

Mohsin Naqvi, Chinese Ambassador discuss security cooperation, law enforcement coordination



Effective measures, concrete planning indispensable to protect children from violence: Azam Nazeer Tarar



14-province idea on the table, says planning minister

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DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

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AJK leadership meets PM Shehbaz, Nawaz Sharif to discuss development, public welfare matters

PEAK POINT

MUZAFFARABAD: President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Dr. Muhammad Najeeb Naqi Khan and Prime Minister Syed Iftikhar Ali Gillani on Wednesday met with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif here.

During the meeting, they discussed matters pertaining to the development of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the federal government's sustained cooperation with the AJK government for the welfare of its people.

The meeting also featured discussion on the active role of the Punjab government for the uplift of the AJK people.

The AJK prime minister reiterated his resolve to ensure the implementation of development projects with full energy for the prosperity and welfare of the Kashmiri people

The participants of the meeting also discussed ensuring the implementation of promises made in the AJK elections.

The meeting was attended by Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz, federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Engineer Amir Muqam, Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, and Attaullah Tarar, Advisor to the Prime Minister Rana Sanaullah, Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Minister Punjab Marriyum Aurangzeb, Member of Azad Jammu.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, President PMLN Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz and members of the federal cabinet meet President of AJK Dr. Muhammad Najeeb Khan and Prime Minister of AJK Syed Iftikhar Ali Gillani, in Muzaffarabad.

'He who claims equity must come with clean hands': Asif hits back at Bilawal



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif joined others from the ruling PML-N on Wednesday in responding to PPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari following the latter's hard-hitting speech over several issues, including new provinces, constitutional tweaks and treatment of the opposition. "He who claims equity must come with clean hands," Asif reminded Bilawal in a post on X, as the wrangling between coalition partners PML-N and PPP appeared to deepen.

The exchange has particularly heated up after Bilawal delivered a no-holds-barred speech the previous day that covered the question of new provinces. The Bhutto scion also expressed support for several opposition demands and questioned past decisions and actions taken by the ruling coalition.

Bilawal referred to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's recommendation of holding a referendum to decide on the creation of new administrative units and said: "In our history, a referendum has always been carried out for an undemocratic act and never a democratic one."

China's Xi greets Trump on arrival at Shenzhen airport ahead of trilateral meeting with Putin



PEAK POINT

SHENZHEN: Chinese President Xi Jinping personally greeted Donald Trump at the airport as the US leader arrived Wednesday ahead of a trilateral meeting in Shenzhen that will also include Russia's Vladimir Putin, AFP footage showed.

After descending from Air Force One, Trump saluted as he stood alongside Xi on a red carpet lined with people waving colourful pom-poms and brandishing Chinese and American national flags, before the two leaders shook hands. According to Xinhua, Xi tells Trump that he wants a "constructive, strategically stable relationship" between China and the United States.

"I look forward to an in-depth exchange of views with you on major issues concerning China-US relations, Asia-Pacific cooperation, and the global landscape, with the aim of advancing a constructive, strategically stable relationship between our two nations — one built upon the foundations of mutual respect, fairness, and reciprocity," Xi said a day before formal talks with Trump and a trilateral summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Explosion heard in Saudi capital, missiles intercepted



PEAK POINT

SAUDI ARABIA: A powerful explosion rattled homes in Riyadh on Wednesday, AFP journalists and residents said, as Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis pressed their campaign of attacks against the kingdom.

The Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis also said they intercepted two cruise missiles -- the latest in weeks of strikes targeting military, civilian and oil infrastructure. Residents said Wednesday's explosion came without warning, with no mobile-phone alert issued beforehand as is usually the case during aerial threats. "The explosion was extremely loud," said a resident in northern Riyadh. "Hearing a blast without receiving a warning is very frightening." An AFP journalist said doors throughout her home swung open and the lights briefly went out. The location of the explosion was not immediately clear, but residents told AFP they saw smoke near Riyadh's airport in the northeast of the city. In October, a deadly attack targeting Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport killed 14 people and injured hundreds.

