However, he struggled to maintain that form in the subsequent home series against Australia in May-June, managing scores of eight, zero and 27 on difficult surfaces. The reasons behind his omission from the squad for the upcoming tri-series remain unclear. The break, however, offers him an opportunity to refine his game

with the 2027 World Cup in mind. "I am targeting the ODI World Cup and I am preparing for it," Maaz said in a video interview released by the Pakistan Cricket Board on Thursday. "I have a 15-20-day window coming up which I am going to dedicate to working on myself for the World Cup."

The youngster, who rose from tape-ball cricket in Peshawar to become a franchise T20 sensation, has continued to build his reputation on the domestic and international circuits. He also struck two centuries in the recently concluded Caribbean Premier League season.

Abubakar, Amir, Hamza, Omer reach Aitchison College junior NT U-18 semifinals



PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Abubakar Talha, Amir Mazari of Aitchison College, Omer Jawad comfortably reached U-18 semifinals while Hamza Ali Rizwan survived three-set battle against Shayan Afridi to earn a place in the U-18 last four in the Aitchison College Junior National Tennis Championship 2026 at the Aitchison College courts on Mall Road on Thursday.

In the boys' U-18 singles quarterfinals, Abubakar Talha delivered a commanding performance to defeat Abdur Rehman 6-1, 6-1, while Omer Jawad overcame Arham Tariq 6-1, 6-2. Amir Mazari was equally dominant, conceding no games in his 6-0, 6-0 victory over Ahmad Fareed Yawar. Hamza Ali Rizwan, meanwhile, fought back after losing the second set to overcome Shayan Afridi 7-5, 1-6, 7-5 in the day's closely contested encounter.

In the boys' U-18 doubles, Amir Mazari and Nabeel Qayum defeated Romail Shahid and Hassan Alam 6-1, 6-1. Abdullah Yousaf and Abdullah Razaq beat M. Ahmad Afzal and Abdur Rehman 7-6, 6-2, while Aalay Husnain and Haroon Arif secured a hard-fought 6-3, 4-6, 10-6 victory over Hamza Ahmad and Abdullah Sajjad Wahla.

Pakistan hockey secures private sponsorship



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) and Vital Group on Thursday signed a sponsorship agreement aimed at promoting hockey and encouraging greater youth participation in the sport.

The signing ceremony at Islamabad was attended by Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Prime Minister's Youth

Programme Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, PHF President Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Vital Group's Mian Asad, national team players and former Olympians.

Ahsan Iqbal said hockey was a symbol of Pakistan's national identity and the country had the potential to regain its lost glory in international hockey.

He said talented young players were being encouraged to

"A player's focus should be on how to score the next goal, not how to meet his expenses," he said.

Ahsan also highlighted the growing importance of science, technology and data in modern sports, saying physical fitness, mental strength, discipline and consistent training were essential for international success.

He offered the national hockey team the use of the National Sports City in Narowal as a permanent training base, saying the facility provided international-standard facilities for 14 sports at one location.

He added the government was taking steps to provide hockey players with modern training facilities and a supportive environment.

Swiatek avoids seed exodus to breeze into Wuhan last eight



Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia could be postponed but 'no hurry' to decide: AFC

PEAK POINT

SAUDI ARABIA: The Asian Cup scheduled for January in Saudi Arabia could be moved back a year to 2028 "if we need to," the continent's top football official said, following a series of Houthi attacks on the country. But AFC president Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim al-Khalifa also said they were in "no hurry" to make a decision over Asia's premier football tournament.

The 2027 Asian Cup is supposed to kick off on January 7 in the Saudi cities of Jeddah, Riyadh and Al Khobar.

The kingdom has in recent days come under sustained attack in a dramatic escalation in the war with the Houthi group.

"We can wait until the end of November," the Asian Football Confederation president told reporters in Zurich on Wednesday about a deci-

sion on the fate of the Asian Cup. "Things can change very quickly for better or worse in the region and it is a question of seeing what happens," he added.

"If we need to make a decision then we will, but we

intercepted a missile fired towards Riyadh.

Three matches in Saudi domestic football, including one involving Al Nassr, were this week postponed.

