

# Independent

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## So-called legislation, court decisions cant' absolve India of its int'l obligations on Kashmir: PM

Assures implementation of understanding with AJK; stresses permanent solution to people's issues; Directs to constitute committee on Neelum-Jhelum project

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that no so-called legislation or court verdicts could absolve India of its obligations on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, under international laws. The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of Hurriyat leaders of Jammu and Kashmir during his daylong visit here, said that Pakistan categorically rejected the Indian unilateral and illegal actions in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) regarding the revocation of its special status. He said Kashmir was an internationally recognised dispute that remained on the UN Security Council's agenda for the last seven decades and awaited settlement as per the UNSC's resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people. The Hurriyat leaders appreciated the prime minister's role in handling the recent situation in the AJK and also thanked Pakistan for its steadfast stance in condemning

Indian unilateral actions and solidarity with the Kashmiri people. Prime Minister Shehbaz assured the delegation that Pakistan would continue extending its moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people and cited the recently held OIC summit in Gambia where Pakistan effectively raised the Kashmir issue. He assured that the Foreign Ministry as well as Pakistan's diplomatic missions would play their role to highlight the Kashmir cause at international forums more effectively. He also urged the Pakistani media to create global awareness of Indian atrocities in the IIOJK. The prime minister instructed the Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam to improve his coordination with the Hurriyat leaders. The delegation comprised Mehmood Ahmed Sagar, Ghulam Muhammad Sufi, Syed Faiz Ahmed Naqshbandi, Altaf Ahmed Bhat, Shehzad Wani, Ejaz Rehmani, Zahid Ashraf and Altaf Hussain Wani.



MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the meeting of the Cabinet of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Iraq: Asif

ISLAMABAD (Online): Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has emphasized that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Iraq and wishes to expand cooperation in all fields of mutual interests especially defence. He expressed these views while talking to Iraqi Ambassador Hamid Abbas Lafta, who called on him in Islamabad Thursday. The Defence Minister said both Pakistan and Iraq should work closely to share their experiences and

build capacities of their Armed Forces. He said Pakistan strongly supports the sovereignty, political unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. Khawaja Asif said Pakistan has developed the best training facilities and infrastructure for its Armed Forces and numerous foreign countries are availing these facilities, especially the training related, to counter terrorism. He encouraged the visiting dignitary to avail more training facilities in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Hamid Abbas Lafta, Ambassador of Iraq called on Minister for Defence & Development Production Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

## Development, prosperity of Balochistan's people Govt top priority: Syedaal Khan

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar Thursday said the development and prosperity of the people of Balochistan is the key priority of the government. He said that senators from Balochistan are given the opportunity to represent the people of the province in the upper house. He expressed these views in a meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti to discuss the overall political and economic situation of the province, development projects. They expressed pledge to work together for the development of the province and the welfare of its people. Syedaal Khan said that the Upper House is determined to resolve the problems faced by the provinces and provide op-

portunities for development and prosperity to its citizens. He said the development and prosperity of Balochistan will ensure the economic stability of the country. He said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project is a game changer for the development and prosperity of the country and Gwadar Port is the hub of business. The quality of life of the people of Balochistan would be improved with the early completion of ongoing projects under CPEC in the province, he added. He further said that economic development is dependent on industrial development, therefore effective measures must be taken to further promote industries in the province.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Russia Albert Khorev called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House.

## Chinese Finance Minister reaffirms continued support for Pak financial stability

BEIJING (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday met with Chinese Minister of Finance Lan Fo'an and underlined the Government of Pakistan's reform agenda with a focus on governance, revenue, and ease of doing business to attract Foreign Direct Investment. The deputy prime minister, who is on a four-day visit to China, also emphasized Pakistan's high priority to investments from China, and shared an overview of the priority sectors identified for this purpose, including agriculture, IT, mines and minerals and renewable energy.

Deputy Prime Minister Dar and Minister Lan expressed profound appreciation for Pakistan-China financial and banking cooperation calling it a manifestation of the 'All Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership' between the two countries. They discussed ideas to further enhance financial cooperation, especially in view of growing business-to-business (B2B) linkages between Pakistan and China. Taking note of the positive trajectory of Pakistan's economy, the Chinese finance minister commended Pakistan's economic agenda and reiterated China's continued support to Pakistan in the efforts to strengthen financial stability.

