

Pakistan's natural resources worth $8-10tr at 'most conservative estimate', says Dar



Gilani invites Thai Senate president to visit Pakistan, seeks stronger bilateral ties



Atta Tarar says public opinion should determine creation of new provinces

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DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

Saturday 21 November 2026 Jumada-ul-Sani 21, 1448 A.H VOl No: 06 Issue No. 253 Pages 4 Rs. 20

On North Waziristan visit, CDF Munir vows to eliminate terrorism, preserve peace in KP

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir reaffirmed on Friday the security force's "unwavering resolve" to decisively eliminate terrorism and preserve peace and stability of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in close coordination with law enforcement agencies (LEAs).

The CDF said this during a visit to Miranshah in KP's North Waziristan, the military media wing said in a statement.

"He reaffirmed the unwavering resolve of the Security Forces, in close coordination with law enforcement agencies, to decisively eliminate the menace of terrorism and preserve the hard-earned peace and stability of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," the statement by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) quoted him as saying.

He also appreciated the "brave police force" in KP and expressed pride in its resilience and sacrifices against terrorism and Fitna-al-Khawarij — a term the state uses for the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan.

During the visit, the CDF was given a comprehensive briefing on "the prevailing security situation, ongoing intelligence-based operations and measures being undertaken to consolidate the gains achieved through sustained counter terrorism efforts and ensure lasting peace and stability in the area", the ISPR statement said.



Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir visits Miranshah, North Wziristan on Friday.

Afghanistan not invited to ECO moot as Islamabad does not recognise Kabul regime: FO

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) said on Friday that Afghanistan was not invited to participate in the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Islamabad as Pakistan does not recognise the incumbent Afghan regime. Addressing a weekly press briefing, FO spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan said that Afghanistan's membership had been suspended by the ECO Secretariat. He added that ministerial-level participation in ECO meetings was the prerogative of the host country under the organisation's procedures. "Afghanistan was not invited to join the ECO meeting in Islamabad as Pakistan has not recognised the incumbent regime," he said. "Pakistan attaches great importance to strong regional cooperation, connectivity and economic integration," the spokesperson said. "This commitment also informs our approach towards Afghanistan, which we want to see as a peaceful, prosperous and stable country, fully integrated within the ECO framework and at peace with itself as well as with all its neighbours," he added.

PM reaffirms commitment to protection, welfare, rights of children

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Thursday reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring the protection, welfare and holistic development of children, pledging equal access to quality education, healthcare, nutrition and opportunities for every child across the country.

In his message on the occasion of World Children's Day, being observed on November 20, the prime minister said Pakistan was committed to taking every possible measure to safeguard children's physical and mental well-being, intellectual growth, education and fundamental rights. He described children as the architects of the nation's bright future and custodians of its cultural heritage, traditions and values.

Referring to this year's theme, "My Day, My Rights, My Future," the prime minister said it underscored the importance of placing children's rights, welfare and well-being at the centre of collective efforts.

He emphasised that children must have a meaningful voice in decisions affecting their lives, adding that their views, aspirations and feelings should be heard, respected and duly considered at individual, societal and state levels.

"Only a society that listens to its children can ensure a just, inclusive and prosperous future," he observed.

Bilawal wants PM Shehbaz to become first premier to complete 5-year term

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said on Friday that he wanted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to become the first premier to complete a five-year term in office.

Since the country came into being in 1947, no elected prime minister has ever completed their five-year term.

Addressing an event in Karachi, Bilawal, citing the economic crisis resulting from the US-Israeli war on Iran, called for "empowering" PM Shehbaz so that he could present a way forward to tackle the crisis.

"My objective is that I want to strengthen the hand of the prime minister [..] usually politicians create difficulties or plot his fall and secure the seat for themselves. I will not do that […] I am saying that I want Shehbaz Sharif to be the first prime minister […] to complete a five-year term," Bilawal said.

Bilawal noted that the prime minister had not been "given the chance" to focus on the economic issues so far. "What can he do? Whenever he [PM Shehbaz] makes a plan, some federal minister objects and presents.