Army chief threatens 'more devastating' response if Iran attacked

PEAK POINT

TEHRAN: Iran's army chief Amir Hatami said on Wednesday that Tehran's response to any new attacks by the United States would be "more devastating" and directed at both US forces and their allies. "Should the enemy make a mistake and repeat actions that have previously led them to despair, our response -- directed at both the enemy and their backers -- will undoubtedly be even more devastating and will know no geographical boundaries.," Hatami said, according to Iran's Fars news agency.

15,000-tonne LPG cargo arrives from Abu Dhabi under new policy to ease shortages

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The government on Wednesday said it received the first cargo of 15,000 tonnes of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from Abu Dhabi after it introduced policy changes earlier this month to arrange imports through state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to ease supply constraints and contain rising prices in winter.

In a statement, the Petroleum Division said that SSGC LPG Limited (SSL) – a subsidiary of the state-run Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGCL) – had imported a record 15,000 metric tonnes of LPG cargo, the largest of its kind that berthed at Engro Vopak Terminal Limited (EVTL).

The shipment marks the first "major" import under the new LPG guidelines aimed at ensuring the availability of LPG at affordable



rates for the public, the statement said. The SSL arranged the cargo through competitive bidding at a price yet to be disclosed by the company. Petroleum Division officials said the company would publish details of the pricing components on its website in a couple of days, but claimed the SSL import had already dented market prices by Rs100 to Rs120 per kg. Separately, Petroleum Minister Ali Pervez Malik informally told journalists that another shipment arranged by Pakistan State Oil (PSO) was on its way to Karachi and would reach over the next two days, followed by others. He said LPG availability would address the pricing distortions in the market. On November 3, the federal cabinet approved new LPG pricing guidelines to enable SOEs to play a leading role in securing LPG supplies.

Previously, formal sector companies had exited imports due to regulatory constraints that prevented them from recovering procurement costs.

Under the cabinet decision, the government also directed state-owned companies to lead LPG imports and strengthen the country's supply chain, especially in winter.

The increased influx of LPG is expected to further improve market availability, ease supply constraints and help bring prices down through greater product availability. It will also enhance supplies to hilly, remote and far-flung areas, particularly during peak winter season. A welcome ceremony was held at Port Qasim to mark the arrival of the shipment, with Special Secretary Petroleum Mirza Nasir ud Din Mashood as the chief guest.

Pakistan Army conducts successful launch of Fatah-3 Supersonic Cruise Missile



PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Army conducted a successful launch of the Fatah-3 Supersonic Cruise Missile, marking another significant milestone in the advancement of national defence capabilities. The weapon system is equipped with advanced navigation and propulsion systems and is capable of engaging targets at long range with high precision and lethality at supersonic speed, according to an ISPR press release. Fatah-3 will significantly enhance the operational flexibility and strike reach of the Pakistan Army's Rocket Force Command, further strengthening the country's overall conventional deterrence and defence posture. The launch was witnessed by the Commander, Army Rocket Force.



DAILY PEAK POINT

SPORTS



Pakistan tighten grip on second Test as Sri Lanka stumble to 74-3



MOHSIN ALI

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan strengthened their grip on the second Test on Wednesday, taking a commanding 227-run first-innings lead before reducing Sri Lanka to 74-3 at stumps on the second day at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium.

After wicket-keeper-batter Ghazi Ghori's half-century and an explosive contribution from Razaullah helped Pakistan reach 325 all out, the hosts' fast bowlers struck repeatedly to leave Sri Lanka facing a daunting task on day three.

The visitors, who were dismissed for 98 in their first innings, still trail by 153 runs with seven wickets remaining.

Pakistan's innings had appeared in danger of ending with a considerably smaller advantage after Lahiru Kumara's five-wicket haul kept the hosts in check. But Ghazi's 54 off 90 balls, followed by Razaullah's brisk 42 from 32 deliveries, ensured Pakistan added valuable runs in the lower order.

Resuming at 121-3, Pakistan reached 221-7 at lunch. Azan Awais, who had made 47, was dismissed without adding to his overnight score, while nightwatchman Saqib Khan contributed 37 from 78 balls. Tayyab Arif had earlier made 46 off 82 deliveries.

Kumara was Sri Lanka's most effective bowler, removing Azan, Pakistan captain Babar Azam (eight), Saqib and Saud Shakeel (24) to put the visitors in a strong position. Asitha Fernando claimed three wickets, including those of Tayyab and Salman Ali Agha (21).

