

At ECO moot, Dar calls for translating 'collective commitments into concrete action'



Atta Tarar calls for stronger regional trade, connectivity through ECO platform



Leghari invites Turkmenistan's minister of energy Annageldi Saparov to join CASA-1000

Founded By:
(Late) Rehmat Khan

ABC CERTIFIED

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

ExecutiveGroup Editor
Arif Mehmood Khan

DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

Tuesday 17 November 2026 Jumada-ul-Sani 06, 1448 A.H VOl No: 06 Issue No. 249 Pages 4 Rs. 20

Pakistan honoured to take leading role in addressing collective challenges, ever prepared to support OIC's efforts: PM

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Monday underscored that Pakistan was honoured to take a leading role in addressing the collective challenges and was ever prepared to support the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) 's efforts in this matter.

The prime minister made these remarks during a call on paid at him here by Secretary-General of the OIC, Ismail Ould Sheikh Ahmed here, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

The prime minister welcomed the OIC Secretary General on his first visit to Islamabad after assuming office of the Secretary General, and highlighted that his election by consensus, was a testament to the confidence reposed in him by the OIC Member States.

The OIC Secretary General appreciated Pakistan`s continued valuable efforts for peace and stability in the region.

Both sides agreed that as a representative body of the Muslim Ummah, the OIC was uniquely positioned to lead collective efforts to address the critical issues faced by the Ummah.

They expressed their commitment to undertake every effort to ensure that the OIC further consolidates its work for the common benefit of the Muslim Ummah, facing complex challenges. They also reiterated their support for the oppressed people of Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets the Foreign Ministers and heads of delegations of ECO member states, participating in the 30th meeting of ECO Council of Ministers.

'I may not return alive': Imran Khan seeks urgent medical attention



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan has appealed to the chief justices of the Supreme Court, Federal Constitutional Court and Islamabad High Court to ensure the implementation of court orders and provide him and his wife, Bushra Bibi, with proper medical treatment. In an open letter written by Barrister Salman Sadar on behalf of the ex-premier, Imran expressed serious concerns about his health, saying doctors had warned him of the risk of a brain haemorrhage and a heart attack. In the letter shared on the social media platform X, he said his blood pressure had reached 193, and his health was getting worse due to prolonged isolation in Adiala Jail. "I will prove my innocence if I remain alive," Imran wrote, urging the judges to provide justice before it was too late. He said he was not asking for any special favour but only wanted the court orders to be followed and proper medical care for himself and his wife. Imran also claimed that a Supreme Court order issued on August 18 to shift him to Shifa International Hospital for a medical examination had not been implemented.

At ECO meeting, Araghchi calls for reliable, sustainable regional energy mechanism



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stressed the need for a reliable and sustainable regional energy mechanism on Monday, as he addressed the 30th meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) Council of Ministers in Islamabad. He made these remarks while speaking about the US-Israeli war on Iran, which has also resulted in the choking of key fuel supply routes — the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab. "Our region needs not only an independent security framework but also a reliable and sustainable regional energy mechanism to safeguard energy flows, ensure stable supplies, reduce external vulnerabilities and enhance collective resilience against geopolitical shocks and disruptions," Araghchi said, according to a transcript of his speech provided by the Iranian embassy in Pakistan. Araghchi said ECO was moving "beyond its traditional role towards becoming an effective platform for collective action, strengthened cooperation and joint efforts". He said the shift would enable member states "to address emerging challenges and contribute to an inclusive and equitable global economic order". He stressed the need for a "modern, new-generation, more inclusive, effective and operational trade agreement" that would benefit the region. Referring to the US war on Iran, Araghchi said, "Iran has remained committed to diplomatic engagement and peaceful solutions".