Pakistan calls for 'universal realisation' of right to self-determination

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan called for the "universal realisation" of the right to self-determination, saying the aspirations of people living under foreign occupation remained unfulfilled despite the principle being enshrined in international law. According to a press release shared on X by the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations on Friday, Ambassador Syed Haider Shah said, "The universal recognition and exercise of this right has transformed the course of history. Millions of people have exercised their right to self-determination, liberating themselves.

Houthis threaten to strike Saudi Red Sea ports

PEAK POINT

YEMEN: Yemen's Houthis threatened on Friday to attack Saudi Arabia's Red Sea ports if Saudi-led coalition forces struck the strategic Red Sea port of Hodeidah.

"We warn all employees, workers, and those in the vicinity of these ports to evacuate them immediately and stay away. We also urge all shipping companies to immediately evacuate their ships from these ports," Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree said in a statement.

The Houthis warned airlines to avoid Saudi airspace "because it will be the scene of our operations in the coming hours."

Yemen's Houthis have threatened to target the Shuqaiq power station in southwestern Saudi Arabia in response to strikes on two power stations in Yemen.



LIVE updates: https://t.co/ddY22B2Kdq pic.twitter.com/QjoVFXtWUP

Cross-border fighting involving the Saudi-led coalition, which backs Yemen's internationally recognised government, and the Houthis, who control the capital Sanaa, has intensified amid the US-Israeli war on Iran, opening another front in the conflict.

Saudi-led coalition says it intercepts two Houthi drones over Riyadh, southern regions

The Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Houthi group said on Friday that it intercepted and destroyed two drones launched toward Saudi Arabia's Riyadh and its southern regions.

Coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki announced the interceptions on X.

Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Houthis asked civilians to evacuate areas in the strategic Red Sea port of Hodeidah for their safety.

Earlier, Saudi air defences intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by Yemen's Houthi movement towards the kingdom's southern region, the Saudi-led coalition said, as cross-border attacks between the two sides showed no signs of abating. Saudi Civil Defence also reported that drones had been intercepted in the southern region and issued early-warning alerts for several areas, including Jazan, Abha and Khamis Mushait, before announcing that the danger had passed. In Yemen, Houthi-run Al-Masirah TV reported Saudi airstrike on the capital Sanaa on Friday. There was no immediate comment from Saudi Arabia on the reported strikes.

Police foil major terror attack in KP's LM, claim suspected suicide bomber killed



PEAK POINT

LAKI MARWAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police said on Friday that they had foiled a major terrorist attack in Lakki Marwat district and killed a suspected "Afghan-origin" suicide bomber, according to a statement.

In a press release, police said the operation was carried out within the jurisdiction of Bargi Police Station in Lakki Marwat.

The police claimed that they had been receiving intelligence for some time about a Mazda truck allegedly carrying a large-scale improvised explosive device (IED) intended to cause widespread destruction. Acting on the intelligence, Lakki Marwat police intensified their operations and increased patrolling and the number of checkpoints.



DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

SPORTS



Pakistan outclass Sri Lanka in second Test to win series 1-0



MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD; Pakistan sealed a crushing eight-wicket victory over Sri Lanka Friday in the second and final Test in Rawalpindi to win the series.

Sri Lanka put up some fight to avoid an innings defeat on Thursday, but folded for 316 on the fourth morning Friday after adding just seven runs to their overnight total of 309-9.

Pakistan completed their first Test series win this year by reaching the slender 90-run target in 13 overs, with Aamer Jamal scoring 34 not out and Azan Awais an unbeaten 32.

Pakistan lost opener Tayyab Arif for 13 and Mohammad Taha for four, but there were no hiccups as Jamal hit the winning boundary off spinner Prabath Jayasuriya to seal the win.

The first Test, also in Rawalpindi, ended in a draw.

Pakistan skipper Babar Azam said he was satisfied with team's win.

"This is a new team with some new players, but they showed some good performances and winning always gives you satisfaction and confidence," he said.

"We are looking to create a positive environment so everyone has the fighting spirit alive regardless of what the match situation is." Sri Lankan skipper Kusal Mendis said the 98-run first innings hurt his team.

