

POSITIVE



Greenwich University

A Publication by Department of Mass Communication & Media Studies and the Diplomatic Academy

Pakistan's standing in the global rankings

Overview

Pakistan observed a slight improvement in the overall international rankings in 2021 covering socio-economic and political outcomes of the country. Several elements complemented the prospects including successful democratic transition, efficient counter-terrorism measures leading to enhanced peace and security, and foreign direct investment inflows under CPEC, among others. Albeit, decoupling economic growth from human development suggests that the country needs to enhance its scores in health, education and standard of living by ensuring political will, equitable financing and efficient governance to ensure parallel growth for marginalized segments as well. Civil and political liberties must grow hand in hand to ensure a conducive environment for democratic dialogue and accountability which ultimately supports its nation building process.

DEMOCRACY INDEX

Pakistan was placed at the 104th spot among 167 states on the global Democracy Index 2021, compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

Index from 0 (authoritarian regime) to 10 (full democracy)

Compiled based on indicators covering: Electoral process and pluralism, Civil liberties, Functioning of government, Political participation, and Political culture.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Pakistan ranked 161 out of 192 countries in the Human Development Index scoring 2022 0.562 out of 1.000 in 2018 compared to 0.560 out of 1.000 in 2017.

Index from 0 (low development) to 1 (very high development)

Compiled based on indicators covering: life expectancy, education, and per capita income

PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

Pakistan's press freedom rank dropped to 145 out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom Index, An annual ranking of countries published by Reporters Without Borders (RWB), an international non-governmental organization dedicated to safeguard the right to freedom of information.

Compiled based on indicators covering: pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and infrastructure.

TERRORISM INDEX

Terrorism Index in Pakistan decreased to 7.83 in 2021 from 7.92 in 2020.

Index from 0 (lowest impact) to 10 (highest impact)

Compiled based on indicators covering : Total number of terrorist incidents in a given year, total number of fatalities caused by terrorism in a given year, total number of injuries caused by terrorism in a given year and the approximate level of total property damage from terrorist incidents in a given year.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM INDEX

In 2021, index of economic freedom for Pakistan was 51.7 score. Though Pakistan index of economic freedom fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to decrease through 2002 - 2021 period ending at 51.7 score in 2021.

Compiled based on indicators covering: Market openness, Regulatory efficiency, Government size and the rule of law.

Positive Post is a strategic effort to project achievement and contributions of Pakistan. While showcasing Greenwich University's cultural diplomacy initiatives, it also encapsulates a compilation of different developments complementing Pakistan's socio-cultural, economic & Political outcomes

December 2025

29 December 1930: Dr. Muhammad Allama Iqbal, a great Muslim philosopher and poet suggested creation of separate Muslim state in Indian sub-continent to protect Muslim population dominated by Hindu majority.

31 December 1947: Muhammad Farid Khan, Nawab of Amb, and Khanate of Phulra acceded to Pakistan.

24 December 1951: UN Security Council adopts the Anglo-American Resolution on Kashmir urging immediate demilitarization talks between India, Pakistan.

16 December 1957: Malik Feroz Khan Noon is sworn in as seventh Prime Minister of Pakistan.

December 8 1958: Gawadar, formerly a feif of the Sultan of Oman, is handed over to Pakistan after its purchase.

31 December 1985: Martial Law is lifted, amended 1973 Constitution revived.

5 December 1992: Pakistan joins Unified Task Force and participates in Operation Restore Hope.

12 December 2009: Operation Rah-e-Nijat ends in a Pakistani victory.

20 December 2012: Mohmand offensive ends in a Pakistani victory.

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PM Shehbaz meets MBS, Macron on sidelines of global water summit

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday emphasised the need for strong political will and global leadership to address the global water crisis, which poses an existential threat to nations worldwide, and urged the international community to take action to safeguard rapidly depleting water resources.

Speaking at the 'One Water Summit' in Riyadh, PM Shehbaz stressed that "water scarcity is the world's biggest challenge and requires urgent measures". He highlighted the importance of preserving water resources, warning that water shortages are leading to drought conditions globally.

The prime minister also drew the attention of the world community to the devastation caused by the 2022 floods in Pakistan and reiterated the need for more dams in the country to prevent the wastage of water.

PM Shehbaz, who met Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman on the sidelines of the summit, praised him for his Vision 2030 initiative and other climate-related efforts.



Later, a PM Office statement said, he held a warm and cordial meeting with the Saudi crown prince, their fifth over the past six months.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets French President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of One-Water Summit in Riyadh, on Tuesday.

According to the statement, both leaders agreed that it was now necessary for the two countries to bring about a qualitative change in their economic, trade and investment relationship. The crown prince stressed the importance of ensuring the enhancement of meaningful cooperation between both countries, which would bring about economic growth and prosperity in Pakistan.