Ex-Bangladesh PM Hasina to return home despite 'threat of death'



PEAK POINT

NEW DELHI: Ousted Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina, sentenced to capital punishment after she was toppled in 2024, told AFP on Monday she would return home in December despite "the threat of death". Hasina fled to India in August 2024 after a student-led uprising ended her iron-fisted 15-year rule, and has remained in hiding ever since. She was sentenced to death in absentia last year after a Bangladeshi court convicted her of crimes against humanity over a deadly crackdown on protesters. "I am fully aware of the risks I face if I return," she told AFP in an email interview. "But I have made my decision, and no threat of death will keep me away from my own country." Her insistence on going back comes days after Bangladesh said she would face execution if she returned, adding that she has no further legal recourse after missing the deadline to appeal against her conviction. The 79-year-old has repeatedly rejected the legitimacy of the trial. Dhaka has sought her extradition from India, which says the request is under legal review.

Separate legislative assembly in Islamabad on the cards

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government has intensified its efforts to set up a separate legislative assembly in Islamabad. If all goes as planned, a legislative assembly will be set up in the capital city, which will be headed by an elected mayor. Some months ago, a high-profile committee headed by Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal had finalised recommendations, which were presented to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The recommendations proposed the devolution of powers from the federation.

China says Xi, Trump, Putin to discuss 'world peace' in trilateral summit

PEAK POINT

CHINA: The leaders of China, Russia and the United States will discuss "world peace" when they hold their first trilateral summit in Shenzhen this week, Beijing said on Monday.

Presidents Xi Jinping, Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin are due to meet in the southern Chinese city on Thursday on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit. China has provided few details as to what the three leaders will discuss but said they would hold "in-depth exchanges on safeguarding world peace and promoting strategic stability in major-power relations".

"It will be of groundbreaking significance," foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a news briefing on Monday, hours



after Beijing confirmed the meeting. Top Chinese and US diplomats have previously raised the possibility that the three-way talks could broach the sensitive subject of denuclearisation.

Washington, which dislikes China's rapidly expanding nuclear arsenal, said it wants Beijing to be part of a nuclear arms control deal.

Beijing, however, has long maintained that the US and Russia should reduce their giant nuclear arsenals before it agrees to talks on its own stockpile.

After a US-Russia bilateral treaty on nuclear weapons expired in February, Trump called for a "better agreement" including China. Beijing at the time declined to join disarmament negotiations.

But in a call this week, China's top diplomat Wang Yi and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio "agreed on the importance of meaningful leader-level conversations to advance goals such as peace and denuclearisation", the US State Department said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Monday that if the three leaders "really commit themselves to a meaningful denuclearisation, it will be a great achievement for the world".

"We have been for a long time… talking and requesting the need of disarmament in the nuclear field, and we believe that we will only be entirely safe when we would be entirely (without) nuclear weapons," Guterres said during an Asean summit in the Philippines. Trump has said the three leaders will also likely discuss his war in Iran. "We'll talk a lot of things, including denuclearisation, but we'll be talking a lot of things.

Rocket from Boeing-Lockheed firm fails mid-flight, destroys payload of Amazon satellites



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: A Vulcan rocket owned by United Launch Alliance, the joint venture of Boeing and Lockheed Martin, failed on Sunday shortly after liftoff from Florida, destroying its payload of 40 satellites from Amazon's Leo internet network in the launch company's first mission failure.

The rocket failed roughly 10 minutes after liftoff from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida, and the cause was not immediately clear. It represented a major setback for the two-decade-old company's new flagship rocket as ULA sought to begin a regular cadence of launches for Amazon's burgeoning satellite internet constellation. "Based on data received by our Launch Director.



DAILY PEAK POINT

SPORTS



Shaun Tait, Kusal Mendis want extra push for Pakistan-Sri Lanka series result



MOHSIN ALI

RAWALPINDI: Sri Lankan skipper Kusal Mendis and Pakistan bowling coach Shaun Tait urged their teams to push hard for a result in the second and final Test starting on Tuesday in Rawalpindi.

A combination of bad weather and less penetrative bowling on a seemingly grassy pitch left the first Test without a result.

Sri Lanka twice spurned chances to force a result as they let go a strong position of 404-4 in reply to Pakistan's 434-9 declared, slumping to 446 all out.

They then had Pakistan 57-3 on the final day before dropping crucial catches as the hosts closed the match on 284-8.

Kusal said his team wanted to put pressure on Pakistan.

"We were looking to establish a decent lead to put pressure on the Pakistan but credit must go to Saqib Khan, who bowled exceptionally well and restricted us," said Kusal.

