

Naqvi, Moscow envoy agree to activate Pak-Russia antiterrorism dialogue

Islamabad (News Desk) Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with Russia's Ambassador to Pakistan, Albert P. Khorev, on Tuesday in Islamabad, where both agreed to activate antiterrorism dialogue between their countries. Pakistan and Russia witnessed a couple of bilateral exchanges last year, including Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin's visit to Islamabad in October for the 23rd summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. "There was an agreement between both countries to activate antiterrorism dialogue," said a statement issued by the interior ministry after the

meeting between Naqvi and Khorev. According to the ministry, the two leaders also decided to increase cooperation between Pakistan and Russia in countering terrorism and drug trafficking. "Terrorism is a global challenge and only joint multilateral actions can control this scourge," the interior ministry statement said. "We will promote bilateral contacts to further strengthen relations with Russia," the statement quoted Naqvi as saying. He noted that there were vast opportunities to expand cooperation between the countries in various areas. Ambassador Khorev also invited Pa-

kistani officers to attend anti-narcotics training programmes in Moscow and Siberia. They further agreed to "maximise the bilateral exchange of delegations". Matters of mutual interest and promotion of bilateral relations were discussed during the meeting, the ministry said. Last week, Pakistan-Russia ties — including exchange programmes for students and boosting tourism — were discussed as Khorev met with a delegation led by Habib Ahmed, honorary consul of the Russian Federation in Lahore. During the October 2024 visit of PM Mishustin, his counterpart She-

hbaz had thanked Russia for supporting Pakistan's bid to join Brics — the leading Global South bloc — marking a step towards deeper collaboration on the global stage. The two countries had agreed to pursue robust dialogue and cooperation in areas of trade, industry, energy, connectivity, science, technology and education. Defence cooperation was also seen in October as Pakistan and Russia held a joint military exercise codenamed Druzhba (Friendship) VII, with both countries vowing to deepen security cooperation during high-level talks held later.



Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi meets with Russia's Ambassador to Pakistan, Albert P. Khorev, in Islamabad on Feb 25, 2025

NEOC issues advisory for rain, snow in northern areas

RAWALPINDI: (News Desk) The National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) has issued an advisory for rain, wind, thunderstorms, and snowfall in northern and western parts of the country.

It said that a westerly wave was expected to impact various regions of Pakistan from February 25 to March 1. According to the NEOC advisory, Islamabad, upper Punjab, Potohar region, central, southern and north-eastern Punjab are likely to experience rain, wind, and thunderstorms with snowfall or hailstorms.

Heavy rainfall may trigger flash floods in vulnerable areas, the advisory cautioned.

In Balochistan, rain, wind, and thunderstorms with snowfall over hills are anticipated in the western, north-western, and northern parts of the province, with the possibility of flash flooding in susceptible regions.

Similarly, upper and western regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Malakand and Hazara divisions, are likely to witness rain, wind, thunderstorms, and hailstorms, along with snowfall over the hills in KP.

New York City cancels \$220m deal with PIA's Roosevelt hotel over criticism of taxpayers' money usage



New York (News Desk) The mayor of New York City announced on Monday that the city would be ending its \$220 million lease agreement with the Roosevelt Hotel, owned by Pakistan International Airlines, following criticism of American taxpayers' money being used to house asylum seekers.

The hotel closed in 2020 due to continued financial losses associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and reopened in 2023 as a shelter for asylum seekers deported to liberal states by the conservative governor of Texas.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams, facing pressure from both the federal government and right-wing hardliners, announced the facility's closure on Monday.

He credited the closure to the administration's successful emergency response and policy decisions, stating that it would help the city save millions of taxpayers dollars.

The hotel reportedly housed tens of thousands of migrants across its 1,025 rooms at an estimated cost of \$200 per night.

PM Shehbaz arrives in Uzbekistan on 2-day visit to boost bilateral ties

Islamabad (News Desk) Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Uzbekistan on Tuesday on a two-day official visit to enhance bilateral relations with the Central Asian country. Pakistan and Uzbekistan have strengthened ties through trade and economic cooperation. A \$1 billion trade deal was signed in 2023, and plans for further collaboration, including a roadmap for industrial cooperation, show the two sides' commitment to boosting regional connectivity.

Last month, Uzbekistan's Ambassador to Pakistan,

Alisher Tukhtayev, had announced his government's plan to introduce a new direct flight route between Tashkent and Karachi this year, describing it as a "significant step to foster closer ties between the two nations".

PM Shehbaz is visiting the country at the official invitation of Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, state-owned Radio Pakistan reported today.

"The prime minister and president of Uzbekistan, during their meeting, will discuss all areas of bilateral cooperation including connectivity, economic

cooperation, trade, investment, energy, defence and security, regional stability, and education," the report said. It further said that the prime minister was set to address the Pakistan-Uzbekistan Business Forum, where businessmen from both countries would be present, to enhance bilateral ties. During the visit, several memorandums of understanding (MoUs) and agreements between the two countries were expected to be signed, according to the report. Earlier this month, Ambassador Tukhtayev had met with the Quetta

Chamber of Commerce and Industry, where he stressed that Uzbek investors were keen to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan, particularly Balochistan. In May last year, the foreign ministers of both countries met, underscoring their countries' commitment to the swift completion of a planned railway link that would traverse Afghanistan. The bilateral trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan has grown substantially over the last few years, from \$27 million in 2019-20 to \$126m in 2022-23.