Both leaders also expressed satisfaction at the pace of progress of the implementation of MoUs and agreements signed with Saudi Arabia regarding investment in Pakistan.

During their meeting, PM Shehbaz reiterated his invitation to the crown prince to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience, to which MBS responded that he was looking forward to his visit to Pakistan. Meeting with Macron

Separately, PM Shehbaz also held a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of the summit. Commending France's leadership on climate change and development issues, he also recalled with appreciation President Macron's strong

advocacy for the people of Pakistan after the devastating 2022 floods.

Both leaders agreed to enhance Pakistan-France cooperation, particularly through business-to-business contacts in the areas of agriculture, livestock, information technology, skills development, and clean drinking water, a PM Office statement said.

Expressing satisfaction at the positive trajectory of bilateral relations, the two leaders exchanged views on the full spectrum of the Pakistan-France relationship, including political, economic, trade, and investment ties, as well as cooperation at multilateral forums such as the United Nations.

PM Shehbaz stressed the need to further strengthen mutually beneficial economic and trade ties and encouraged France to seize investment opportunities in Pakistan, particularly in climate adaptation and renewable energy. Both leaders also reiterated their shared desire to remain closely engaged on regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Courtesy: Dawn

HEC National Outreach Programme for Faculty launched at NFC IET Multan

Higher Education Commission of Islamabad has launched its first faculty training programme under the "National Outreach Program for Faculty" at NFC Institute of Engineering and Technology Multan.

Dr Abid Shahzad, chairperson of the Department of Education, Leadership & Management IUB, National Trainer of NAHE conducted the initial session. It is a 30-day comprehensive teacher training course that is, for the first time, offered in South Punjab. QEC-NFC IET Multan sub-



mitted their faculty training proposal, which HEC Islamabad approved. Accordingly, its launching ceremony was held in the conference room of the Chemical Engineer-

ing department of NFC IET Multan.

In the opening ceremony, Engr. Dr Sadiq Hussain, Director of QEC and coordinator of this

training at NFC IET Multan, welcomed Dr Abid Shahzad, NAHE trainer and participant faculty from different departments. He motivated them to participate actively in this training activity. On this occasion, Vice Chancellor NFC IET Multan Lt General Muzzam Ijaz congratulated the faculty members who have been selected for this training and thanked the chairman of the HEC for their support and initiative in strengthening the faculty's skills under the National Outreach Program of HEC.

Courtesy: The Nation

Realme closes 2024 with record-breaking growth, launches C75

As the fastest-growing smartphone brand in the world, Realme has cemented its place as a trailblazer in the tech industry. With an impressive 11% market share in Pakistan, a staggering growth from just 3% last year, Realme now ranks among the top four smartphone brands in the country, surpassing industry giants. Globally, the brand achieved 1443% YoY growth in the first half of 2024, a feat that underscores its relentless innovation and consumer focus.

In Pakistan, Realme has doubled its monthly sales volume in 2024, assembling devices locally to meet growing demand. This surge in popularity reflects the brand's commitment to making cutting-edge technology accessible, while also contributing to the economy with a workforce of 412 employees and expanding job opportunities. Realme also became the first smartphone

brand in Pakistan to introduce a 24-month extended warranty across its product lineup in 2024. This groundbreaking initiative reflects Realme's unwavering confidence in the reliability of its devices and its dedication to providing unparalleled value to its users.

US, China discuss 'malicious' cyber activity, trade restrictions
The commitment to quality is further reinforced with the Realme C75, which comes with an exclusive one-year water damage warranty, setting a new benchmark for industry standards. Priced at Rs49,999, the Realme C75 brings flagship-level features to an entry-level smartphone. The C75 reflects Realme's philosophy of balancing affordability and premium features, setting new standards in the tech space. Designed with an IP69 rating, the C75 offers unparalleled water and dust re-



sistance, making it perfect for users with active lifestyles and even redefining how they clean and maintain their smartphones.

Whether rinsing under water or enduring harsh environmental conditions, the C75's durability redefines expectations for smartphones.

This launch marks not just the introduction of an innovative product but also a celebration of Realme's extraordinary year, including record-breaking sales of its flagship GT 6, the popu-

lar Realme 12+ and 13+, and the affordable yet powerful C-series models.

With a strong focus on the needs of young and dynamic users, Realme continues to prove that it is not just a brand but a partner in technology for the modern generation. As it closes 2024 with a momentous event in Lahore, Realme looks forward to scaling even greater heights in 2025 with plans to expand its mid-range and flagship offerings further

Courtesy: Dawn

Top huddle vows 'no leniency' for violent protesters

Prime Minister Sheh-baz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir on Monday held a meeting on key security concerns, including a recent PTI protest in Islamabad in which several lives were lost over the course of demonstrations spanning multiple days.