Kusal and Dhananjaya de Silva hit hundreds and added 249 for the fifth wicket, but Sri Lanka lost their last six wickets for a mere 42 runs.

It was Saqib who derailed Sri Lanka with figures of 7-130, becoming the fourth Pakistani to take seven wickets on debut.

Kusal said the wicket for the second Test is green.

"The wicket looks quite green and has similarities to the surface we played on in the first Test so we will assess the conditions before making a final decision."

Sri Lanka may be tempted to bring one from spinners Prabath Jayasuriya or Keshara Nuwantha.

Pakistan is considering handing Test cap to rookie 19-year-old pacer Ali Shabbir for Razaullah.

Tait hoped Pakistan players would make an extra effort to win their first Test series this year.

"That extra push is needed," said Tait, a former Australian pacer.

"I am happy with the way bowlers bowled during the majority of the last Test and want some extra push."

Experienced batter Saud Shakeel missed centuries in both innings with scores of 93 and 97.

Skipper Babar Azam's Test century drought continued with 42 innings without a three-figure knock.

The two-match series is part of the World Test Championship's fourth cycle, with Pakistan (ninth and last) and Sri Lanka (seventh) already out of next year's final.

Jay Shah re-elected unopposed as ICC chairman for second term



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Jay Shah was re-elected unopposed as chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) for a second two-year term on Monday, extending his leadership of the governing body as cricket prepares for its return to the Olympic Games at Los Angeles in 2028.

The decision was announced following the ICC Board meetings in Bali, Indonesia, where directors proposed Shah's reappointment.

The 38-year-old first took charge of the ICC on Dec 1, 2024, after serving as secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). He became the youngest person to head the global governing body at the age of 35. He is the son of India's Home Minister Amit Shah.

Shah's second term will cover an important period for international cricket, with the sport preparing for its Olympic return after more than a century. Cricket will feature at the 2028 Los Angeles Games, with the T20 format selected for the competition. His first tenure saw the ICC oversee several major developments in the international game, including the 2025 Champions Trophy, which was staged under a hybrid model after India declined to travel to Pakistan. The arrangement saw India's matches played in Dubai.

Pakistan crush Zimbabwe by 51 runs in ICC Women's Emerging Nations trophy



PEAK POINT

DUBAI: Pakistan defeated Zimbabwe by 51 runs in the ICC Women's Emerging Nations Trophy 2026 at the Seven Districts Sports Club in Ajman on Monday, thanks to Muneeba Ali's brilliant half-century and Nashra Sandhu's three wickets.

The victory was Pakistan's second in a row in the tournament.

Muneeba also made history by becoming Pakistan's most successful wicketkeeper in Women's T20 Internationals, taking her total dismissals to 51 and going past Batool Fatima's previous record of 50.

Batting first, Pakistan scored 150 for six in their 20 overs, while Zimbabwe managed only 99 for eight in reply.

Captain Muneeba led from the front with 51 off 49 balls, hitting five fours.

Ayesha Zafar also played an attacking knock of 42 off 27 balls, including six fours and a six.

Pakistan lost Sadaf Shamas (7) and Shawaal Zulfiqar (16) early, but Muneeba and Ayesha steadied the innings with a 68-run partnership for the third wicket.

Ayesha was dismissed for 42, while Muneeba continued to hold the innings together before being run out in the 19th over.

Eyman Fatima added a useful 16 off 14 balls to help Pakistan reach a competitive total.

Christine Mutasa took two wickets for Zimbabwe.

