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**At India's invitation, Pakistan to attend SCO Civilisations Dialogue Forum in New Delhi**


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DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

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# Pakistan, Qatar sign MoU on security cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Qatar on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on security cooperation, along with an action plan to prevent drug smuggling. The MoU was signed between Qatar's Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) and the Federal Constabulary, according to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, who is currently visiting Pakistan, signed the documents. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also witnessed the signing ceremony, the statement said.

The PMO handout said that the premier "warmly" welcomed the visiting dignitary on "on his first visit to Pakistan and reaffirmed the longstanding brotherly relations between Pakistan and Qatar".

"He expressed the hope that the visit would further strengthen cooperation between the ministries of interior and relevant institutions of the two brotherly countries," it said.

PM Shehbaz also conveyed his greetings to the Qatari emir and thanked the country's leadership for its "unwavering support to Pakistan".

"He particularly appreciated Qatar's continued supply of liquefied natural gas, which contributes to meeting Pakistan's energy requirements," the statement said.



**ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif witnesses the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Security Coooperation between the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) of Qatar and Federal Constabulary of Pakistan.**

## Security forces kill 22 India-backed terrorists in KP operations: ISPR



PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed 22 India-backed Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists during multiple engagements across parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday. According to the military's media wing, the terrorists were killed during operations conducted between November 16 and 17. The ISPR said that security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in South Waziristan district.

"During the conduct of the operation, troops effectively engaged khawarij location and after intense exchange of fire, fifteen khawarij belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna al-Khawarij were sent to hell," it said.

In two separate encounters in Bannu district, security forces effectively engaged militant hideouts and neutralised six terrorists, the ISPR said, adding that another terrorist was eliminated in an encounter in Tank district.

Weapons and ammunition have also been recovered from killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area. Sanitisation operations were being conducted to eliminate.

## CDF Munir briefed on ongoing operations during Balochistan visit: ISPR



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir was briefed on counterterrorism operations during a visit to Turbat, Balochistan, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a press release on Thursday. CDF Munir received a comprehensive briefing on "the prevailing security environment, operational preparedness and successful ongoing operations against externally sponsored terrorism", ISPR said. He was also informed of progress in ongoing socioeconomic development initiatives in Balochistan. CDF Munir, in interactions with the troops, "commended their high state of operational preparedness, professionalism and unwavering resolve to defend the motherland, amidst challenging operational conditions", ISPR said. He also laid a floral wreath at the Shuhada Monument. The army chief reaffirmed Pakistan army's "unwavering commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Balochistan in their continued pursuit of peace, prosperity and sustainable development".

Upon his arrival in Turbat, the CDF was received by Corps Commander Balochistan, the ISPR statement added.

In a separate statement, ISPR said security forces had killed 22 terrorists earlier this week, on Nov 16 and 17, during multiple engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The operations in South Waziristan, Bannu and Tank were conducted on Monday and Tuesday.

## Navy's combat capabilities significantly enhanced across all operational domains: Admiral Ashraf



PEAK POINT

NOWSHERA: Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Naveed Ashraf on Thursday said the Pakistan Navy has significantly enhanced its combat capabilities across all operational domains.

He made the remarks while addressing the graduation parade of the Pakistan Air Force Academy Asghar Khan in Risalpur in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Nowshera district. CNS Admiral Ashraf stated that the Pakistan Navy was making significant headway towards modernising its fleet.

"The induction of state-of-the-art warships, Hangor-class submarines, indigenously developed long-range weapons, unmanned systems, and the establishment of Pakistan Maritime Science & Technology Park are some of the important developments taking place," he highlighted. The naval chief further said that the navy's combat capabilities "have recently undergone significant enhancement and transformation across all operational domains aligned with contemporary and future warfare demands".

## Airspace ban on Indian aircraft extended till Dec 23

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has extended its airspace ban on Indian aircraft until Dec 23, according to a Notice to Airmen (Notam) issued by the Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA).