"We have to improve in some areas when it comes to batting and fielding, but we bowled well in patches," he said.

The day began with Sri Lanka hoping to extend their 82-run lead and Milan Rathnayaka hitting a boundary, but the innings was done in the second over when Mohammad Abbas trapped Asitha Fernando lbw for two.

Rathnayaka cracked 12 fours in his fighting 88-ball 66 not out.

Abbas was the pick of the Pakistan bowlers with 3-55 while Jamal took 3-67 and Razaullah 2-116.

It was Pakistan's first series win in this cycle of the World Test Championship, having drawn with South Africa and the West Indies and losing 2-0 in Bangladesh and 3-0 in England.

Pakistan's pace quartet exploited the green-tinged pitch to maximum effect, dismissing Sri Lanka for 98 in their first innings to get an ideal start on the first day.

The home team then posted 325 to take firm control of the match.

FG Din/SQ and AOS/Rijas storm into subsidiary final of Battle Axe Polo Cup



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: FG Din/SQ and AOS/Rijas/Guard Group secured places in the subsidiary final of the 12th Battle Axe Polo Cup 2026, sponsored by TCL and Rivaj, after recording victories in their respective matches at the Lahore Garrison Polo Grounds on Thursday.

Both victorious teams have now qualified for the subsidiary final of the tournament. The enthralling and exciting matches were witnessed and enjoyed by Club Secretary Major Babar Mehboob Awan (retd), along with several former polo players.

In the second match of the day, FG Din/SQ defeated Lotto Carets Singapore by 11–5. Raja Temur Nadeem led the scoring for FG Din/SQ with eight goals, supported by Shiraz Qureshi (two goals) and SM Rafay (one goal). For Lotto Carpets, Ahmed Zubair Butt and Malik Ali Kuli Khan thrashed in two goals each while Hashim Kamal Agha contributed one. Earlier in the day's first encounter, AOS/Rijas/Guard Group edged past Peshawar Polo Club 8½–7 in a closely contested match.

For AOS/Rijas/Guard Group, who had a half goal handicap advantage, Abdullah Ejaz led the scoring with four goals, while Hamza Ali Hakeem contributed three and Saim Abbas added one.

Zohaib enters J-30 Subh-e-Nau singles and doubles semis



PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Pakistan's Zohaib Afzal Malik produced an impressive performance to reach the boys' singles and doubles semifinals of the J-30 Subh-e-Nau Pakistan World Junior Tennis Championships at the PTF Tennis Complex, Garden Avenue, Islamabad. In the boys' singles quarterfinals, Zohaib overcame compatriot Abdul Basit 6-4, 6-7(1), 6-2 in a competitive three-set encounter. Ahtesham Humayun also secured a semifinal berth after defeating Amir Mazari 7-5, 6-7(4), 7-5 in another closely contested match. The remaining singles quarterfinals saw Thailand's Phasin Sinchalong defeat Pakistan's Hassan Usmani 6-0, 7-6(1), while Sri Lanka's Rehan Gunawardhana came from behind to beat Germany's Jakob Letsch 2-6, 6-3, 6-3. Zohaib continued his impressive run in the boys' doubles, partnering Hamza Roman to defeat Abdul Basit and Haziq Asim 7-5, 6-3 and book their place in the semifinals. Amir Mazari and Omar Jawad Malik also advanced after edging Ahtesham Humayun and Muhammad Hassan Usmani 3-6, 6-3, 13-11 in a thrilling contest.

The boys' doubles quarterfinals witnessed some exciting encounters, with Jakob Letsch (Germany) and Jayin De Saram (Sri Lanka) overcoming Rehan Gunawardhana and Aahil Kaleel 3-6, 6-3 (10-8). Thailand's Phasin Sinchalong and Theerapat Samritvanitcha also secured a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Pakistan's M Yahya and Singapore's Brennon NG. In the girls' singles, Kazakhstan's Polina Sushkova, Ailin Bakiyeva and Adema Alseipulova, alongside Thailand's Ploypetch Daungkhiaw, advanced to the semifinals after impressive victories. The girls' doubles quarterfinals also produced competitive action, with Thailand's Ploypetch Daungkhiaw and Anyawee Paisarnpanuwong, Russia-China's Varvara Rubtsova and Xuan Yi Wei, and Kazakhstan's Ailin Bakiyeva and Danelya Beissebayeva booking their semifinal places.