Mirra Andreeva defeats Elina Svitolina to win WTA Finals



Islamabad set to get Pakistan's largest cricket stadium as project cost swells to Rs16.7 billion

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The federal capital is moving closer to getting a major international cricket venue, with the Capital Development Authority (CDA) revising the development plan for a 35,000-seat stadium near the Margalla Hills. However, the expansion in the project's scope has pushed its estimated cost to Rs16.7 billion, up from the earlier unapproved estimate of Rs11.9 billion.The revised project documents cover two construction phases and include the stadium's main structure, finishing works, electrical installations and other essential facilities. The modified PC-Is have been completed and are expected to be placed before the CDA Development Working Party (DWP) for approval.The proposed stadium, planned near Sector D-12, is expected to become Pakistan's largest cricket venue in terms of seating capacity. Its design is reportedly based on Dubai Cricket Stadium, with facilities intended to support international cricket events.The revised development plan reflects a significant expansion in the original project. The earlier proposal envisaged accommodation for 25,000 spectators, but the CDA subsequently increased the capacity to 35,000. Additional features include floodlighting, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems, ground and pitch preparation, finishing works and a security surveillance system.Despite the revision in the overall project cost, the CDA says preparations for the first phase are progressing. The bidding process for the main stadium structure and connecting road network has already been completed, while groundbreaking is expected to take place soon.The first phase, covering the grey structure, is expected to be completed within six months. Following approval of the revised PC-Is, the authority plans to initiate the tendering process for the second phase, with an overall completion target of approximately one year.

The first-phase construction contract attracted a bid of Rs8.9 billion from a joint venture comprising Habib, ZKB and EA.

Pakistan Shaheens off to Doha to play ACC Men's Asia Cup Rising Stars 2026

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Pakistan Shaheens departed from Karachi for Doha, Qatar in the wee hours of Monday to participate in the 50-over ACC Men's Asia Cup Rising Stars 2026, scheduled from 19 to 29 November, reported 24NewsHD TV channel.

The 15-member squad led by Abdul Samad will be joined in Doha by Ali Raza and Farhan Yousuf, who recently featured in the ACC Men's U19 Asia Cup in Oman.

Defending champions Pakistan Shaheens are placed in Group B alongside India 'A', Nepal and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). They will begin their campaign against UAE on 20 November, followed by matches against India 'A' on 22 November and Nepal on 24 November.

Talking exclusively to PCB Digital ahead of the team's departure, captain Abdul Samad said: "Our preparations have been good. We have played scenario-based matches throughout the week, while the coaching staff has worked hard with the players to prepare for the 50-over tournament. We are confident of putting up strong performances in the event.



"Our immediate focus is on winning the opening match and carrying that momentum forward in the tournament. Every player is aware of his role and responsibilities within the team. "If we execute our plans effectively, I am confident that we will achieve positive results, which will also benefit the players in the future events."

Pakistan Shaheens won the previous 50-over edition in 2023, beating India 'A' by 128 runs in the final in Sri Lanka, while in the previous edition which was played in T20 format, Shaheens clinched title by beating Bangladesh 'A' in a thrilling final decided by super-over.

Abdul Samad (captain), Ahmed Daniyal, Ali Raza, Danish Aziz, Farhan Yousuf, Haider Ali.

Senate panel questions CDA officers' Engineering degrees as 2 top officials fail to attend meeting

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: Serious questions over the educational qualifications, professional registration and posting of officers in the Capital Development Authority (CDA) have emerged during a Senate committee meeting, where lawmakers expressed dissatisfaction over incomplete official records and the absence of two senior officials, including the CDA Chairman.The Senate Functional Committee on Problems of Less Developed Areas took notice of concerns regarding diploma holders working against engineering posts and officers holding additional responsibilities in multiple positions.The committee demanded complete details of engineering degrees, registration with the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), and the appointments and postings of officers performing engineering related duties.The matter was discussed during a meeting of the Senate Functional Committee on Problems of Less Developed Areas, held at Old PIPS Hall, Parliament Lodges, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Senator Niaz Ahmed.Senators Kazim Ali Shah, Jan Muhammad and Aimal Wali Khan attended the meeting along with senior officials of the concerned government departments.At the beginning of the proceedings, the committee examined the information submitted by CDA concerning the educational and professional qualifications of officers serving in engineering positions.However, the committee found the departmental response incomplete and unsatisfactory.The absence of CDA Chairman and Director General Human Resource Development (HRD) further drew criticism from the committee.Senator Niaz Ahmed expressed displeasure over the failure of the two senior officials to attend the meeting when important questions regarding professional qualifications and administrative appointments were under examination.He directed that both officials must personally appear before the committee at its next meeting and provide complete records concerning the matter.The chairman also sought information about officers holding diplomas who were working against engineering posts and those exercising charge of more than one position.The committee questioned the differences in treatment between diploma holders and officers possessing Bachelor of Science degrees in Engineering.Members emphasized the need to examine these differences and ensure that appointments and assignments were made according to the relevant service rules and professional requirements.The chairman directed the department to address the disparity between diploma holders and engineering degree holders and submit a complete explanation.The committee also sought details of PEC registration of officers serving in engineering positions.The committee's demand for these records has brought attention to the procedures followed by CDA in assigning technical responsibilities and verifying the qualifications of its officers.Another issue concerned officers reportedly holding charge of multiple posts within the authority.The committee sought complete information about such arrangements to examine the basis on which additional responsibilities had been assigned.Members stressed the importance of proper documentation and clear administrative procedures in government institutions, particularly where technical qualifications are required for official responsibilities.The incomplete response from CDA prevented the committee from completing its examination of the matter.Consequently, the committee deferred further consideration and directed the CDA Chairman and Director General HRD to attend the next meeting with all relevant records.