The previous extension of the ban was set to expire on Nov 24. "Pakistan airspace not available for Indian registered aircraft and aircraft operated/owned or leased by Indian airlines/operators, including military flights," the Notam said.

According to the notice, the ban will remain in place until 23:59 on Dec 23.

## China and Russia release 'peace declaration' after Trump, Xi, Putin meeting

PEAK POINT

SHENZHEN: Chinese President Xi Jinping and his US and Russian counterparts Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin agreed on a "peace declaration" at their unprecedented three-way meeting on Thursday in which they reaffirmed that a nuclear war should never be fought, China and Russia said.

In the declaration, the three leaders also pledged to advance reforms of the United Nations, to increase supplies of refined petroleum products for all countries and to uphold the immunity enjoyed by state officials in international courts. The document was released by Chinese state news agency Xinhua and by the Kremlin. None of the presidents made immediate statements after their meeting and Trump departed on his flight back to the US. Earlier, the leaders of the world's biggest nuclear powers, sitting at a round table in a villa nestled among wooded hills beside a lake in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, described their meeting as historic. "We are really making history," Trump told Xi and Putin at the start of the meeting before journalists were sent away. "No peace was ever forged by declining opportunities for engagement." Putin, fresh from a setback in his war against Ukraine after the crippling of a key bridge linking Crimea to Russia, said the three countries had "numerous shared interests in the settlement of regional conflicts, including obviously the conflict in Ukraine". Unlike Trump and Putin, Xi did not make a direct reference to Ukraine, but said: "History tells us that when major powers live in harmony, the world is at peace. When major powers clash, the world falls into turmoil."



The three countries have deep differences over Ukraine, Iran, nuclear weapons and trade, casting doubts about a durable outcome. Their meeting on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific summit has unnerved smaller countries that fear their interests might be disregarded.

Before the trilateral, Trump met Xi and Putin separately, referring to both as friends. Trump said both he and Xi felt strongly about oil having to flow through the Strait of Hormuz, which has been disrupted by the Iran war. Xi did not directly mention Iran in any of his remarks. "China, Russia, and the United States should continue encouraging parties to conflicts to sit down and engage in talks, and resolve disputes through political and diplomatic means," Xi said.

## 10 killed as Karachi-bound passenger coach, LPG bowser collide on Makran coastal highway near Ormara



PEAK POINT

GWADAR: At least 10 people, including a woman and a child, were killed and several others sustained burn injuries when a Karachi-bound passenger coach collided with a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bowser and caught fire near Basol in Ormara on Thursday, police said. Superintendent of Police (SP) Makran Coastal Highway Police Muhammad Aslam Bangulzai confirmed the death toll, saying the coach was travelling from Turbat to Karachi when the collision occurred. "The impact triggered a fire that quickly engulfed both vehicles, trapping passengers inside," he added. Rescue teams, coastal highway police personnel and local administration officials rushed to the scene, while the injured were taken to the Ormara Health Centre for treatment, Bangulzai said.



DAILY PEAK POINT

# SPORTS



# Pakistan inch closer to victory in second Test despite Sri Lanka fightback




MOHSIN ALI

RAWALPINDI: Sri Lanka mounted a determined rearguard to stave off an innings defeat and frustrate Pakistan on the third day of the second and final Test, reaching 309-9 at stumps at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

The visitors, however, remain in a precarious position, with an overall lead of 82 runs and just one wicket left.

Milan Rathnayake led the resistance with an unbeaten 60, while Kusal Mendis and Sonal Dinusha contributed half-centuries to keep Sri Lanka in the contest.

Their effort ensured the match would continue into a fourth day, although Pakistan will believe they have done enough to remain favourites to secure victory.

Sri Lanka added 235 runs during the day after resuming at 74-3, still trailing by 153. Pakistan had taken a commanding 227-run first-innings lead after dismissing the visitors for 98 and then making 325 in reply.