Ghazi then steadied the innings, reaching 54 with four boundaries before Milan Rathnayaka dismissed him. Aamer Jamal added 12, while Razaullah's aggressive knock, which included four fours and three sixes, lifted Pakistan beyond the 300-run mark.

Kumara eventually bowled Razaullah to finish with five for 95. The final three wickets added 104 runs after lunch, taking Pakistan to 325 in 87.5 overs.

Pakistan's head coach Mike Hesson described the batting effort as scrappy but praised the contributions that helped the side build its lead.

"It was a real scrappy performance for the bat," he said, singling out Kumara for his persistence and Ghazi for his half-century. Hesson also highlighted Saqib's contribution as nightwatchman, saying he had batted for almost 100 minutes.

Ghazi's goal in vain as 10-man Pakistan lose SAFF final to India



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Pakistan's historic quest for their maiden SAFF Championship title ended in heartbreak as India came from behind to secure a 2-1 victory in Tuesday's final at Dhaka's National Stadium, capitalising on a second-half red card that left the Shaheens with 10 players for the final half-hour. Pakistan produced an impressive first-half performance, controlling possession and creating several attacking opportunities. Their persistence was rewarded in stoppage time when Alamgir Ghazi struck a superb goal to give the Shaheens a 1-0 advantage at the break.

The move originated from a corner that India initially cleared. Pakistan regained possession, and Junaid Shah delivered a cross from the left. The ball deflected off an Indian defender before reaching Ghazi, who curled a brilliant finish into the top corner in the 45th minute of added time.

India returned with renewed determination and began applying sustained pressure. However, Pakistan goalkeeper Yousuf Butt kept his team ahead with an important save against PV Vishnu in the 51st minute. The final's turning point arrived in the 59th minute when VAR review.

Zohaib, Yahya among nine Pakistanis advancing in Subh-e-Nau J-30 Tennis



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Pakistan's junior boys made a strong impression at the J-30 Subh-e-Nau Pakistan World Junior Tennis Championships 2026, with nine local players recording victories in the second round of the boys' singles round-robin competition at the PTF Tennis Complex in Islamabad. Zohaib Afzal Malik and Muhammad Yahya led the home challenge, joined by Ahtesham Humayun, Abdul Basit, Amir Mazari, Muhammad Hassan Usmani, Inam Qadir, Muhammad Muaz and Omar Jawad Malik in the list of successful Pakistani players. Zohaib delivered one of the most convincing performances of the day, defeating Kazakhstan's Alshinhan Mikhamedkali 6-0, 6-1. Omar was equally impressive, overcoming Kazakhstan's Miras Aidarbek 6-0, 6-3, while Abdul Basit swept aside Thailand's Pittinan Jaturonroj 6-0, 6-2.

Ahtesham defeated Thailand's Tachatam Srisen 6-4, 6-2, and Amir Mazari beat another Thai opponent, Shaan Laoamornpanich, 6-4, 6-2. Muhammad Muaz secured a 6-1, 6-4 win over Abdaar Ali, while Hassan Usmani defeated Sanzhar Bolat 6-0, 6-3 in an all-Pakistani encounter. Yahya advanced by walkover against Sri Lanka's Rahil Rizvie, as did Inam Qadir against India's Rudransh Patan.

The tournament features 55 players, including 33 boys and 22 girls, representing 16 countries. The international junior event is being staged at the federal capital's PTF Tennis Complex, Garden Avenue. Shahida Kauser Farooq, chairperson of Subh-e-Nau and tournament director, visited the venue, watched the matches and met participating players. The girls' singles second round also produced several.

DP and MP record thrilling wins in Battle Axe Polo Cup



12th H.M.S. Chaudhry Amateur Golf Cup tees off at Defence Raya on 19th

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Pakistan's leading amateur golfers will assemble at the Defence Raya Golf & Country Club from November 19 to 22 for the 12th Vice Admiral H.M.S. Chaudhry Amateur Golf Cup 2026, an event aimed at promoting competitive golf and nurturing sporting talent across the country. The four-day tournament, organised with the support of Pakistan Navy, will feature competitions in amateur, senior amateur and ladies' categories, providing golfers from different age groups and playing levels an opportunity to demonstrate their skills.