Sufyan's hat-trick powers Pakistan to crush Canada 5-1 in Sultan Azlan Shah Cup opener



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



Khairpur Sugar National Junior Squash hampionship: Three Sindh Girls Reach Semi-Finals

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: (Sports Reporter)Three female players from Sindh have qualified for the semi-finals of the 5th Khairpur Sugar National Junior and Girls Squash Championship, while two more upsets were recorded on the third day of the competition.In the Boys Under-19 category, Punjab's Umar Farooq Butt caused an upset by defeating third seed Nasrullah of Balochistan 3-0. In the Boys Under-11 event, Sindh's Hamza Khan also pulled off an upset, overcoming third seed Umar Najeeb of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) by the same scoreline.The quarter-finals were played at the Venus Jahangir Khan Squash Academy, Karachi, where the championship is being organised by the Sindh Squash Association in collaboration with Khairpur Sugar Mills. The event carries a total prize money of Rs 800,000.According to the results released by Sindh Squash Association Secretary Naveed Rehman, the Boys Under-11 quarter-finals saw Sindh's M. Bin Naseem defeat Punjab's Shehzad Ahmed 3-0, while Hamza Khan overcame Umar Najeeb 3-0. KP's M. Talha edged out fellow province player Mustafa 3-2 in a closely contested match, while Sindh's Muhammad Aban defeated KP's Aliyan Khalil 3-0 to secure their places in the semi-finals.In the Boys Under-15 category, KP's Fawad Khan beat PAF's M. Ishtiaq 3-0, while PAF's Aziz Ali Naz defeated KP's Abdul Rehman 3-1. Sindh's Raheel Victor secured a 3-0 victory over fellow province player Abdul Hadi, while Punjab's Jasim Afridi defeated Ahmed Khan Zahid 3-1.In the Boys Under-19 quarter-finals, Umar Farooq Butt of Punjab defeated third seed Nasrullah of Balochistan 3-0. SNGPL's M. Zaman overcame Punjab's Faheem-ur-Rehman 3-0, KP's Ubaidullah defeated Balochistan's Ismatullah 3-0, while Sindh's Adnan Zaman beat Punjab's.





DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Olive Industry on a Growth Trajectory, Experts Say

Grand National Olive Gala 2026 to be held in Islamabad from December 11 to 13

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's olive industry is steadily moving towards growth, creating new opportunities for agricultural diversification, increased domestic olive oil production, improved livelihoods for farmers and the promotion of healthy dietary habits. Technical and development cooperation between Pakistan and Italy is playing a significant role in advancing olive cultivation, modern production techniques, oil processing, quality improvement and capacity building across the sector.These views were expressed by Italian olive culture expert Dr. Francesco De Musso, gender, climate and community specialist Dr. Fozia Kanwal, and progressive olive farmer and producer Saad Bhatti during a media dialogue titled "Promoting Olive Culture, Its Health Benefits and Nutritional Importance," held at the National Press Club, Islamabad, under the Olive Culture Scale-Up Project.The project is being implemented by CIHEAM Bari, Italy, with the aim of supporting the development and expansion of Pakistan's olive sector.The speakers said significant



progress had been made in promoting olive cultivation, expanding local olive oil extraction, improving processing capacity and enhancing production standards in Pakistan. They emphasized that olive farming should not be viewed merely as an agricultural activity but developed into a comprehensive economic and commercial sector by strengthening linkages among growers, producers, processing units, marketing organizations and consumers.They said establishing stronger connections across the value chain would help local producers access better markets, create sustainable business opportunities and improve the economic prospects of farmers and other stakeholders associated with the industry.The speakers stressed that sustainable growth of the olive sector requires not only increased production but also greater consumer confidence in locally produced olive oil. Raising awareness about its nutritional properties, quality, benefits and proper use, while encouraging its inclusion in daily diets, is essential to increasing domestic demand and strengthening the local industry.Participants highlighted the importance of public awareness campaigns, reliable nutritional information and promoting the consumption of quality locally produced olive oil. They observed that informed consumers and greater appreciation of local products could help expand the market, encourage investment and support the long-term sustainability of Pakistan's emerging olive industry.On the occasion, the 8th Grand National Olive Gala 2026 was officially announced.