The exhibition Six Kings Slam tennis tournament, due



could move back a year to 2028 if we need to.

"But at the moment we are monitoring the situation and everything is on schedule." Cristiano Ronaldo's Al Nassr saw their Asian Champions League match delayed by an hour on Monday after the Saudi-led military coalition said it had

to include Novak Djokovic, Carlos Alcaraz and Alexander Zverev, was pushed back to the end of December.

Australia, one of the 24 teams set to play at the Asian Cup, said this week it was "closely monitoring" the situation in Saudi Arabia.



Cricket players in action during the cricket match between Pakistan Under-17 and Sri Lanka Under-17 teams as Pakistan chase a target of 240 runs set by Sri Lanka at Multan Cricket Stadium.



52 cases of illegal artefact trade reported since 2016, Government says Law needs no change

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: The government has declared Pakistan's 1975 Antiquities Act effective enough to protect the country's cultural heritage, saying there is no need to amend the law despite modern threats to historic sites. Yet the government's reply to the National Assembly reveals that only two heritage sites in Islamabad Capital Territory were declared protected during the last 10 years, while Customs authorities reported 52 cases involving the illegal trade of cultural artefacts. The government has also said that no cases of illegal excavation, destruction or unauthorised construction were reported or registered under the Antiquities Act, 1975, during the period. The figures raise questions about the extent of

protection provided to historic sites and how effectively violations are being detected and reported across the country. The details were provided by Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division Aurangzeb Khan Khichi in response to a question from MNA Asiya Naz Tanoli in the National Assembly. The law, amended in 1992, covers the identification and protection of Pakistan's cultural heritage. The minister said it had not been reviewed because the government considered it sufficiently effective. However, the reply identified only two heritage sites declared protected by the Department of Archaeology and Museums in Islamabad during the past decade. These are the Shah Allah Ditta Caves, declared protected

through a notification issued on August 12, 2016, and the Ban Faqir Stupa, declared protected through a notification issued on May 27, 2016. Both sites are important parts of the country's archaeological heritage. However, the reply did not provide a total nationwide figure for protected antiquities, despite the question seeking details of the number declared protected during the last 10 years. The reply also mentioned 52 cases reported by Customs authorities concerning the detention of illegally traded cultural artefacts since 2016. It did not provide a breakdown of these cases, identify the places from which the artefacts were recovered, or explain what action had been taken against those involved. The absence of reported cases of illegal

excavation, destruction and unauthorised construction does not, by itself, establish that such activities never took place. The government's reply did not explain whether the department had conducted checks to determine if these offences were going undetected or unreported. MNA Asiya Naz Tanoli had also asked whether the government had reviewed enforcement weaknesses and problems in coordination between federal and provincial authorities. She sought details of corrective measures and asked whether the law would be updated to address online trafficking in antiquities, urban encroachments, climate change and public participation in protecting heritage. In response, the government acknowledged the need for effective

coordination and strong enforcement. It said the Department of Archaeology and Museums provides technical assistance and helps different government agencies coordinate their work on archaeological sites and antiquities. The government also pointed out that all four provinces have introduced their own laws to protect cultural heritage within their respective areas. Punjab has the Punjab Antiquities Act, 1975; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Antiquities Act, 2016; Sindh has the Sindh Cultural Heritage (Preservation) Act, 1994; and Balochistan has the Balochistan Antiquities Act, 2014. Despite the concerns raised in the question, the government maintained that the existing law and its rules were sufficient to pro-

tect archaeological sites against encroachment, unauthorised changes and illegal trafficking. It said further amendments were not required at this stage. On public participation, the government said local communities were involved in heritage preservation when documents for World Heritage sites were submitted to the World Heritage Centre. The disclosures leave key questions unanswered about the scale of illegal trade in cultural artefacts, the outcome of the 52 reported cases and how authorities measure the effectiveness of the existing law. The government has maintained that the law is adequate, but the information provided does not offer a complete nationwide picture of enforcement and protection.