Addressing a media briefing, Commander Central Punjab Rear Admiral Sohail Ahmad Azmie highlighted the Pakistan Navy's continued commitment to promoting sports and encouraging healthy competition. He said the championship had developed into one of the country's prominent amateur golfing events, offering players a valuable platform to test themselves against leading national competitors.

The main amateur category will feature golfers with handicaps of 14 or less, with the title decided over 36 holes across two days. Experience, strategic decision-making and effective course management are expected to play important roles in determining the winners. The ladies' category will also be part of the championship, featuring women golfers with handicaps of 24 or below in an 18-hole competition. Their participation will provide an opportunity to showcase the growing strength and development of women's golf in Pakistan. Rear Admiral Azmie emphasised.



handicaps of 10 or below. Participants will compete over 54 holes across three days, playing 18 holes daily. The demanding format is designed to test their consistency, concentration and technical ability throughout the championship. The senior amateur competition will be open to golfers carrying

Saad Habib shines as sole Pakistani to make cut in New Zealand





Daily Peak Point, November 19, 2026

DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

Audit questions 336,997 extra malaria screenings in KP, Rs 25.72 million paid to absent or unqualified workers

NADEEM TANOLI

ISLAMABAD: Serious financial irregularities and suspected inflation of patient screening figures have emerged in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Global Fund supported health programmes after federal auditors found that 336,997 more malaria screenings were reported than the number of diagnostic kits issued, while Rs 25.727 million was paid to workers who were either absent during a mosquito net distribution campaign or lacked required educational documents.The special audit also questioned Rs 9.268 million spent on vehicles not listed as Global Fund assets, identified losses of Rs 8.2 million in a hospital warehouse fire and raised objections over the appointment of a senior laboratory official.According to the Auditor General of Pakistan's Special Audit Report on Global Fund grants covering 2015 to 2023, the Integrated Vector Management Programme in the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa received and issued 1,540,535 rapid diagnostic test kits between 2019 and 2023.However, the programme reported screening 1,877,532 patients during the same period. Auditors questioned how 336,997 additional screenings could have been conducted without corresponding testing kits.The report warned that the figures might have been inflated to justify additional demand for medical supplies, raising concerns about the reliability of patient records and possible misuse of donor resources.The management did not submit a response to the objection.The Departmental Accounts Committee, during its meeting on January 27, 2026, directed the Common Management Unit to obtain a written explanation and submit a detailed report to the Ministry of National Health Services and audit authorities.Another serious objection concerned Rs 162.457 million spent on hiring 8,376 workers for distributing mosquito nets in nine merged tribal districts.The campaign was intended to distribute approximately 1.487 million insecticide treated nets to 352,000 households.Auditors found that Rs 25.727 million had been paid to individuals who were absent during distribution activities or had not submitted mandatory educational documents. The required recruitment records, advertisements and selection criteria were also unavailable during the audit.The auditors further questioned the hiring of Telenor's payment services without open competition and said household registration records were not provided to verify actual distribution.Management maintained that workers had been hired temporarily under difficult security conditions and that exemptions from educational requirements had been approved.It also claimed that payment and recruitment records were available.However, auditors rejected the explanation and recommended an investigation and action against responsible officials.The report also identified serious concerns regarding malaria treatment.According to official records, 219,129 confirmed malaria cases were reported in the merged districts between 2020 and 2023.During the same period, 108,600 doses of Artemether and Lumefantrine were received, but only 94,000 doses were issued, leaving 14,600 doses unused.Auditors observed that medicine availability and distribution did not properly match the reported disease burden, creating risks of inadequate treatment. Management did not respond to this objection either. Another financial irregularity involved Rs 9.268 million spent by the TB Control Centre, Peshawar, on fuel, oil, lubricants and vehicle repairs between 2015 and 2023.According to the audit, four vehicles receiving these expenses were not recorded as vehicles provided under Global Fund grants.Management argued that the vehicles were used exclusively for programme activities and that the expenditure was necessary.Auditors rejected the explanation, recommended recovery and called for responsibility to be fixed.Meanwhile, the audit disclosed that medical equipment and medicines worth Rs 8.2 million were destroyed in a fire at the tuberculosis programme warehouse at District Headquarters Hospital, Mardan, on February 10, 2021.The destroyed items included a GeneXpert machine valued at Rs 3 million, medicines worth Rs 3 million, a microscope worth Rs 800,000 and other equipment.An official inquiry linked the fire to an electrical short circuit, unsafe wiring, missing fire extinguishers and congested storage conditions.Auditors criticized the failure to identify officials responsible for the negligence. The Departmental Accounts Committee directed a fresh inquiry and ordered proper fire safety arrangements, including smoke detectors and regular inspections.The audit also questioned the deployment of two Global Fund vehicles outside the TB Control Programme.A Toyota Hilux was handed to the Transport Officer of the Directorate General Health Services, while a Suzuki Carry Van was assigned to former Special Secretary Health Fayaz Sherpao.Management claimed that both vehicles were temporarily used for official health activities and had been returned.Auditors maintained that handing donor funded vehicles to unauthorized personnel violated asset management requirements.Another controversial finding concerned the 2015 appointment of Sajjad Ahmad as Senior Lab Supervisor. The audit observed that he was allowed to participate in recruitment despite initially submitting a course completion certificate instead of the required bachelor's degree, while other applicants were rejected for incomplete documentation. Management defended the appointment, stating that he possessed a 2014 degree in Medical Laboratory Technology and that his qualifications had subsequently been verified by the Higher Education Commission.The audit maintained that the supporting documents had not been produced to rebut its objection and recommended further investigation. Separately, auditors identified 56 people in a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa sample who received tuberculosis social support payments despite not appearing on the verified eligibility list.The committee directed an investigation and verification of the payments.Field inspections also identified weak medicine records, improper storage and shortcomings in diagnostic facilities in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Khyber and Mardan. The audit findings have raised serious questions about financial accountability and patient care in donor supported health programmes. The Departmental Accounts Committee has directed investigations, recovery where justified, improved recordkeeping and action against officials found responsible.