Maqam art gallery opens in Rawalpindi with 23-Artist exhibition

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: MAQAM Art Gallery officially INTERWOVEN, a group exhibition featuring original artworks by 23 Pakistani artists.Pakistani film actor Arbaz Khan attended the opening ceremony as chief guest and appreciated the artworks displayed at the newly established gallery.Curated by Samra Cheema, the exhibition brings together diverse artistic styles, creative expressions and cultural perspectives, showcasing the richness of Pakistan's contemporary art scene.Owned by senior Pakistani artist Ghazanfar Iqbal,



who has over three decades of artistic experience, MAQAM Art Gallery aims to provide a dedicated platform for artists and promote original Pakistani artwork.Located at Plaza 147, Civic Center, Bahria Town, the two-level gallery seeks to strengthen connections between artists, collectors and art enthusiasts while contributing to the promotion of visual arts in the Rawalpindi–Islamabad region. The exhibition marks the beginning of the gallery's programme of curated exhibitions and future artistic activities: Photo by Asif Farooq.

Opinion & Editorial

DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD
Arif Mehmood Khan
Group Editor: 0333-5366814
Samra Athar Kakakhel
Resident Editor
Nadim Tanoli
Joint Editor: Mob-0301-7777874
Email: editor.peakpoint@gmail.com
www.peakpoint.pk

Running out of gas

Pakistan's natural gas reserves have depleted considerably over the years, forcing SSGC to restrict domestic supplies to three designated meal times a day. With indigenous production having declined by nearly half over the past decade, the country is struggling to meet even the basic energy needs of its population. The restrictions have added to the difficulties of households in Sindh and Balochistan, where prolonged outages and low gas pressure have already become commonplace. The problem is particularly acute for urban cities like Karachi, where households already contend with erratic supplies and rising utility bills. Even the assurance of gas during cooking hours offers little relief when pressure is insufficient to operate a stove. The illegal use of suction pumps and compressors, which deprives neighbouring households of their share, is another symptom of a distribution system in which scarcity has become normalised. Consumers should not have to compete for a basic utility, nor should they be expected to bear the consequences of failures in supply management. SSGC's available gas has fallen by almost 13% in a single year, while national production has reportedly halved over the past decade.

The IWT dilemma

Aisha Khan

THE Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) of 1960 has long been heralded as one of the most durable water-sharing agreements in history. Despite multiple wars and decades of profound political animosity between India and Pakistan, the IWT managed to survive, providing a fragile framework for regulating the shared waters of the Indus River system.

However, the delicate equilibrium of this treaty has been shattered. The move by India to place the IWT in abeyance is not merely a diplomatic protest; it represents a fundamental strategic pivot.

In an era increasingly defined by climate change and existential resource competition, the suspension of the IWT signals a shift toward a new, perilous world order where water security dictates state survival, and historical norms are rapidly eclipsed by the "law of the jungle."