## National Assembly told Pakistan witnessed 1,514 terror incidents in 2023

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan witnessed 1,514 terror incidents in 2023, the interior ministry told National Assembly (NA) on Thursday. According to details, the interior ministry submitted a written report in the National Assembly regarding law and order situation of Pakistan. The report stated that 572 security personnel were martyred and 1292 were injured in the terror incidents in 2023, while 358 citizens lost their lives and 700 sustained wounds. The report highlighted the worsening law and order situation in the country specially in KP, where 858 terror attacks were reported that claimed lives of 402 security personnel and 178 civilians. As many as 148 security personnel were martyred and 198 were injured in 626 terror attacks in Balochistan during the past year, the report of the interior ministry said. In Sindh, 8 security forces were martyred, 26 were injured, while 6 civilians also lost their lives in the terror incidents in 2023.



MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witnesses the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Pakistan and the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir with regard to 960 MW Dudhnaid Hydropower Project.

## Qaiser chairs meeting to boost economic activity in Gwadar area

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh presided over a meeting aimed at boosting economic activities in Gwadar Port area, emphasizing the government's commitment to accelerate growth and regional development in Balochistan region on Thursday. Federal Secretary Maritime Affairs, representatives from ministry of finance, industries & production, fisheries department, ministry of commerce attended the meeting, a news release said issued here. The federal minister stressed the strategic importance of Gwadar Port

as a key player of Pakistan's economic prosperity and emphasized the need for concerted efforts to enhance import operation and business activity. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to this cause, citing directives from the prime minister to take decisive measures to enhance import of government goods through Gwadar Port. Furthermore, the federal minister emphasized the significance of previous decisions made by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) and the directives of the prime minister in 2008 and 2022, respectively.

## Parliament should be dissolved if ordinances are to be introduced, says CJP Isa

ISLAMABAD (INP): If ordinances are to be introduced, then parliament should be dissolved, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa remarked on Thursday, as the Supreme Court resumed hearing of arguments in the National Accountability (NAB) Ordinance 1999 amendment case. The incarcerated founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) joined the proceedings through video link from Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail in light of the court order issued on the previous hearing. "Through ordinances, the will of one person is imposed on the entire nation. Isn't this against democracy? Shouldn't the

president of the country provide detailed justifications along with the ordinances," the CJP said. A five-member SC bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi, heard the case. Unlike previous hearings, today's proceedings were not live-streamed, but images of the PTI founder went viral on social media. The news of PTI founder's viral image irked the court which ordered an investigation to penalise the rules violator. At the outset of the hearing, Advocate Khwaja Haris came to the rostrum.

The chief justice said he (Haris) was a counsel in the original case and his absence was strange. The CJP said the court would like to hear his stance. Haris said he would assist the court in the matter. Advancing his arguments, federal government's lawyer Makhdoom Ali Khan argued that the NAB amendment case was sub judice before the IHC. At this point, Justice Isa asked him to present his arguments loudly so that the PTI founder could hear him on the video call. Justice Minallah asked the lawyer, "Was the petition pending before the high court accepted for hearing?" The lawyer replied in the affirmative.



BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meets with the Minister of Finance of the People's Republic of China Lan Fo'an.

## Pakistan, UK vow to enhance coordination on multilateral fora

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the United Kingdom have expressed their commitment to further enhance coordination on multilateral fora on matters relating to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. The commitment was expressed during the 6th Round of Pakistan-UK Dialogue on Arms Control & Non-Proliferation here on Wednesday, a Foreign Office press release said on Thursday. Additional Foreign Secretary (Arms Control & Disarmament) Ambassador Mohammad Kamran Akhtar, and Director Defence and International Security at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom, Ambassador Stephen Lillie, led their respective delegations. A broad spectrum of topics relating to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation came under discussion during the dialogue.

## Pakistan to be among world's top 10 economies by 2047: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms, Ahsan Iqbal Thursday said that by 2047, Pakistan would be included amongst top 10 economies in the world. "By working hard, we can bring Pakistan to the top 10 economies of the world by 2047 and for this we have to silence negative voices," he said. Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal's address at the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Conference was held in the Ministry of Planning regarding the national development agenda. The minister said that development is possible only through implementation of SDGs. "It is also to be taken into consideration that Pakistan's budget would be compatible with the SDGs", he said. Ahsan said that natural resources were misused in industrial revolution. He said that "We want to retain a better country for future generations".

The minister said that sustainable development goals are included in Pakistan's 2025 agenda. He said that Pakistan is among top ten countries affected by climate change. The minister said that parliamentarians have a very important role regarding sustainable development goals and the work of distribution of resources is done by the Parliament. He said the private sector has an important role to play in achieving the SDGs and media should help spread awareness of SDGs to the public. The Sustainable Development Goals, when formulated, were intended to develop and it is our responsibility to establish safe and sustainable development for future generations, he said. He said that "We want to retain a better country for future generations". The minister said that sustainable development goals are included in Pakistan's 2025 agenda.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh chairs a meeting regarding the enhancement of Import at Gwadar Port.