Opinion & Editorial

DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

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The revenue zigzag

A familiar jugglery of figures is underway between the federation and the provinces. Struggling to meet its revenue targets - and burdened by the 7th NFC Award, which hands 57.5% of net federal taxes to the provinces - Islamabad has struck a deal of convenience with the federating units. While the rationale behind this provincial largesse remains unclear, a staggering Rs1.035 trillion in cash grants will flow back to the federal exchequer. Even Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, long at odds with the Centre over its withheld dues, has agreed to pitch in Rs157 billion annually. This figure also absorbs the Rs17.8 billion previously deducted at source from the reluctant province's NFC share. The agreement signed earlier this month is being seen as a win-win proposition under Article 164 of the Constitution, which enables cash grants to the Centre. The point, however, is that it is a zigzag under duress, as the present political setup lacks credibility. K-P, under Governor's Rule, is obviously not in a position to put up any resistance, unlike the suspended two-thirds majority government of the PTI. Chief Minister Sohail Afridi had moved the Federal Constitutional Court claiming Rs964 billion from the Federal Consolidated Fund regarding the continued extension of the 7th NFC Award and the merger of the erstwhile FATA into the province.

Predatory medicine

Murad Moosa Khan

"Medicine carries a morality that is destroyed when the emphasis is placed on the bottom line. Unless humanism and professionalism remain, medicine will become just another commodity in life's marketplace." — Dr William W. Parmley

MEDICINE has traditionally been regarded as a profession founded on trust, compassion and an ethical commitment to heal. Patients entrust doctors with their bodies, their fears and, often, their lives. This relationship rests on an implicit promise: that medical decisions will be guided by the patient's best interests. But what happens when the business of medicine begins to take precedence over the practice of medicine? In his book Predatory Medicine, US cardiologist Jack Vangrow draws attention to an uncomfortable reality: healthcare can become an extractive enterprise in which patients are exploited. He describes how both practitioners and institutions who should be protecting patients, instead exploit patients' limited medical knowledge and trust. The commercialisation of medicine may not be inherently unethical. Private hospitals, clinics, labs and pharmaceutical firms have an important role in healthcare delivery. Medical innovation and research require investment, and healthcare professionals deserve fair remuneration. The problem arises when profit becomes the dominant consideration and the patient's wellbeing becomes secondary.