The hosts had further strengthened their position by taking three Sri Lankan wickets before stumps on Wednesday.

They continued to apply pressure on Thursday morning, with Aamer Jamal trapping Dhananjaya de Silva lbw for 37. The batter reviewed the decision, but the original call stood, leaving Sri Lanka at 99-4.

Razaullah then accounted for Pasindu Sooriyabandara, who had battled for 116 deliveries to make 38.

The right-arm fast bowler found the edge, and wicket-keeper Ghazi Ghori dived to his left to complete an impressive catch. Sri Lanka went to lunch at 166-5, with Kusal on 32 and Dinusha on 19.

The pair provided the backbone of the recovery after the interval, putting together an 81-run partnership for the sixth wicket. Kusal, playing a patient innings, reached his 24th Test half-century, striking eight fours in his 126-ball 53.

Pakistan finally broke the stand when Salman Ali Agha dismissed the Sri Lankan captain at 215-6. Mendis attempted to sweep the off-spinner but played the ball onto his leg stump, departing after having helped steady the innings.

Dinusha continued to resist, finding support from Rathnayaka, who came in after Kusal's dismissal. The pair added 53 for the seventh wicket, taking Sri Lanka past Pakistan's first-innings total and into the lead.

# Khairpur sugar Junior National Squash: Raheel victor stuns third seed Abdul Rehman



PEAK POINT

KARACHI: (Sports Reporter) The quarter-final line-ups for the 5th Khairpur Sugar National Junior and Girls Squash Championship have been completed, with Sindh's Raheel Victor producing a major upset in the Boys Under-15 category by defeating third seed Abdul Rehman Shourim of Punjab.All seeded players in the remaining categories secured victories in their pre-quarter-final matches.The championship, carrying a total prize money of Rs8 million?The tournament, carrying a total prize money of Rs800,000, is being organised by the Sindh Squash Association in collaboration with Khairpur Sugar Mills at the Venus Jahangir Khan Squash Academy, Karachi.According to the results released by Sindh Squash Association Secretary Naveed Rehman, top seed M. Zaman of SNGPL defeated Punjab's Qasim Hussain 3-0, while Sindh's Adnan Zaman overcame fellow provincial player Faizan by an identical 3-0 scoreline to book their places in the quarter-finals.Punjab's Faseeh Rehman, Umar Farooq Butt and Saifullah Khan, Balochistan's Ismatullah and Nasrullah, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Ubaidullah also advanced to the last eight.In the girls' category.

# Lahore Qalandars pledge full support to strengthen Pakistan-US cricket ties: Sameen Rana



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Lahore Qalandars have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cricketing relations between Pakistan and the United States, with owner and Director Sameen Rana pledging full support for the promotion of US cricket and its players.

"We have strong ties with the United States, and Lahore Qalandars' full support will always be available for US cricket and cricketers. We aim to further strengthen these relations by providing the best possible facilities and opportunities to American players in both countries," Sameen Rana said.

Lahore Qalandars owners Atif Rana and Sameen Rana, accompanied by Pakistan's ODI captain Shaheen Shah Afridi, attended a special event hosted by US Embassy Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker in Islamabad.

The gathering was organised to recognise and appreciate the contributions of Pakistani embassy employees and their families. The Qalandars delegation joined the embassy community for an afternoon featuring informal interactions, food from popular American restaurants and team-building activities.

Atif Rana expressed gratitude to Natalie A. Baker for inviting the Lahore Qalandars delegation and making them part of the special family celebration. He appreciated the opportunity to interact with embassy staff and their families.

Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker highlighted the importance of teamwork in both cricket and diplomacy, expressing pride in the cooperation between Pakistani and American colleagues to promote the safety, security and prosperity of both countries.