D-8, Al-Hidayah Group discuss digital trade, investment cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) Ambassador Sohail Mahmood received a delegation of Al-Hidayah Group, led by its Chairman and former D-8 Secretary-General, Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, at the D-8 Secretariat in Istanbul. The meeting pro-

vided an opportunity to review progress under the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed between the D-8 Secretariat and the Al-Hidayah Group in July 2023, particularly the initiatives being developed to promote digital economic cooperation, financial inclusion, trade and investment, and sustainable development across D-8 Member States,

said a press release.

During the meeting, the delegation briefed the Secretary-General on progress in developing its proposed economic model, including an integrated digital platform designed to facilitate cross-border trade and investment, enhance SME market access, promote financial inclusion, and mobilize resources for pro-

ductive economic activities.

The Group highlighted the model's potential to stimulate economic growth, expand business opportunities, and contribute to higher GDP across D-8 Member States upon successful implementation, while supporting poverty reduction and sustainable development. The Secretary-General appreciated the delegation's

briefing and acknowledged the efforts of Al-Hidayah Group in elaborating their initiative. He highlighted the importance of practical, commercially-viable and inclusive platforms that complement the D-8's economic cooperation agenda and contribute to deeper private-sector participation, digital transformation, and sustainable economic growth

among Member States.

Both sides exchanged views on potential next steps, including continued consultations with relevant institutions and stakeholders in Member States, with a view to identifying opportunities for advancing the proposed initiatives in accordance with the priorities and regulatory frameworks of the broader D-8 membership.

Opinion & Editorial

ISLAMABAD
DAILY PEAK POINT
ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN
Group Editor: 0333-5366814
SAMRA ATHAR KAKAKHEL
Resident Editor
NADIM TANOLI
Joint Editor: Mob-0301-777874
Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com
www.peakpoint.pk

Don't derail the transition

Ishtat Husain

PAKISTAN has reached a staff-level agreement with the IMF after completing the fourth review under its programme. Implementation of the Extended Fund Facility is on track, with progress on macroeconomic stability. The challenge is to translate the gains into sustained growth.

Political and administrative disruptions that can derail this difficult transition must be avoided. The fiscal deficit has been contained at 2.6 per cent of GDP. The primary surplus has strengthened, supported by provincial cash surpluses and exceptional grants to the federal budget. Revenue targets have been met, though raising petroleum levies amid rising global prices adds to inflationary pressure. The external current account has been broadly balanced, largely because of stronger-than-expected workers' remittances, despite declining merchandise exports.

Sovereign credit ratings have improved, though remaining below 2006-07 levels. Access to global capital markets for long-term financing stands restored, and diversification into instruments like Panda bonds has begun. Foreign portfolio inflows have recovered, but FDI remains disappointing. Talks with the US Treasury on a proposed 10-year Exchange Stabilisation Facility continue, while tariff reduction discussions with

the US Trade Representative remain inconclusive.

Foreign exchange reserves accumulated by purchasing dollars from the intermarket rather than borrowing now cover three months of imports, up from a trough of \$4.3 billion in FY2023, helping stabilise the exchange rate and strengthen the balance of payments.

External public debt has declined to 25pc of GDP; the share of short-term debt has fallen from 24 to 16pc, partly after a Saudi deposit was converted into a three-year facility.

Yet ordinary citizens see little improvement. Poverty, joblessness, poor public services, unfair taxation, intrusive regulation, and high energy prices constrain households and businesses. Savings and investment are weak, and exports lack the dynamism to sustain growth. We must expand productive capacity, employment, and exports without reigniting inflation or destabilising the external account. This requires completing the structural reform agenda. Federal and provincial governments must be right-sized, civil services professionalised through specialist recruitment and better incentives, and public administration digitised. The FBR must broaden the tax base instead of burdening compliant taxpayers; provinces must effectively implement agriculture income and property taxes. Energy and wheat markets must be made more competi-

tive, with BISP protection for poor households. Restructuring and privatising SOEs, reforming the Export Facilitation Scheme, implementing the National Tariff Policy, and expanding financial access for small businesses, farmers, women entrepreneurs, and housing are equally important. Export financing and insurance must reach new exporters. Delays or reversals will weaken investment, employment, and competitiveness, undermining the stability painstakingly achieved. Long-delayed infrastructure projects must advance — the Karachi-Peshawar ML-1 railway, the Sukkur-Hyderabad motorway, oil pipeline extensions, oil refinery upgrades, the Quetta-Zhob highway, five special industrial zones, and revamping the Karachi Circular Railway. Skills upgrading must complement these investments.