Healthcare is a rapidly expanding commercial market in a country where millions cannot afford basic treatment. Predatory medicine describes many practices that lead to profit-making: unnecessary investigations, excessive prescriptions, avoidable surgical procedures, inappropriate hospital admissions, inflated bills and the promotion of expensive treatments when cheaper, equally effective alternatives exist.

The fundamental problem is the profound imbalance of knowledge and power between doctors and patients. Most patients cannot independently assess whether an investigation is necessary, whether a diagnosis is accurate or whether a proposed intervention offers meaningful benefit. They depend on their physician's integrity and competence. When that trust is exploited, the consequences can be both financial and physical. Vangrow highlights the culture of professional complicity: doctors who recognise questionable practices but remain silent to protect their careers, professional relationships or financial interests. Predatory medicine, therefore, is not simply about a few unethical practitioners; it becomes embedded in the institutional culture.

Vangrow's observations are highly relevant for Pakistan, where private healthcare has become a hugely lucrative business, while a chronically underfunded public health system struggles to provide even basic services. The private medical sector continues to grow exponentially, with private hospitals, specialist clinics, diagnostic labs and pharmaceutical firms dominating healthcare delivery.

According to Pakistan's National Health Accounts 2021-22, total health expenditure stood at approximately Rs1.96 trillion, with the private sector accounting for 52.6 per cent. Much of this expenditure comes directly from household pockets. The World Bank's latest available data show that out-of-pocket payments accounted for approximately 53pc of Pakistan's current health expenditure in 2023. These figures illustrate the extent to which healthcare costs are transferred from the state to individual households. They also reveal a stark contradiction: healthcare is a rapidly expanding commercial market in a country where millions cannot afford basic treatment. Public health expenditure remains around one per cent of GDP, leaving government hospitals chronically under-resourced, overcrowded and struggling with shortages of medicines, equipment and personnel. While wealthier Pakistanis can access private healthcare, the poor have to suffer the indignity of treatment at government facilities, underscoring a deeply unequal healthcare system.

Courtesy Dawn

What problems to solve?

Muhammad Hamid Zaman

When I first started working in global health nearly two decades ago – coming from the world of engineering and technology – I was a firm believer in the mission of frugal innovation, or context appropriate technology. The idea was that technology can solve some of the most pressing problems we see in the developing countries, but because necessary infrastructure does not exist, we need to create technology that works in these locations. To carry out this mission, schemes with grand ideas were unveiled. These were the days of programmes including "one laptop per child" – the notion that if we give a laptop to each child around the world, we would be able to make extraordinary gains in education. Ideas such as a 100 dollar laptop came from this mindset. The campaign lasted for about a decade, and then ended abruptly as it failed miserably. Today no one really talks about it.

In my own discipline of biomedical engineering, there was extraordinary excitement around paper-based diagnostics changing the face of disease detection. There were claims that a 'device' printed on paper, about the size of a postage stamp, could potentially eliminate the need for many heavy-duty diagnostics. The results of that promise did not materialise in any substantial way either. Most of those companies, that made such promises, do not exist today.

And then there was this broader movement about using local materials, local knowledge and local innovations to solve local problems. A whole bunch of 'innovations' came to the fore, and while some local individuals were able to improve their financial condition by creating small businesses or find ways to support their families, by and large, these innovations did not scale. Large number of those who lived in slums, or in refugee camps, were not able to break free from the shackles of injustice or abject poverty.

Courtesy Tribune

DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

Thar coal mining to shift from diesel to grid power, saving $30m annually



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Under the proactive, vigilant and visionary leadership of the Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari, work formally begins on moving Thar coal mining from diesel to the national grid, which will save Pakistan around $25 million to $30 million in foreign exchange every year. The contract has been awarded and completion has been brought forward to the first quarter of 2028 (by April 2028), well ahead of the original end-2028 target by roughly eight to nine months, said a press release. The progress was reported today at a review meeting on the electrification of Thar Block I and Block II chaired by the Federal Minister, and attended by representatives from the Thar Coal and Energy Board (TCEB), Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company (SECMC), Sino Sindh Resources Limited (SSRL), the Power Division, and Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO). Under the direction of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the Power Division has moved from planning to execution of this project, which will connect mining operations in both blocks to the grid through 132kV transmission infrastructure from the Islamkot Grid Station and supply around 60 megawatts of electricity to the mining sites. Finishing earlier means the savings begin earlier.