## Pakistan Shaheens begin ACC Men's Asia Cup Rising Stars campaign against UAE on Friday



# Major Shake-up in KP Baseball Association; Wali Khan Shinwari elected unopposed as President

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: In a significant leadership reshuffle, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Baseball Association has elected Wali Khan Shinwari unopposed as its new President and Muhammad Asim as Secretary General during a special General Council meeting.According to details, the special session of the KP Baseball Association's General Council was held at the Peshawar Sports Complex, chaired by the association's Senior Vice President, Wali Khan Shinwari. Representatives from regional baseball associations across all divisions of the province attended the meeting in large numbers.The proceedings formally commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran, following which the chair presented the agenda before the house. During the session, the council conducted a thorough review of the overall performance of former President Dr. Noman-ul-Haq and former Secretary General Jahangir Jamal. After extensive deliberation, the members formally approved the removal of both former office-bearers from their posts by an overwhelming majority vote.Following the vacation of the offices, fresh elections were conducted in which all participants of the General Council unanimously and unopposed elected Wali Khan Shinwari as the new President and Muhammad Asim as the Secretary General. Addressing the General Council after his election, newly elected President Wali Khan Shinwari thanked the members for reposing their trust in him. He vowed to take practical measures to promote baseball across every corner of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and provide a platform for emerging young talent. On the occasion, he also formally announced plans to organize a grand Provincial Baseball Championship in Peshawar in the near future.



## Rashid Malik defies age and injury to clinch men's 55+ doubles title at ITF Pattaya Masters





DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

# Romanian soprano Georgiana Costea-Glugă receives Global Ambassador Award for Cultural Diplomacy through Music










MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: Romanian soprano and music educator Georgiana Costea-Glugă received the 2026 Global Ambassador Award for Cultural Diplomacy through Music at the 8th Global Ambassador Awards Ceremony at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. Ambassadors and community leaders also received awards for their contributions to Pakistan's international partnerships. Among those present were Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, and Dan Stoenescu, Romania's Ambassador to Pakistan.The awards jury recognised Costea-Glugă for strengthening cultural ties between Romania and Pakistan through her teaching and performances. Since April 2025, she has taught weekly opera singing classes in Islamabad through a partnership between the Embassy of Romania and the Pakistan National Council of the Arts. The classes give young Pakistani singers an opportunity to develop their vocal technique and explore Romanian and other European classical music.Costea-Glugă has also brought this repertoire to audiences in Islamabad and Karachi. Her work in Pakistan draws on her training at the National University of Music Bucharest and the Santa Cecilia Conservatory in Rome, as well as a performing career that has taken her across Europe and Asia. In her hometown of Constanța, Romania, she teaches piano at the same cultural centre where she took her first lessons.Diplomatic Insight Group established the Global Ambassador Awards in 2014. Presented annually on behalf of the people of Pakistan, the awards honour contributions to the country's international partnerships, including through culture, education and personal exchanges.

# Opinion & Editorial

## What the Islamabad ECO Summit Means for a Common Pakistani Citizen

**Areeba Shehzadi**

When international diplomats gather in five-star hotels, sign joint communiqués, and pose for family photographs, the reaction of an ordinary citizen struggling with inflation, power outages, or unemployment is often a skeptical shrug. For a shopkeeper in Quetta, a textile worker in Faisalabad, or a software engineer in Islamabad, high-level regional diplomacy can feel disconnected from daily reality. Yet, if we strip away the diplomatic jargon, every regional bloc in the world is fundamentally created to answer a single, practical question: How can neighboring countries pool their resources to make life cheaper, safer, and more prosperous for their ordinary citizens?

How Regional Blocs Impact Everyday Lives

Across the globe, successful regional organizations prove that foreign policy is, at its core, domestic economic policy. Consider the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). According to World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) assessments, intra-regional trade accounts for roughly 25 percent of ASEAN's total trade, a level of integration that helped expand the bloc's combined GDP past $3.8 trillion and lifted tens of millions of Southeast Asians out of extreme poverty over the past three decades. For an ordinary citizen in Vietnam or Malaysia, ASEAN is the reason everyday consumer goods are cheaper due to near-zero regional tariffs, and why a nurse or engineer can find cross-border employment under mutual skill-recognition frameworks.