Pakistan is midway from crisis management to sustainable growth.

Industrial, automobile, and strategic trade policies must be harmonised in consultation with the private sector and announced without delay. A credible implementation framework with clear milestones, assigned duties, and firm timelines is needed. Regular monitoring, inter-agency coordination, and timely bottleneck removal must replace announcements without execution.

Courtesy Dawn

Six ways to remember a martyr

Yumna Zahid Ali

I have never had to wake up at 4am in the freezing cold, carry a heavy pack up a mountain, and stand guard for hours while everyone I love is far away. Most of us haven't. We complain when the internet is slow, or the traffic is bad, and somewhere, a soldier is sitting in a bunker, eating cold food and thinking about his mother's phone call he couldn't take yesterday.

Some never cross their own doorstep again. The soldier who died is gone, but what he leaves behind is a family still setting a plate at the table, a school bag still hanging on a hook, and a young wife who suddenly has to be both parents. The medal is placed in her hands, she is thanked at a ceremony, and poof! The cameras leave. That is where we confuse the closing of a ceremony with the closing of a wound. Medals matter, but a medal is a moment. A family's grief lasts a lifetime, so our remembrance should too.

Therefore, we can turn our gratitude into action, starting with these ideas.

Put their names where life happens: Name a road, a bridge, a roundabout, or a park after a martyr. Every time someone says, "Meet me at Shaheed Hassan Chowk", a name is spoken aloud again. Name school classrooms, libraries, hospital wards and sports grounds after them too. A child who studies in the "Captain Ali Library" will wonder who he was, and that curiosity is how a memory survives. Name ambulances and rescue vehicles after them, so their names arrive wherever help is needed.

Tell their real story: A plaque shouldn't just say a name and a date. It should say he loved cricket, he was the youngest of five, and he used to send half his salary home to pay for his sister's school. Ranks are forgotten. People are not. Add a QR code to every plaque and every tree, so anyone can scan it and read the full story in seconds.

Courtesy Tribune

The right to refuse

THE Supreme Court's refusal to commute the death sentence of a man convicted of murdering a woman for rejecting his marriage proposal is a welcome affirmation of a fundamental principle that remains dangerously misunderstood in Pakistani society. A woman's right to choose whom she marries is absolute, and her refusal cannot be construed as an insult warranting retaliation. By rejecting the convict's plea for leniency, the apex court has rightly made clear that wounded male pride cannot serve as a mitigating circumstance for murder. A rejected marriage proposal is perceived by some men as an affront to their authority, with the consequences ranging from persistent harassment to deadly violence. Such attitudes are frequently sustained by social customs that place a man's honour above a woman's autonomy. The court's observation that marriage requires the free consent of both parties is therefore particularly significant. Neither religion nor tradition can be invoked to justify the denial of this basic right. Pakistan continues to witness cases of violence against women whose only perceived offence is exercising their independence. More troubling is the tendency to dismiss threats and harassment as personal disputes until they culminate in violence.

Naqvi says govt exhausted efforts to secure K-P's cooperation on terrorism



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Moinis Naqvi on Thursday said the federal government had exhausted all efforts to secure the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) government's cooperation in combating terrorism and avoiding the imposition of emergency and governor's rule, maintaining that the decision had been taken reluctantly after months of unsuccessful engagement.

Addressing a joint session of Parliament, Naqvi rejected opposition allegations that the government had used terrorism for political purposes,

saying it had repeatedly attempted to bring the provincial administration on board to fight terrorism together.

"We made every effort to bring their government on board so that they could fight shoulder to shoulder with us," he said.

The interior minister said efforts to secure cooperation from the provincial leadership had begun long before the latest round of political negotiations. Referring to an Apex Committee meeting held in Peshawar in February, Naqvi said he had attended alongside the Peshawar corps commander, while the K-P chief minister had hosted the meeting.