Qur'anic covenantal framework highlighted as foundation for law, justice, and social responsibilities

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Qur'an's covenants establish a comprehensive framework ofmutual obligations and responsibilities governing human relationships with Allah, fellow human beings, and the wider society. Extending beyond individual religious commitments, these covenants encompass family and social relations, collective responsibilities, governance, and agreements between communities and nations. This aspectwas explored by scholars, legal experts, and religious thinkers who gathered at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad, to discuss "'Ahd Allah: The Qur'an's Covenants and Its Legal Architecture," a book by renowned legal expert and former federal minister Ahmer Bilal Soofi. The discussion provided a platform to examine the book for understanding the Qur'an as a comprehensive source of ethical, legal, and social guidance. In his opening remarks, Dr. Yasir Riaz observed that despite centuries of extensive scholarship on the Qur'an, its depth continues to offer insights



into emerging questions concerning human thought and conduct. He noted that the book explores a relatively less-examined dimension of Qur'anic scholarship and offers new perspectives on the application of divine guidance in human life. Chair of the sessionand member of the Shariat Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court, Dr. Khalid Masood emphasized the importance of revisiting the Qur'anic concept of covenant in contemporary discussions of law and international relations. He explained that covenant represents a responsibility and moral commitment rather than merely a contractual arrangement. He stressed that the teachings of the Holy Qur'an should not remain confined to Muslims;rather,its guidance and principles should be presented to humanity at large.

Director General Religious Education, Maj. Gen. (r) Dr. Ghulam Qamar was the chief guest of the event. He highlighted the book's comprehensive treatment of the Qur'an as a complete code of life. He emphasized therelevance of the covenantal framework beyond Muslim communities, particularly in understanding the rights of minorities and promoting interfaith harmony. He also recommended sharing the book with relevant national and international institutions.

Earlier, former dean of social sciences at NUML, Dr. Mustafeez Alvi,described the publication as a distinctive research work that engages extensively with Qur'anic verses to present an integrated understanding of individual and collective obligations.

Opinion & Editorial

DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD
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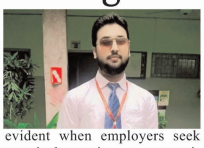
Karachi's cultural identity

Cultural expression has long struggled to find the space it deserves in Karachi. Decades of ethnic tensions and deteriorating public spaces have deprived the metropolis of much of the artistic and recreational life that once distinguished its cosmopolitan character. Although the security situation has improved considerably, opportunities for theatre, music, dance and other forms of cultural engagement remain limited for a city of its size and diversity. Against this backdrop, the ongoing third edition of the World Culture Festival, organised by the Arts Council of Pakistan in Karachi, represents an encouraging effort to restore culture to the centre of public life. The festival's remarkable expansion, bringing together more than 1,000 international artists and 500 Pakistani performers, deserves appreciation. Sustaining an international cultural event of this magnitude requires considerable institutional commitment, particularly given the logistical and diplomatic challenges involved. Beyond its scale, however, its real significance lies in providing a platform where artists from different cultural and political backgrounds can engage with one another. Particularly meaningful is the showcasing of Palestinian artistic expression at a time when the people of Palestine continue to endure immense suffering.