To understand the severity of the hydro-political reality of scarcity, one must look beyond the immediate geopolitical friction and consider the changing hydrology and demography of the region. Climate change is rapidly altering the cryosphere of the Himalayas, which feeds the Indus basin. Glacial retreat, erratic monsoon patterns, and severe, prolonged droughts are making water availability increasingly unpredictable.

The World Resources Institute (WRI) provides a stark warning in its Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas, mapping a future where water becomes the most prized — and contentious — resource on the planet. According to WRI projections, vast swathes of the globe, including South Asia, face escalating levels of baseline water stress. By mid-century, trillions of dollars in GDP will be exposed to high water risk as demand drastically outstrips renewable supply. In such a landscape, water is no longer just an environmental issue; it is a fundamental driver of national security.

As resources diminish, states are becoming increasingly inward-looking. The international order, which once placed a premium on cooperation, is giving way to a more ruthless framework where states prioritise their own existential needs above collective agreements.

In this light, placing the IWT in abeyance is not a temporary diplomatic manoeuvre; it is a strategic preparation of the ground for an eventual unilateral withdrawal.

As water scarcity increases, the temptation for an upper-riparian state to leverage control over water flows to secure its own agricultural and energy requirements becomes overwhelming, effectively treating the resource as sovereign property rather than a shared heritage.

For Pakistan, the stakes are high because the Indus basin underpins agricultural production, rural livelihoods and food security.

The intensification of India's construction of storage dams along the Chenab River, despite the legal challenges and protests from Pakistan, is part of the strategic calculus and entirely consistent with this new paradigm. These projects allow for greater control, storage, and diversion of water.

For Pakistan, an agrarian economy whose very existence relies on the Indus system, this is not a developmental disagreement — it is an existential threat. The Chenab-Beas link tunnel and the Salal sediment bypass illustrate the dilemma.

Such projects may be presented as engineering responses to energy needs and sedimentation, yet transferring water between basins or modifying sediment-control infrastructure on a shared river raises both questions and concerns. The legal status and technical details of each project must be assessed individually for cumulative impact and downstream confidence.

In August 2026 the Court of Arbitration rejected India's unilateral abeyance of the treaty and reaffirmed that it remains in force. The court also ordered interim measures restricting specified construction at the Ratle hydroelectric project till 90 days after the Neutral Expert's final decision expected in July 2027.

Courtesy Dawn

Give us the police we deserve

Fahd Husain

Ten policemen were killed by terrorists in Kohat this week. This should have shocked the nation and jolted it out of its numbness. It did not. Another incident, another mass casualty, another statistic.

Someone should be seething. None more so than the Police Service of Pakistan.

In every briefing and every press conference on terrorism, we are reminded that police are the front line in the war against terror. Time and again pompous officials promise to arm and train the police on modern lines, and to equip them with everything required so they can take on the terrorists with an advantage. The tragic reality however is that these frontline warriors remain under-armed, under-trained and under-appreciated. They pay for this criminal apathy and neglect with their lives.

What makes it even more sad is that almost eight decades since our independence, Pakistanis continue to maintain a love-hate relationship with the police. In all these years, very little has changed in terms of police culture and ethos. Even less has changed in thanas where the citizens engage with the police on a daily basis. The institution itself is wrapped in contradictions and internal quagmires. It is, at the same time, a symbol of oppression and heroism; of incompetence and valour; of unprofessionalism and supreme courage. The men and women of the Pakistan police deserve better from the rulers and citizens of Pakistan. Citizens? No, I stand corrected. It is the leaders, every single one of them from 1947 till 2026, who are responsible. It was, and is, their responsibility, to have converted this colonial institution of control into a service-oriented professional force for the independent nation of Pakistan. They did not. Have not. Will not. The price is a steep one. For those citizens who have to deal with the police, and for those police who have to deal with terrorists.

Courtesy Tribune

DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

Atta Tarar calls for stronger regional trade, connectivity through ECO platform



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar emphasised the need for stronger regional trade, economic cooperation and connectivity through the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), highlighting Pakistan's improving relations with Central Asian states.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the 30th meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers, he said Pakistan had a positive role to play in promoting economic development, trade and regional linkages through multilateral platforms.