He said considerable difficulties had been encountered in arranging the meeting, which aimed to establish a common position on counter-terrorism. The plan was to agree on a joint approach and issue a press release stating that federal and provincial authorities would work together to combat terrorism, he added. Naqvi urged lawmakers to obtain and read the press release that was eventually issued, particularly its concluding

remarks, to understand what had transpired. He recalled that security personnel had been martyred on the same day and that participants had learned of their deaths during the meeting. He said the K-P chief minister had been persuaded through a formal request to attend the funeral prayers of the personnel. Naqvi claimed this was the last occasion on which the chief minister had attended the funeral prayers of a security official. Turning to the government's negotiations with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Naqvi acknowledged that members of the party's negotiating committee had expressed a clear commitment to combating terrorism. He singled out PTI leader Asad Qaiser, saying his position during the talks had been so firm that even government representatives had not expressed themselves in similar terms. Naqvi said all members of the opposition delegation had discussed terrorism and maintained that the fight was for Pakistan, rather than any individual or political party. However, he said he had pointed out to Qaiser a significant.

DPM Dar underscores importance of continued diplomatic ties with global partners

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday underscored the importance of sustained diplomatic exchanges to maintain the positive momentum in Pakistan's engagement with partner countries.

The deputy prime minister held a meeting here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to review the outcomes of recent high-level visits and preparations for upcoming engagements, in line with the Prime Minister's directives, a DPM's Office news release said.

The discussions focused on advancing agreed initiatives and strengthening cooperation in trade, investment and other key areas.

DPM Dar directed the rele-



vant ministries to maintain close coordination, pursue emerging economic opportunities and ensure timely implementation of agreed decisions.

The meeting was attended by the Ministers for National Food Security, Petroleum and Information Technology and Telecommunication, SAPM on Foreign Affairs, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production, the Secretaries of Foreign Affairs, Commerce, Railways and Overseas Pakistanis.

Pakistan pressing ahead with economic reforms agenda, Aurangzeb briefs IMF chief

PEAK POINT

BANGKOK: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb met International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva and briefed international investors on Pakistan's economic stabilisation, fiscal consolidation and efforts to diversify external financing on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings 2026 in Bangkok on Thursday.

During the meeting with IMF chief, Aurangzeb exchanged views on Pakistan's economic situation and ongoing reforms. He said Pakistan has finalized staff-level agreement with the IMF and pressing ahead with its reforms agenda.

Aurangzeb also participated in the JP Morgan Investment Seminar on "Pakistan: The Road to Resilience in a Turbulent Global Economy Landscape".

During the seminar, the finance minister highlighted progress in macroeconomic stabilisation, fiscal consolidation, revenue mobi-

lization and sustained primary surpluses. Discussions covered strong remittances, improved foreign exchange reserves, a contained current account deficit and external debt repayments.

He outlined efforts to diversify international financing and replace costly borrowing without increasing the external debt stock. He reaffirmed commitment to the IMF programme and continued structural reforms, alongside prudent monetary policy to contain inflation.

Aurangzeb emphasised targeted support for vulnerable households, careful energy procurement and sustainable, export-led growth. Discussions also addressed federal-provincial fiscal coordination and stronger trade and investment partnerships.

In an interview with Channel News Asia, Senator Aurangzeb talked about Pakistan's shift from aid to trade and investment, strengthening global and bilateral partnerships.

KP people stood with state in fight against terrorism despite heavy losses: Muqam

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam on Thursday said the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had stood with Pakistan and the state in the fight against terrorism despite losing family members and facing displacement, attacks and bomb blasts.

Speaking at a joint sitting of Parliament, he said the province had suffered heavily during years of militancy. He said many people had been forced to leave their homes, while civilians and security personnel had sacrificed their lives. Amir Muqam recalled that other provinces had supported the people of KP during their displacement. He said Punjab, under the "Khadim-e-Punjab" initiative, had sent around 100 trucks of assistance daily. He thanked the provinces for supporting the people of KP.