The Future Belongs to Skills, Not Degrees Alone

By Sardar Ahmed Ali

For decades, a university degree has been regarded as one of the most reliable pathways to a respectable career and a stable life. Families invest their savings, students dedicate years to academic pursuits, and society often measures an individual's potential through educational qualifications. Yet, in a rapidly changing world, an important question deserves serious attention: is a degree alone still enough to secure a successful future?Education remains indispensable. It broadens intellectual horizons, develops reasoning and introduces individuals to knowledge that would otherwise remain inaccessible. However, the growing gap between academic qualifications and practical competence suggests that the traditional understanding of education needs reconsideration. A degree may open a door, but skills, adaptability and the ability to perform are increasingly what keep that door open.Across Pakistan, thousands of young people graduate from universities every year. They possess certificates, transcripts and academic achievements, yet many struggle to find employment that corresponds with their qualifications. This situation is not necessarily a reflection of their lack of intelligence or ambition. Rather, it exposes a deeper disconnect between the education imparted in classrooms and the competencies demanded by a changing labour market.The problem becomes more



evident when employers seek practical experience, communication skills, digital literacy, problem-solving abilities and professional confidence, while fresh graduates often have limited opportunities to develop these qualities during their academic years. The result is a frustrating cycle: employers demand experience, graduates seek opportunities, and institutions continue to prioritise examinations and theoretical learning.The world of work is undergoing a profound transformation. Technology, artificial intelligence, digital platforms and automation are reshaping industries that once appeared stable and predictable. Skills that were considered optional a few years ago are now becoming essential. Web development, data analysis, digital marketing, content writing, graphic design, financial literacy and communication are no longer confined to specialised professions. They are increasingly relevant across different sectors of the economy. Nevertheless, this does not mean that degrees have lost their significance. Medical professionals, engineers, teachers, researchers and numerous other specialists require formal education, structured training and professional qualifications. The argument is not against degrees; it is against the assumption that a degree, without competence, is sufficient.A balanced approach is therefore necessary. Universities should strengthen practical learning, encourage internships, introduce industry-oriented projects and create opportunities for students to develop professional skills alongside academic knowledge. Learning should not end with the completion of a syllabus. It should prepare individuals to confront real-world challenges with confidence and responsibility.Equally, young people must recognise that waiting for opportunities without developing their abilities can become a costly mistake. Learning a skill does not necessarily require expensive institutions or extraordinary financial resources. In many cases, free educational platforms, online tutorials, practical projects and consistent effort can provide a meaningful starting point. What matters most is discipline, patience and the willingness to learn continuously.Unfortunately, our society sometimes places excessive importance on the title attached to a qualification while overlooking the actual ability of an individual. A person may possess impressive academic credentials but struggle to communicate, solve problems or adapt to professional demands. Conversely, someone with fewer formal qualifications may demonstrate remarkable competence, creativity and determination. A fair society should recognise both academic achievement and practical ability.The real challenge is not choosing between education and skills, but bringing them together. A degree without practical knowledge may leave an individual unprepared, while skills without a sound educational foundation may limit intellectual and professional growth. Both are valuable, and neither should be treated as the enemy of the other.Pakistan's future depends, in part, on how effectively it prepares its young population for emerging opportunities. We cannot afford to produce graduates who are academically qualified but professionally unprepared. Nor can we afford to discourage students from pursuing higher education. What we need is an educational culture that values knowledge, competence, creativity, ethical responsibility and lifelong learning equally.The definition of success is gradually changing. Employers, entrepreneurs and institutions increasingly value what individuals can contribute, how effectively they can solve problems and how readily they can adapt to new circumstances. In such an environment, learning a skill is not merely an alternative to earning a degree; it is an essential complement to education.A degree may define what we have studied, but our skills often demonstrate what we can actually do. The future will not necessarily favour those who hold the most certificates, but those who continue to learn, adapt and turn knowledge into meaningful contribution.

Head Office: 8A Basement Ittehad Centre Fazal e haq road Blue Area Islamabad Mob No: 03335366814 Publishe by Maqpoon Printing Press.

DAILY PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD

Gilani invites Thai Senate president to visit Pakistan, seeks stronger bilateral ties



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, on Friday invited the President of the Senate of Thailand, Mongkol Surasajja, to visit Pakistan, expressing the hope that parliamentary exchanges, trade and economic cooperation between the two countries would be further strengthened.

During a meeting with his Thai counterpart in Bangkok, Gilani said Pakistan and Thailand enjoyed longstanding, close and friendly relations, as well as strong cooperation in regional and multilateral forums.