Similarly, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) directly sustains millions of households, not just among Gulf nationals, but across Pakistan. According to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) data, Pakistan received $14.8 billion in workers' remittances during just the first four months (July–October) of FY2026–27.

Closer to home, however, South Asia tells a cautionary tale. World Bank reports highlight that SAARC remains one of the least integrated regions in the world, with intra-regional trade stagnant at barely 5 percent of South Asia's total trade. Political gridlock has deprived South Asians of an estimated $22 billion in annual unrealized trade gains and blocked affordable cross-border electricity grids. Conversely, Pakistan's participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)which represents over 40 percent of the world's population and nearly a third of global GDP—has helped unlock transit infrastructure and energy financing and creating jobs in logistics and construction.

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO): Past Dividends for Pakistan

Against this backdrop sits the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) - a 10-nation bloc spanning Pakistan, Iran, Turkiye, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, representing a combined market of over 500 million people and an area of 8 million square kilometers. Despite its vast natural resources, UN Comtrade and ECO Secretariat figures show that intra-ECO trade has historically hovered around 8 percent of the bloc's total global trade (roughly $83 billion in intra-regional volume), with Pakistan's share sitting at around $4 billion (nearly 5 percent).

Even at that modest level, ECO has delivered tangible benefits to the common Pakistani over the past four decades:

Faster, Cheaper Exports via the ITI Corridor: The revival of the Islamabad–Tehran–Istanbul (ITI) freight train and road corridor has transformed transit logistics. Shipping Pakistani textiles, rice, or Sialkot surgical goods to Europe by sea traditionally took 35 to 45 days. The 6,540-kilometer ITI overland rail route cuts that transit time to roughly 14 to 16 days, reducing freight costs and helping Pakistani factories win time-



sensitive international orders that sustain thousands of working-class jobs.ITI Cargo train started its journey from Islamabad on 21 December 2021 and took 13 days to reach Ankara.

Lower Input Costs Under ECOTA: Through preferential tariff reductions under the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA), Pakistani industries and consumers have gained access to competitively priced Iranian petrochemicals,plastics, rubbers and agricultural produce. Iran grants tariff preferences to Pakistan on the above 309 Products. Additionally, Turkish machinery and Central Asian raw cotton arehelping cushion domestic manufacturing costs.

Emergency Relief and Agricultural Support:During Pakistan's catastrophic floods, the ECO Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security and the ECO Disaster Risk Management framework mobilized emergency relief, agricultural inputs, and seed assistance from member states, directly aiding rural farming families in rebuilding their livelihoods. In January 2026, the National Disaster Management Authority NDMA Pakistan hosted the 10th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction in Islamabad.

The 30th ECO Council of Ministers Meeting in Islamabad

On November 15–16, 2026, Islamabad hosted the 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers the organization's highest policy-making forum, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar alongside ECO Secretary General Dr. AsadMajeed Khan. Assuming the rotating chairmanship for 2026–2027 under the theme "Reviving Regionalism for a Resilient ECO," Pakistan steered the adoption of the Islamabad Joint Communiqué and finalized the Strategic Goals of ECO Vision 2035 ahead of the 18th ECO Summit in Tehran.

With Pakistan's total global exports standing at $36.7 billion (OEC data) and domestic inflation and energy costs weighing heavily on households, the Islamabad ministerial placed practical economic integration, specifically transport corridors, cross-border power grids, and tariff rationalization at the center of its agenda.

What the Islamabad Summit Carries for the Common Pakistani

Beyond diplomatic declarations, the decisions taken at the 30th ECO Council of Ministers carry five direct implications for everyday Pakistanis:

1. Cheaper Electricity and Less Load-Shedding via Regional Grids: A centerpiece of the ECO talks in Islamabad, reinforced by bilateral energy discussions with Turkmenistan and Central Asian partners, is accelerating cross-border power integration. According to World Bank project updates, infrastructure work on Pakistan's side of the CASA-1000 transmission line is largely complete; once fully operational, it will deliver 1,000 MW of clean, affordable summer hydropower from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan directly to Pakistan's national grid at Nowshera.