Uzbekistan's Prime Minister Abdulla Nigmatovich Aripov welcomes PM Shehbaz Sharif upon his arrival in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on Feb 25, 2025

Six security men among eight injured in Kalat attack

QUETTA: (News Desk) Eight people, including six security personnel, were injured in a bomb attack on a truck convoy guarding the copper project in the Mangochar area of Kalat district on Monday. According to officials, a convoy of 29 trucks, transporting blaster copper from the Saindak project to Karachi, was targeted on the Quetta-Karachi National Highway in Man-

gochar. Unknown armed men planted an improvised explosive device in front of the Nadra office on the main highway, and when the convoy, guarded by personnel from the FC, reached the site, a powerful explosion occurred, hitting a security vehicle. A heavy exchange of gunfire ensued and continued for some time. As a result of the blast, eight security personnel

and a truck driver were injured. "A total of six security personnel and a civilian driver have been injured in the blast," a senior official of the Kalat administration told Dawn, adding that security personnel transferred the injured to the district hospital in Kalat. The officials said no Chinese nationals were traveling in the convoy. Following the blast, traffic

between Quetta and Kalat on the highway was suspended; however, it was later restored after security clearance. A senior official of MRDL, the company running the Saindak copper-cum-gold project for over 20 years, confirmed the attack on the project's convoy, saying two people were injured in the gunfire, including a truck driver who was shifted to Civil Hospital in Quetta.

Riyadh reaffirms \$500m pledge to polio eradication initiative

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) Saudi Arabia reaffirmed on Monday its \$500 million pledge to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) by signing an agreement during the fourth Riyadh International Humanitarian Forum. These funds were initially pledged in April last at the first-ever World Economic Forum Special meeting held in Riyadh. The signing of the agreement will help the GPEI and its partners to reach 370 million children with polio vaccines each year and stop transmission of the virus for good, a press release of GPEI said. Dr Abdullah al Rabeeah, Supervisor-General of King Salman Relief and Humanitarian Centre, attended the signing ceremony which was joined by Director-General of World Health Organisation (WHO), Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus; Unicef Executive Director, Catherine Russell; Chief Executive Officer of Gavi.

Actions of SC regular bench in contempt case challenged

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The federal government on Monday alleged that an SC bench, headed by senior puisne judge Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, 'overreached the jurisdiction' in contempt matter, undermining the Supreme Court's (Practice and Procedure Act) committee and thus disrupting the handling of constitutional cases. In an intra-court appeal filed under Section 19 of the Contempt of Court Ordinance 2003, the federal government challenged the jurisdiction and actions of the bench, headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, in a case involving constitutional interpretation and contempt proceedings. The appeal arises from an SC order in the contempt proceedings where the court discharged a show-cause notice issued against Additional Registrar (Judicial) Nazir Abbas. The law secretary, representing the federation, expressed dissatisfaction over the court decision, arguing that the order overreached the court's contempt jurisdiction under Article 204. Govt accuses Justice Mansoor-led SC bench of undermining constitutional committee. The federation raised several critical legal questions in its appeal. It questioned "whether the court exceeded its jurisdiction by addressing issues beyond the scope of the contempt proceedings, particularly in relation to the powers of committees constituted under the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023, and Article 191A(4) of the Constitution?"

Construction of 36 small dams under way in KP: irrigation minister

PESHAWAR: (News Desk) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Irrigation Minister Aqibullah Khan has said the ongoing development projects would be completed on a priority as per the directives of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

He expressed these views while talking to the media during a visit to Jaroba Dam in Nowshera the other day.

"The irrigation department has completed eight dams in a short period. The Jaroba Dam will make 930 acres of barren land cultivable," he said, according to a statement issued here on Monday. The meeting was also attended by Minister for Irrigation Aqibullah Khan, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Amjad Ali Khan, Special Secretary to Chief Minister Waqar Ali Khan, Irrigation Secretary Tahir Orakzai and other relevant officials.

The minister said that currently, work was under way on the construction of a total of 36 small dams in the province. He said Jaroba Dam would provide 4.65 cusecs of water for irrigation, for which a 6.1km long canal had been built for irrigation of adjacent villages.

Aqibullah said construction of dams would not only solve water problems but also create job opportunities, strengthening the provincial economy.

Suspect arrested in Mianwali after body found in Lahore outhouse of PTI leader Aslam Iqbal

Lahore (News Desk) Lahore police arrested a suspect in the Mianwali district after a man was found dead in the servant quarters of an outhouse belonging to PTI leader Mian Aslam Iqbal.

A day ago, a team of Lahore's Samanabad police had been alerted about the body and recovered it, following which a case was registered against unidentified individuals.

"A joint team arrested the suspect, Constable

Arshad, from Mianwali," read an official statement issued today by Faisal Kamran, the Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) deputy inspector general (DIG).

According to sources, an initial investigation had revealed that Arshad, a CIA official, was living in the servant quarters he had rented through a property dealer.

The investigation had further revealed that Arshad had neither been attend-

ing his office for the last month nor he could be contacted. Police were still trying to identify the man found dead.

DIG Kamran confirmed in his statement today that Arshad had rented the "quarters on the dera (outhouse) belonging to Mian Aslam".

"The suspect admitted the murder [and] also told us the initial details," the DIG said, adding that Arshad had thrown the tool of murder in a river after

committing the alleged crime.

He further said the suspect had tried to hide in his sister's residence in Mianwali and that further investigation was underway.

The statement did not mention any alleged involvement or action taken against Iqbal.

Iqbal, a former Punjab minister, is a seasoned politician with over two decades of experience in parliamentary politics,



becoming an MPA in 2002. After the 2024 general elections, Iqbal was picked by the PTI as its nominee for the chief

minister slot. However, he was later replaced with Rana Aftab Ahmed — who lost to PML-N's Maryam Nawaz.