At the outset, he thanked the Thai Senate president for meeting him at short notice, saying that although his visit to Thailand was brief and arranged at short notice, he was keen to exchange views with his counterpart.

He expressed Pakistan's keen interest in further strengthening and diversifying relations with Thailand, both bilaterally and in the context of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

He said Pakistan and Thailand were celebrating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations this year, reflecting the depth and warmth of friendship between the two peoples. Recalling the historic bonds between the two countries, Gilani said the people of Pakistan vividly remembered and cherished the landmark visit of the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Queen Mother Sirikit to Pakistan in 1962.

He also recalled that King Vajiralongkorn had visited Pakistan on three occasions—in 1991, 1998 and 2006—in his capacity as Crown Prince. The chairman said that following the memorable visit of Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn to Pakistan in 2012, the President of Pakistan had again extended an invitation to Her Royal Highness in 2025.

He said Pakistan looked forward to welcoming Princess Sirindhorn and hoped the Thai Palace would soon share possible dates for the visit. He noted that the last prime minister-level exchanges between Pakistan and Thailand took place in 2013, when former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra visited Pakistan in August, followed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Thailand in November.

Gilani further informed his counterpart that the Prime Minister of Pakistan had extended an invitation to Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul.

Atta Tarar says public opinion should determine creation of new provinces

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Friday said the creation of new provinces should be determined by public opinion, adding that a referendum could be held to ascertain people's views on the issue.

Speaking to reporters outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), he said new provinces should be established if people supported the idea and the proposal should not be pursued if they opposed it.

"There is no harm in holding a referendum," he said, adding that the Constitution had a clear provision for referendums on matters of national importance or public interest.

Atta Tarar said people should be given an opportunity to express their views before any decision was taken, adding that the situation could be assessed once public opinion had emerged.

Responding to questions about an ECP hearing concerning his visit to Gujranwala, the minister said he had travelled to his hometown at the invitation of the general secretary of the District Bar Association.

He said no election candidate had attended the event and the invitation had been received before the announcement of the election schedule. He added that the association's general secretary was also his colleague.

Pakistan's natural resources worth $8-10tr at 'most conservative estimate', says Dar

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Friday said that the estimated worth of minerals, hydrocarbons and other natural resources in Pakistan was between $8 trillion and $10tr.

And this was the "most conservative estimate", he said while addressing a ceremony held in Karachi to mark the arrival of a Turkish seismic research vessel, Oruc Reis.

The vessel, which arrived on Thursday, will be used for offshore oil and gas exploration in Pakistan.

Dar began his address by welcoming the leadership and professionals of the Turkish Petroleum, as well as the captain, crew and seismic research team of Oruc Reis, and termed the occasion a "historic moment".

He noted that Oruc Reis brought "Turkish scientific expertise together with the experience and capabilities of our national energy companies to advance exploration in Pakistan's offshore domain".

Dar added, "Every successful journey of exploration begins with knowledge. The data gathered by this vessel may deepen our understanding of the geological structures beneath the seabed and provide a stronger basis for Pakistan's future exploration plan."

He described offshore exploration as "complex, capital-intensive and inherently uncertain". And a seismic survey could not guarantee a commercial discovery, he continued. "But no discovery can be made without seismic and exploration," he stressed, adding that today, Pakistan was taking that step with "confidence, responsibility and the prayers of our people". He said Pakistan sought a long-term energy partnership with Turkiye, encompassing offshore exploration, minerals and renewable energy. "You all have witnessed three memorandums of understanding signed between the relevant Turkish and Pakistani agencies. "We want Pakistani geologists and engineers to work very closely with their Turkish.



KARACHI: Deputy Prime Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik and Minister of Energy of Turkiye Alparsian Bayraktar cutting the ribbon at the welcome ceremony of ORUC REIS.

Mohsin Naqvi hands over 20 new vehicles to Islamabad police's SWAT Force

PEAK POINT

SWAT: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday morning handed over 20 new vehicles to Islamabad police's Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Force.

According to the Interior Ministry, the 20 new vehicles have been provided to enhance the operational capabilities of the Islamabad Police's SWAT) Force.