The government did not share details of the meeting with the media, but a source privy to the meeting told Dawn that the huddle discussed the Nov 24 D-Chowk protest and vowed to spare nobody involved in violence and the killing of law enforcers.

"It was decided that no leniency will be shown for those who killed security personnel and destroyed state property," the source said. The meeting, attended by top security officials, also discussed a surge in terrorism, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

The huddle also took stock of



a renewed threat by KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur about another protest march to Islamabad if the government did not release PTI founder Imran Khan from jail. The source said the meeting also remembered the Army Public School tragedy on the occasion of its 10th anniversary on Monday. Security officials gave a detailed briefing on internal and external security matters.

PM Shehbaz Sharif will visit Egypt from December 18 to 20 to participate in the 11th



Summit of the Developing Eight (D-8) in Cairo. Preceding the summit, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar will attend the 21st session of the D-8 Council of Ministers on December 18, the Foreign Office spokesperson said in a statement.

"At the summit, the prime minister will underline the importance of investing in youth and SMEs for building a strong and inclusive economy; creating jobs; advancing innovation; and promoting local entrepreneurship," the spokesperson added.

The PM will express Pakistan's strong commitment to the ideals of D-8, underscore the importance of fostering partnerships for mutual benefit and prosperity, and promote cooperation in agriculture, food security, and tourism. He will also underline Pakistan's incentives for youth empowerment and financial development, the statement added.

The prime minister will also attend the special session of D-8 on the humanitarian crisis and reconstruction challenges in Gaza and Lebanon to deliberate on the situation resulting from Israeli aggression in the Middle East.

He would underline Pakistan's principled position on the situation in Palestine and call for peace in the Middle East. On the sidelines of the summit, the prime minister is expected to hold bilateral meetings with participating leaders.

Courtesy: Dawn

Siddra Anwar receives best growth facilitator award

Siddra Anwar, a renowned senior HR leader and advocate for technological growth, has been honored with the prestigious Best Growth Facilitator Award at the Global Digital Awards 2024. This award recognizes her outstanding contributions to Pakistan's technology industry over the past decade.

Siddra has played a pivotal role in fostering innovation, driving growth, and creating transformative opportunities for tech startups across Pakistan. Through her expertise in human resources and organizational leadership, she has directly contributed to the development of numerous startups, scaling them from grassroots to thriving businesses, and generating



hundreds of job opportunities in the process.

"This recognition is a testament to the collective efforts of Pakistan's vibrant tech ecosystem. It has been a privilege to collaborate with brilliant minds, nurture talent, and contribute to the growth of our industry. I

am deeply committed to building a future where innovation thrives, and opportunities are accessible to all."

Are supercomputers moving to laptops with next-generation chips?

Her decade-long journey in

the tech industry has been marked by strategic initiatives to align people with business objectives, empower startups to grow sustainably, and establish cultures of collaboration and inclusivity. Her leadership has consistently positioned startups for success in an increasingly competitive global market.

The Global Digital Awards celebrate excellence and innovation in technology, honoring individuals and organizations that have made groundbreaking contributions to the industry. Siddra's recognition underscores her commitment to fostering a dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable tech landscape in Pakistan.

Courtesy: The Nation

Tributes paid to Malika-e-Tarannum Noor Jehan



The 24th death anniversary of Malika-e-Tarannum Noor Jehan was observed on Monday. Her real name was Allah Wasai. Born in Kasur, Punjab in 1926 in a family of musicians, Noor Jehan started her musical career from Kolkata, at the age of nine as a singer. She was renowned as one of the greatest and most influential singers of her time in South Asia and was given the honorific title of Malika-e-Tarannum. Noor Jehan ruled the film industry for more than 35 years and recorded about 10,000 songs

in various languages including Urdu, Punjabi and Sindhi. Noor Jehan was the voice that injected spirit in the Pakistan Army and the public during the 1965 war with India. Noor Jehan was awarded with the President's Award for her acting and singing capabilities. She also earned Special Nigar Award, Pride of Performance, Life Time Achievement Award, Sitara-e-Imtiaz, PTV Life Time Achievement Award, and Millennium Award.

Courtesy: The Nation

Women University Swabi celebrates world Arabic language day



The Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Women University Swabi marked World Arabic Language Day with a vibrant celebration that highlighted the importance and beauty of the Arabic language. The event saw enthusiastic participation from students across various semesters, who took part in multiple segments designed to showcase their understanding and appreciation of Arabic. Students delivered speeches on the significance

of the Arabic language, emphasizing its role as the language of the Quran and its historical and cultural impact on the Islamic world. Their presentations highlighted Arabic's influence on knowledge, literature, and science throughout history. Dr. Ibrahim, a keynote speaker, elaborated on Arabic's profound connection with Islam, underscoring its pivotal role in uniting the Muslim Ummah.