2. Jobs in Ports, Trucking, and Border Towns: Operationalizing the ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) positions Gwadar, Karachi, and Port Qasim as the primary maritime gateways for five land-locked Central Asian republics. For residents of Balochistan especially in Gwadar, Quetta, and Chamanand logistics workers nationwide, higher transit cargo volumes mean direct employment in warehousing, customs clearing, trucking, and hospitality.

3. New Export Markets for Pakistani Farmers and SMEs: Central Asia imports billions of dollars in food, textiles, leather, and pharmaceuticals sectors where Pakistan holds a natural advantage. By pushing forward the ECO Trade Facilitation Agreement and streamlined cross-border banking, a kinnow grower in Sargodha, a rice miller in Gujranwala, or a pharmaceutical producer in Lahore can tap into a 500-million-consumer market without prohibitive tariff barriers.

4. Affordable Regional Travel and Tourism Revenue: The Islamabad Communiqué prioritized reviving ECO tourism circuits and easing visa facilitation for businesspeople, students, and pilgrims.

5. Scholarships and Digital Economy Opportunities for Youth: With over 60 percent of Pakistan's population under age 30, the 30th COM's emphasis on human development, vocational training, and digital trade linkages under the ECO Educational Institute and ECO Science Foundation opens new doors for Pakistani students, researchers, and IT freelancers.

A Reality Check: Structural Hurdles and Critical Gaps

While the aspirations of the Islamabad Joint Communiqué are promising, an honest assessment requires confronting why ECO has historically underperformed. Despite four decades of existence, ECO's intra-regional trade remains stuck at 7–8 percent, trailing far behind ASEAN's 25 percent and the European Union's 60+ percent. The spoiler includes geography which dictates that Pakistan's shortest overland access to Central Asia runs through Afghanistan. Yet persistent security instability, militant sanctuaries along the Durand Line, and strained bilateral relations with Kabul repeatedly disrupt trade transit. According to the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), bilateral and transit trade has plummeted from a peak of $2.5 billion in past years to less than $1 billion, directly threatening flagship corridors like CASA-1000 and the Trans-Afghan Railway.Two of Pakistan's most critical ECO neighbors Iran and Afghanistan remain under severe international and US financial sanctions. As highlighted by the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and State Bank briefings, the absence of formal banking channels and SWIFT connectivity forces Pakistani traders to rely on informal barter or third-country hawala networks. This banking vacuum has stalled major bilateral initiatives, including the long-delayed Iran–Pakistan (IP) gas pipeline, leaving Pakistani consumers deprived of cheap gas while exposing Islamabad to billions of dollars in potential arbitration penalties.

Bringing Regional Diplomacy Home

Ultimately, the true measure of the 30th ECO Council of Ministers in Islamabad will not be found in the eloquence of its communiqué, but in its execution on the ground. World Bank research shows that simply upgrading regional port and transit infrastructure can boost intra-regional trade by up to 7.5 percent. For the Islamabad summit to mean anything to a household in Quetta or Lahore, Pakistan and its nine ECO partners must move beyond ritualistic declarations: they must establish sanction-resilient payment mechanisms, stabilize border security, and harmonize customs at Chaman, Taftan, and Torkham. Only when diplomatic intent overcomes bureaucratic and geopolitical inertia will ECO's dividends finally reach the everyday Pakistani.

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DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

# Finance Minister urges diaspora to promote investment in Pakistan





PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday urged the Pakistani diaspora and business community in Singapore to play an active role in promoting Pakistan as an investment destination and strengthening economic ties between the two countries.