He said Pakistan's relations with Central Asian countries had improved considerably over the past few years, adding that the ECO provided an important forum for strengthening regional cooperation.

Atta Tarar said the participation of foreign ministers from ECO member countries in the Islamabad meeting reflected the importance of multilateral engagement and provided an opportunity to discuss matters of mutual interest. He said Pakistan had been hosting a series of high-level international engagements, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Heads of Government meeting last year, followed by visits by presidents and ministers from different countries.

The minister said Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar had hosted a dinner for visiting foreign ministers, while the Council's deliberations would continue throughout the day. The visiting dignitaries were also scheduled to meet the prime minister. Referring to the expected Islamabad Declaration, Atta Tarar said it would not be appropriate to comment on its contents before the conclusion of the Council of Ministers' meeting. He said Pakistan's diplomatic engagement and role in regional affairs had received international recognition, adding that multilateral forums where Pakistan assumed leadership responsibilities could further strengthen its diplomatic standing.

The minister also referred to Pakistan's role in facilitating mediation efforts between Iran and the United States, saying the country's contribution had been acknowledged internationally.

Highlighting the cultural dimension of the ECO gathering, Atta Tarar said the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had arranged cultural activities for local and international journalists, including media representatives accompanying visiting delegations, to showcase Pakistan's cultural diversity.

He said musical performances featuring national and regional songs from all four provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir were organised.

Ayaz Sadiq calls for stronger Pakistan Iran trade and regional cooperation

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has called for stronger trade, economic ties and regional cooperation between Pakistan and Iran, saying the two countries have historic and brotherly relations and significant opportunities to expand their partnership. He said Pakistan's Parliament was the first in the world to condemn the attack on Iran and had unanimously passed a resolution against it.He made these remarks during a meeting with Fada Hossein Maleki, Head of the Iran Pakistan Parliamentary Friendship Group in the Iranian Parliament, at Parliament House in Islamabad. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral relations, parliamentary cooperation, trade and economic ties, and regional peace and stability.Ayaz Sadiq said Pakistan had always supported peace and stability in the region. He stressed that both countries should increase their bilateral trade volume and explore new opportunities for economic cooperation and investment.Highlighting the importance of Gwadar Port, the Speaker said it could provide major opportunities for Iran and other regional countries to improve trade, connectivity and economic links. He called for exploring new ways to expand trade and investment through regional cooperation.The Speaker said terrorism.

At ECO moot, Dar calls for translating 'collective commitments into concrete action'

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar closed out the 30th meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) Council of Ministers in Islamabad on Monday with a call for countries to translate their commitments into action.

Pakistan, which holds the ECO chairmanship for 2026-27, is hosting the meeting under the theme "Reviving Regionalism for a Resilient ECO".

The deputy premier, who is chairing the meeting, expressed his "sincere appreciation to all delegations" for their constructive engagement during the meeting.

"The deliberations today have reaffirmed our shared commitment to regional economic cooperation and integration," Dar said.

He termed the adoption of the Strategic Goals of Economic Cooperation 2035 an "important milestone in charting the future course of our organisation over the next decade", saying that it provided a shared framework to advance regional priorities alongside the Islamabad Communiqué.

"Our task now is to translate our collective commitments into concrete action," he added. "This will require clear priorities, realistic timelines, and effective follow-up mechanisms."

He highlighted regional cooperation as a central pillar of Pakistan's foreign policy and noted that the country had consistently advocated a "stronger, more effective and responsive" ECO that harnessed "geographical proximity, historical bonds and economic complementarities". Dar underscored Pakistan's commitment to advancing the ECO agenda as the chair of the organisation and to working with all institutions and member states to strengthen regional connectivity, facilitate intra-regional trade and promote mutually beneficial economic cooperation. He looked forward to welcoming the countries back for the 31st meeting of the council of ministers in 2027, saying, "Let us build on the momentum generated here so that our next meeting can take stock of tangible progress in advancing our shared priorities."



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar with the Foreign Ministers and Heads of delegation of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states and the ECO Secretary-General at the 30th meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers.