The gains are direct and measurable. Daily diesel savings are projected at around Rs25 million. The cost of coal production—and consequently the coal tariff—is expected to fall by about $0.70 per ton, lowering the overall power purchase basket cost. Power for mining operations, which costs around 33 cents per kilowatt-hour when generated from diesel, will drop to 13 cents, a reduction of over 60 percent. Mining currently burns between 200,000 and 250,000 liters of diesel a day, including about 35,000 liters for dewatering alone. Much of that will now be replaced by cheaper electricity.

The reform also delivers a cleaner future. Carbon emissions are expected to fall by about 80,000 tons a year, and diesel-powered mining vehicles will be progressively converted to electric systems, supporting long-term decarbonization goals.

During the meeting, the Managing Director of TCEB briefed the Minister that both blocks are actively pursuing electric vehicle (EV) deployment, with Block I planning to induct approximately 40 EV trucks by the end of this year and Block II targeting to initiate EV deployment in 2028 alongside the completion of grid connectivity.

Thar coal is a key component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and central to Pakistan's energy security. Appreciating the coordination among all stakeholders and emphasizing.

Ayaz Sadiq congratulates Nation on successful test of Fatah-3 Supersonic Cruise Missile

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has congratulated the nation on the successful test of the Fatah-3 supersonic cruise missile, describing it as a manifestation of Pakistan's defence and technological capabilities.In his message, the speaker paid tribute to the scientists and engineers involved in the development and successful testing of the Fatah-3 missile.He said the successful test marked an important milestone towards further strengthening Pakistan's national defence capabilities.Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said the nation was proud of the professional expertise demonstrated by the Pakistan Armed Forces, scientists and engineers, adding that their achievements reflected Pakistan's growing technological self-reliance.He said strengthening Pakistan's defence capabilities was essential for safeguarding the country's sovereignty, security and protection.The speaker said the successful Fatah-3 test was a testament to the tireless efforts and commitment of experts working for the country's national defence.He maintained that a strong defence of Pakistan was of key importance for peace and stability in the region.Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said the entire nation was proud of the achievements of Pakistan's armed forces, scientists and engineers.

Effective measures, concrete planning indispensable to protect children from violence: Azam Nazeer Tarar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, has reaffirmed Pakistan's global commitment to ending violence against children, emphasizing that effective measures and concrete action planning are indispensable to protecting every child in every setting. Addressing the 2nd Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children in Manila, Philippines, on Wednesday, the Federal Minister stated that the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees the protection of the family, mother, and child, and provides free and compulsory education to every child aged five to sixteen. He noted that Pakistan is advancing the pledge made at the BogoUNiCaetá Conference—to keep children safe from all forms of violence—with tangible practical measures and a clear roadmap in Manila today. Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar informed the conference participants that last month, Pakistan launched its first-ever National Strategy to End Violence Against Children (2026–2031), alongside the formulation of the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Policy. He clarified that a comprehensive action plan, annual work plans, and clear responsibilities for federal ministries, provinces, and territories are being established to ensure effective implementation of this strategy.

Highlighting the expansion of the country's child protection system, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar stated that Pakistan had 42 Child Protection Units at the time of the first global conference, which have now been expanded to 81 districts. He said the government aims to extend effective child protection mechanisms to 100 districts by 2030. This system will adopt an integrated, multisectoral approach to address all forms of exploitation, including technology-facilitated violence, while further strengthening improved data and accountability frameworks.



MANILA: Federal Minister for Law & Justice and Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, in a group photo with global delegates and ministers on the occasion of the 2nd Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence against children in Manila,Philippines.

Khawaja Asif arrives in Brussels to attend Schuman Security, Defence Forum

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has arrived in Brussels to participate in the two-day Schuman Security and Defence Forum at the special invitation of European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President Kaja Kallas.