He made these remarks during an interaction with members of the Pakistani diaspora and business community at a dinner hosted by Pakistan's High Commissioner to Singapore, Rabia Shafiq, at Pakistan House, according to press release issued by finance ministry. The minister briefed participants on Pakistan's improving macroeconomic stability and the government's measures to strengthen the economy and reduce the fiscal deficit.

He highlighted the government's commitment to fiscal discipline, structural reforms and creating a conducive environment for investment. Recalling his time spent in Singapore, Senator Aurangzeb described the Pakistani diaspora as a valuable national asset and an important partner in the country's economic development. He encouraged overseas Pakistanis, particularly business community members, to facilitate greater engagement between Pakistani and Singaporean investors.

He also highlighted investment opportunities in Pakistan across various sectors and briefed participants on the government's privatisation programme. He noted that the privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) would help reduce the financial burden on the national exchequer, contain government expenditure and improve economic efficiency.

Members of the Pakistani business community shared their perspectives on strengthening Pakistan's investment appeal and attracting foreign investors. They also discussed opportunities for greater business-to-business engagement and offered suggestions for promoting investment and economic cooperation.

# At India's invitation, Pakistan to attend SCO Civilisations Dialogue Forum in New Delhi

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's delegation will attend the first Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Civilisations Dialogue Forum in New Delhi from November 20 to 22, with Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr Musadik Masood Malik leading the delegation, the Foreign Office said on Thursday. The November 20-22 visit will mark the first trip to India by a Pakistani federal minister since May 2023, when then foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari visited Goa for a meeting of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers. The meeting comes amid strained relations between Pakistan and India, which have remained locked in a diplomatic stalemate since their four-day military confrontation in May 2025. Relations between the two countries deteriorated following the killing of 26 people in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). New Delhi accused Islamabad of involvement in the attack, a charge Pakistan denied. In a statement issued today, the Foreign Office said Malik would attend the forum at the invitation of India's Minister of Culture and Tourism. "Dr Malik will share Pakistan's perspective on the salience of dialogue among civilisations and Pakistan's contribution in this area.

# Pakistan, ASEAN vow to deepen cooperation in trade, regional security

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Thursday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening its longstanding partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), emphasizing greater cooperation in trade, investment, education, research, regional connectivity and people-to-people exchanges. Addressing delegation-level talks with ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Kao Kim Hourn, Dar said Pakistan highly valued its partnership with ASEAN and its relations with individual member states, adding that Islamabad wanted to give these ties greater practical substance through enhanced engagement among businesses, universities and research institutions. He observed that ASEAN's nearly six decades of experience in bringing countries with diverse histories and economies into a closer regional community offered valuable lessons in economic integration, regional connectivity and collective cooperation. "In an increasingly fragmented world, ASEAN's commitment to dialogue has particular significance," Ishaq Dar said, underscoring the importance of collective efforts for peace, stability and shared prosperity. Welcoming the ASEAN Secretary-General's visit, the deputy prime minister expressed confidence that the engagement would deepen mutual understanding and provide fresh momentum to Pakistan-ASEAN cooperation. He said the discussions would help identify shared priorities, strengthen existing areas of collaboration and explore new avenues of engagement. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, in his remarks, appreciated Pakistan's active engagement with ASEAN, particularly the deputy PM's participation in regional meetings and commemorative activities marking the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. He said ASEAN attached considerable importance to its Sector Dialogue Partnership with Pakistan, established in 1993, and welcomed progress under the ASEAN-Pakistan Sector Dialogue Partnership Practical Cooperation Areas 2024-2028. The ASEAN chief highlighted expanding cooperation in trade and investment, private sector development.



**ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar holding delegation-level talks with the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Houm, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.**

# Ayaz Sadiq visits Federal Ombudsman's office

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Thursday visited the office of the Federal Ombudsman.