He said the people of the province had fought militants rather than supported them and had paid a heavy human.

People welcome emergency, governor's rule in KP by distributing sweets: Sardar Yousaf

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Muhammad Yousaf said on Thursday that people in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had welcomed the imposition of emergency and governor's rule by distributing sweets and observing it as a day of deliverance.

Speaking at a joint sitting of Parliament, he expressed concern over the law and order situation in the province and said the government's primary responsibility was to protect the lives and property of citizens.

Yousaf said the provincial government should have supported operations against terrorism but had opposed them.



The minister said the KP government had been in power for 13 years but had failed to improve health, education and road infrastructure. Referring to the road leading to the Lowari Tunnel in Chitral, he said it had fallen into disrepair despite being built during the tenure of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

Yousaf said the imposition of emergency and governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had become necessary under the prevailing circumstances.

Sherry Rehman urges political unity against rising terrorism

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Senator Sherry Rehman on Thursday called on political parties to unite against terrorism, saying terrorist incidents had increased by 195 per cent in two years in KP.

Speaking at a joint sitting of Parliament, she said the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) had persuaded the government to hold talks with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). She praised Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and the PTI's federal team for taking part in the negotiations sincerely. She said the talks covered a written agreement, a joint declaration and confidence-building measures.

Rehman said the PTI's leader-



ship in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should have joined the talks, as any agreement on counterterrorism required the provincial government's involvement.

She said the PPP was ready to sign the proposed agreement, but the provincial leadership did not support it. The senator also called on the provincial government to strengthen the police and the Counter Terrorism Department.



BANGKOK: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, participating in the Bank of America (BoFA) Small talks symposium to discuss Pakistan's economic outlook, structural reforms and export-led growth.

Peshawar School roof collapse kills children, Senate Leaders demand strict safety checks

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and Deputy Chairman Syedal Khan Nasir have expressed deep grief over the deaths of children in the collapse of a private school roof in Peshawar, calling for the best possible medical treatment for the injured and strict safety checks to prevent such tragedies. The roof collapsed at a private school in the Deir Colony area of Peshawar, claiming the lives of several children and leaving many others injured, according to statements issued by the

Senate Secretariat on Thursday. The statements did not provide an exact death toll or a detailed breakdown of the casualties. Gilani expressed heartfelt condolences to the families who lost their children and prayed for strength and patience for them during this difficult time. He also prayed for the departed children, asking Allah Almighty to grant them the highest place in Jannah, and called for the injured to receive the best possible medical care and recover quickly. The Senate chairman urged the relevant authorities

to take effective steps to prevent similar incidents in the future. He stressed the need to protect precious human lives and ensure that such tragedies do not happen again. Deputy Chairman Syedal Khan Nasir also described the loss of young lives as deeply tragic and said the loss was irreparable. He extended condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the recovery of the injured children. He directed the authorities to ensure the best possible treatment for the injured without negligence. He stressed that pro-

tecting children in schools was a basic responsibility and that safety could not be ignored. Syedal Khan Nasir called for regular inspections of school buildings to check their strength and identify construction defects before they lead to disasters. He also called for strict enforcement of safety standards in educational institutions to protect students and teachers. The statements came amid renewed calls for authorities to ensure that school buildings are safe for children. The Senate leaders stressed that proper inspections and

timely action were necessary to prevent further loss of life. In a separate development, Gilani met Foreign Secretary Asim Iftikhar Ahmad at Parliament House in Islamabad and stressed the importance of closer coordination between parliamentary diplomacy and Pakistan's formal diplomatic efforts. Gilani welcomed Asim Iftikhar Ahmad and congratulated him on taking up his new responsibilities. He expressed confidence that the foreign secretary's diplomatic experience and professional knowledge would help

advance Pakistan's foreign policy goals and protect the country's national interests. The Senate chairman said continued engagement, constructive dialogue and cooperation that benefits both sides were important for strengthening Pakistan's relations with countries around the world. He said parliamentary diplomacy could help build political understanding, establish links between institutions and create new opportunities for international cooperation. Referring to his recent visits to other countries and participation.