A ceremony was held in the federal capital by the Ministry of Interior to hand over the new vehicles to the SWAT Force.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi handed over the symbolic key to the Islamabad Inspector General of Police. Mohsin Naqvi also inspected the vehicles and met with the SWAT Force jawans.

He said the vehicles will surely enhance the operational capabilities of the SWAT Force personnel.

He said SWAT Force will take immediate action as first responder in case of an emergency situation.

Railways, Mirpur business community discuss enhanced freight transport facilities

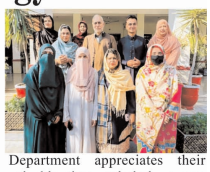
PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi Friday met with a delegation led by Mirpur Chamber of Commerce and Industries President Chaudhry Kashif Nazir Bajjar to discuss industrial development, investment promotion and improved freight transportation facilities through Pakistan Railways. The meeting, held at the Ministry of Railways, focused on industrial and commercial activities in Mirpur, the transportation needs of businesses and opportunities for strengthening freight services through the railway network. Kashif Nazir briefed the minister on the chamber's history, industrial activities and the growth of the business sector, informing him that the Mirpur Chamber of Commerce and Industries was established in 1980. He said around 115 industrial units associated with pharmaceutical, steel and other sectors were operating in Mirpur and playing an important role in the economic and industrial development of the region. The delegation discussed transportation challenges faced by the industrial sector and explored possibilities of transporting goods through Pakistan Railways. It also expressed interest.

Women University Mardan graduates 44 M.Phil Zoology Scholars

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Women University Mardan (WUM) has achieved a significant academic milestone with the successful completion of M.Phil Zoology Viva Voce examinations of all 44 scholars. The final three scholars successfully defended their research theses, two under the supervision of Dr. Komal Aman and one under the supervision of Dr. Huma Fatima, Head of the Department of Zoology.The research theses were evaluated by distinguished external examiners, Prof. Dr. Akram Shah from the University of Peshawar and Dr. Tahir Usman from Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan. The Department appreciates their valuable time, scholarly expertise, and constructive feedback.The research addressed important challenges in zoological sciences, including public health at the human-animal-environment interface, drug resistance, and stress management in chickens through probiotics and nanoparticles, contributing to the advancement of public health.

CDWP clears seven projects worth Rs19.3bn, refers four worth Rs172.4bn to ECNEC

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives/Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday chaired a meeting of the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) that approved seven development projects worth Rs19.3 billion and recommended four projects costing Rs172.4 billion to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC).

The meeting considered 11 projects with a combined estimated cost of Rs191.8 billion, covering agriculture, infrastructure, governance, health, information technology, manpower and employment, power, transport and communications, and environment.

In the agriculture sector, the forum recommended Punjab's Resilient and Inclusive Agriculture Transformation (PRIAT) project, costing Rs104.4 billion, to ECNEC.

Financed through the World Bank and the Punjab government, the project aims to improve farmers' incomes,



ensure equitable access to agricultural water and enhance water-use efficiency through improved irrigation infrastructure, solar-powered irrigation systems, water storage ponds, certified seeds and plants, crop diversification and better market linkages.

The CDWP approved the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission's Exploration of Radioactive Minerals in Marwat Range project at a cost of Rs1.4 billion, aimed at reducing reliance on imported fuel for nuclear power generation.

It also approved the revised Strengthening Institutions for Refugees' Administration (SIRA) project worth Rs255.8 million, sponsored by the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and States and Frontier Regions.

In the health sector, the forum approved the modified and revised project for establishment of Mirwaiz Molvi Muhammad Farooq Shaheed Medical College, Muzaffarabad, at a cost of Rs3.415 billion. It also cleared the Expansion of Cellular Services in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan project worth Rs4.4 billion.

The CDWP gave in-principle approval to the third revised Prime Minister's Youth Skill Development Programme (2023-28), costing Rs47.6 billion, and referred it to ECNEC. Ahsan Iqbal directed that the project cost be rationalised and duplication of work avoided.

The forum also approved the Youth Education, Employment.