During the forum, the defence minister will present Pakistan's perspective on regional and global security developments and key defence-related issues. His engagements in Brussels will also include meetings with senior European Union officials responsible for defence and security.

Pakistan's high-level participation in the forum reflects its commitment to promoting international peace, security and defence cooperation.

It also highlights Pakistan's defence capabilities, diplomatic significance and constructive role in international affairs. Pakistan remains committed to contributing to global peace and stability.

JICA seeks stronger education ties with Pakistan

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Headquarters is visiting Pakistan this week to strengthen education cooperation, with a special focus on improving access to quality education and addressing the challenge of out-of-school children.

The JICA delegation, led by Ms. KOMORI Akiko, Deputy Director General of the Human Development Department and Director of the Basic Education Group at JICA Headquarters, has sought a courtesy meeting with the Honourable Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, during its visit from 18 to 20 November.

The proposed meeting aims to provide an opportunity for the JICA delegation to brief the Honourable Federal Minister on Japan's ongoing education cooperation in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh, and to exchange views on key education sector priorities, including out-of-school children, strengthening foundational learning, expanding girls' access to education, and enhancing support from development partners, including the Global Partnership.

Mustafa Kamal slams Bilawal for talking about shedding blood of Mohajirs

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Health Minister and MQM-P leader Syed Mustafa Kamal on Wednesday said that he was saddened by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's yesterday's speech. Speaking at Islamabad Press Club, he said it was unfortunate that Bilawal talked about shedding the blood of the people belonging to Mohajir community. "Late prime minister Benazir Bhutto was killed in Rawalpindi, but Karachi witnessed violence on a large-scale," he said, adding that the businesses of Mohajirs were set ablaze in Karachi and Hyderabad according to a well-orchestrated plan. "Even Mohajir women were not spared and they were raped," Kamal claimed. The minister made it clear to Bilawal that in case of bloodshed in Karachi or any other part of Sindh, he would be responsible for that. He said it was an irony that the PPP chairman turned a blind eye to what he called 'genocide' of Mohajirs for the last 79 years. Kamal accused Bilawal of using 'Sindh Card'.

Effective measures, concrete planning indispensable to protect children from violence: Azam Nazeer Tarar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, has reaffirmed Pakistan's global commitment to ending violence against children, emphasizing that effective measures and concrete action planning are indispensable to protecting every child in every setting.

Addressing the 2nd Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children in Manila, Philippines, on Wednesday, the Federal Minister stated that the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees the protection of the family, mother, and child, and provides free and compulsory education to every child aged five to sixteen. He noted that Pakistan is advancing the pledge made at the BogoUNiCaetá Conference—to keep children safe from all forms of violence—with tangible practical measures and a clear roadmap in Manila today.

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar informed the conference participants that last month, Pakistan launched its first-ever National Strategy to End Violence Against Children (2026–2031), alongside the formulation of the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Policy. He clarified that a comprehensive action plan, annual work plans, and clear responsibilities for federal ministries, provinces, and territories are being established to ensure effective implementation of this strategy. Highlighting the expansion of the country's child protection system, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar stated that Pakistan had 42 Child Protection Units at the time of the first global conference, which have now been expanded to 81 districts. He said the government aims to extend effective child protection mechanisms to 100 districts by 2030. This system will adopt an integrated, multisectoral approach to address all forms of exploitation, including technology-facilitated violence, while further strengthening improved data and accountability frameworks.

The Federal Minister stressed the importance of positive parenting training, nonviolent discipline, and reforming social and gender norms that perpetuate violence against children. In this regard, Pakistan has developed a training manual titled "Art of Parenting," under which Master Trainers across the country are working closely with families and educational institutions. Referring to legal reforms, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar noted that over the past two years, new legislation has been enacted in Islamabad, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan to set the minimum age of marriage at 18 years. Furthermore, steps are underway to further strengthen existing laws against corporal punishment and ensure their effective enforcement. During the conference, the Federal Minister commended the hospitality of the Government of the Philippines, as well as the efforts of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF for placing child protection and well-being at the center of the global agenda, adding that ending violence against children is not possible through the isolated efforts of any single country and requires global cooperation, exchange of mutual experiences, and joint action.