Punjab to introduce anti-rape legislation, establish special courts: Azma Bokhari

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari on Monday said the province was planning to introduce its own anti-rape legislation and establish special courts to improve convictions in sexual violence cases, citing the low number of convictions and a rise in reported offences against women and children. Speaking at a press conference, Bukhari said only 0.77 per cent of rape cases had resulted in convictions in 2025, describing the rate as "very low". She said the provincial government had decided to introduce comprehensive legislation to ensure that those accused of crimes against women and children did not secure acquittals. The announcement followed a law and order meeting at which Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz sought statistics on offences against women and children. Bukhari said the meeting had taken important decisions to address the issue, including identifying areas reporting high numbers of domestic violence cases and placing those localities under monitoring. Bokhari also outlined figures.

Dr. Tariq terms PTI founder's letter contrary to facts

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Monday termed a letter written from jail by the PTI founder to the chief justices as contrary to the facts.

Speakng to the media at Parliament House, the minister said the letter was, in effect, a request for an NRO.

He said those who used to taunt others with the NRO label were now seeking one themselves. He said the PTI founder could obtain relief only through the courts. Rejecting the claim of political victimisation, he said the PTI founder was in jail because he had been convicted in the £190 million corruption case.

The minister said the £190 million was supposed to go to the national treasury but was instead transferred to Malik Riaz's account. In return, he, Malik Riaz, gifted the PTI founder around 450 kanals of land. He maintained that the case rests on clear and solid evidence. Rejecting the letter's allegations about a lack of medical facilities and non-compliance with court orders, the minister called them baseless.

He also denied claims that the PTI founder was held in solitary confinement for 22 hours.

New provinces in Punjab need of time, says Aleem Khan

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday said the creation of new provinces in Punjab, including Multan & Bahawalpur is an important need of the time, extending full support for holding referendum on the issues of new provinces.

Talking to media during his visit to Multan, the minister said that without the formation of new administrative units, it would not be possible to effectively address the problems of the masses and ensure public access to essential services.

Meaningful relief for the people cannot be ensured until new provinces are established.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that it would be a welcome step if the people of South Punjab voted in favour of new provinces in a Referendum.

He added that no one should fear that the creation of new provinces would undermine anyone's authority or so-called kingdom, emphasizing that sovereignty belongs to Allah.

Atif Khan Calls for Political Dialogue, Says PTI Should Be Treated as a Political Party

ZIYAD ALI SHAH



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and Member of the National Assembly Atif Khan has called for an end to what he described as the unfair treatment of his party, stressing that political differences should not justify such measures. Speaking to the media at Parliament House, Atif Khan said that PTI should be treated as a political party and that political workers should not be labelled as terrorists. "Political differences are one thing, but this kind of treatment is unacceptable," he said, adding that continued political confrontation would only increase hatred and division in the country.He stressed that PTI leaders should be allowed to meet their family members and called for a more democratic approach towards political opponents.Commenting on social media, Atif Khan said that information should be verified before being shared or circulated. He emphasised that every claim must be properly investigated before being passed on to others.Talking about the proposal to create new provinces in Pakistan, he said the issue should be discussed, adding that the decision must ultimately rest with the people. However, he observed that the current political situation was not suitable for establishing new provinces.Atif Khan said that transparent and credible elections were the only way to reset the country's political system. He called for fair elections, stressing that the country needed a democratic process to move forward.He also criticised the use of accountability as a tool to suppress political figures, saying that while those involved in corruption must be held accountable, accountability should not be used for political victimisation.The PTI leader further called on all political parties to sit together and find solutions to the country's challenges, emphasising that Pakistan's problems could only be resolved through broad-based political consensus.

Leghari invites Turkmenistan's minister of energy Annageldi Saparov to join CASA-1000

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division), Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Monday invited Turkmenistan's Minister of Energy, Annageldi Saparov to become part of the CASA-1000 project. The Turkmenistan's minister called on the Federal Minister for Energy on Monday,where Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) power transmission project was a key focus of the meeting. Both sides held detailed discussions on bilateral cooperation in the energy sector and regional grid connectivity. Awais Leghari also shared that Pakistan has encouraged Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to explore extending the CASA-1000 transmission line to Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.