The speaker was received by the Federal Ombudsman, Justice Naveed Kamran Baloch, and senior officials of the institution. On this occasion, the Speaker inaugurated the Justice (R) Sardar Muhammad Iqbal Memorial Library established at the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat. The library has been named after the former Federal Ombudsman, Justice (R) Sardar Muhammad Iqbal, in tribute to his academic, legal, and national services. Ayaz Sadiq has stated that the establishment of the Justice (R) Sardar Muhammad Iqbal Memorial Library is a commendable initiative. He stated that Justice (R) Sardar Muhammad Iqbal was a principled, impartial, honest, and visionary personality who rendered invaluable services to the judiciary, the supremacy of law, and the dispensation of justice to the public throughout his professional career. The Speaker noted that during his tenure.

# Formation of electoral reforms committee delayed because opposition not finalising nominees: Minister

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Affairs Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Thursday said the formation of the Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms (PCER) had been delayed because the opposition had yet to submit its nominees.

He made the remarks after meeting opposition chief whip Malik Amir Dogar to discuss the committee's formation.

In a post on X, Chaudhry said the government and its allied parties had submitted all their nominees for the committee.

"The opposition should finalise its nominees soon; the (National Assembly) Speaker will issue the notification to form the committee as soon as the names are received," he said. Chaudhry further said that if the PTI wanted to return to mainstream politics, it should join the electoral reforms committee and present its position there instead of expressing reservations on talk shows and in the assembly.

"PTI will have the opportunity to address its concerns about the upcoming elections in the committee," he said, adding that the party's "constructive proposals" would be incorporated into the final draft.

# Hamza Shehbaz holds talks with US envoy Natalie Baker

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: An important meeting was held between US Charge d'Affaires Natalie A Baker and former Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz, MNA, in Islamabad on Thursday.

According to the report, the talks centered on strengthening bilateral ties and addressing key regional issues. Both officials exchanged views on the overall trajectory of Pakistan-US diplomatic ties. Discussions highlighted avenues for expanding trade, investment, and economic collaboration between the two nations. The two leaders reviewed ongoing regional developments and stability. The PML-N leader Hamza Shehbaz felicitated Natalie Baker on her recent nomination to lead the US Embassy Islamabad, and serve as the official US Ambassador to Pakistan. He expressed the optimism that US Ambassador's vast diplomatic experience would help further cementing Pak-US relations.

US Embassy head of Internal Politics Dr Cairn A Gloer and prime minister's office.

# Maroof International Hospital celebrates International Men's Day, calls for greater focus on Men's health and Well-being

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Maroof International Hospital (MIH) celebrated International Men's Day with an engaging program recognizing the valuable contributions of men to families, workplaces and society, while highlighting the importance of their physical, mental and emotional health.Observed worldwide on 19 November, International Men's Day provides an opportunity to recognise positive male role models, celebrate men's contributions and promote greater awareness of men's health and well-being.The celebration brought together the hospital's senior management, medical professionals and staff for an occasion combining health awareness, appreciation and interactive activities.Ch. Naseer Ahmed, Chairman, Maroof International Hospital, emphasized the importance of recognizing men's contributions and creating a culture that values the health, dignity and well-being of every individual."International Men's Day reminds us that appreciation, respect and well-being are shared responsibilities. At Maroof, we recognize the invaluable contributions of our male colleagues and remain committed to fostering a workplace where everyone feels valued, supported and encouraged to prioritize their health," said Ch. Naseer Ahmed.Mr. Haroon Naseer, Chief Executive Officer, Maroof International Hospital, highlighted the role of a supportive workplace in promoting employee well-being."Our people are at the heart of Maroof. Their dedication, professionalism and commitment contribute immensely to the hospital's mission. International Men's Day is an opportunity to acknowledge these contributions while reinforcing the importance of physical, mental and emotional well-being. A healthy and supported workforce is fundamental to delivering quality healthcare," said Mr. Haroon Naseer. Speaking on the health aspects of the occasion, Dr. Usman Aftab, Consultant Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist and Head of the Department of Medicine at Maroof International Hospital, highlighted the importance of preventive healthcare and encouraging men to take a proactive approach to their health.