Courtesy: The Nation

Envoy calls for strengthening trade relations between Somalia, Pakistan

United Business Group (UBG, FPCCI) Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari met with Somalia's Ambassador Sheikh Noor Muhammad Hassan at the Somali Embassy in Islamabad on Monday. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral trade and cultural ties. Also present on the occasion were former president of Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and chairman of Ba-Waqar Pakistan, Waqar Bakhtawari; ICCI Executive Member Roohail Anwar Butt; Fatima Hassan; and the Deputy Head of Mission Yasin Mohamud Mire. Counsellor Jama Hassan and other officials from the Somali Embassy were also present.

During the meeting, Somalia's Ambassador shared that he has served as a minister in various ministries in Somalia and is primarily a politician. He expressed his commitment to enhancing relations, promoting trade, and strengthening diplomatic ties between the



two countries during his tenure in Pakistan. Sheikh Noor Muhammad Hassan highlighted the significant improvement in Somalia's security situation and extended an invitation to Zafar Bakhtawari to visit Somalia with a trade delegation. The ambassador emphasized Somalia's strategic advantage as a seaport nation, which offers Pakistan the opportunity to expand its maritime trade with other African countries. He stated that strengthening trade relations between Somalia and Pakistan remains his

top priority.

Growth at risk unless electricity price brought down to Rs15 per unit: PM

Zafar Bakhtawari remarked that Somalia is a vital and resource-rich country in Africa. Enhancing trade with Somalia would further deepen mutual relations. Introducing UBG, he explained that it is a representative organization of Pakistan's business community, led by its Patron-in-Chief, S.M. Tanveer, a prominent industri-

alist. Bakhtawari highlighted the vast potential for fostering trade relations between the two countries and noted the growing demand for Pakistani products in the Somali market. He emphasized the need to establish platforms to bring the business communities of both countries closer.

Waqar Bakhtawari stated that Pakistan's business community is ready to provide all possible cooperation to strengthen ties with Somalia. He expressed gratitude for the ambassador's interest and support, noting that fostering close relations between the people of both nations could open new avenues for global trade. Roohail Anwar Butt highlighted the quality and popularity of Pakistani products in the Somali market. He stressed the importance of establishing direct connections between traders from both countries to make trade easier and more beneficial.

Courtesy: The Nation

Poets, writers pay homage to Parveen Shakir

Poets, writers, former colleagues and members of the Parveen Shakir Trust (PST) led by Chairperson of the trust Mrs Parveen Qadir Agha observed on Thursday, 30th death anniversary of their dear colleague and Pakistan's prominent poet Parveen Shakir who breathed her last on Dec 26, 1994 after she succumbed to her injuries in a fatal accident. They gathered at her grave to offer Fateha and pay respects to the departed poet. A contingent of the Pakistan Customs and a delegation of the Pakistan Academy of Letters also joined the mourners and laid floral wreaths on her grave in the H-8 graveyard. Besides, a large number of the fans of Parveen Shakir's poetry also turned up at the grave and recited her popular couplets.

They called her a trendsetter who gave voice to women's sensibilities in her poems. Even today, she is considered a symbol of women empowerment and a role model for the young emerging women writers and poets. Among Parveen Shakir's former colleagues who had arrived to pay their respects included ex-collector Customs, Najeeb Rehman Abbasi, Income Tax group's retired officer Muhammad Siddique, Shalimar Recording Company's Mr Anwar Jahangiri, Registrar of the FTO, Khalid Javed, Director General (DG) Khuldoonul Haq, ex-Member Customs, Salman Nabi, another colleague from the Customs Group Zafar Baig and Director Administration Farhan Khan. Eminent poet Mehboob Zafar and Director General of



the PAL, Sultan Nasir also laid floral wreath and offered Fateha there. Members of the PST Riffat Haider, Dr Rubina Siddique, Seema Anwar and Muneza Syed also paid glowing tributes to Parveen Shakir on the occasion. They pledged to relive her memo-

ry from the trust's platform through various events such as Mushaira, Seminars, literary dialogue and above all the annual Aks-e-Khushbu Award for the best works of poetry and fiction, etc.

Courtesy: The Nation

Homeland's divisions spill over to Pakistanis in US

AS Imran Khan's supporters amplify their campaign for his release and seek international condemnation of the November 26 action against their rally in Islamabad, a contrasting group of Pakistani Americans in Dallas, Texas, has called on US lawmakers to refrain from interfering in Pakistan's internal affairs.

This growing divergence among Pakistani Americans highlights the complexity of the political landscape within the diaspora, mirroring the divisions in Pakistan itself.

In Washington, Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh has been actively engaging with US lawmakers to present Islamabad's perspective. Over the past week, he has met with more than a dozen lawmakers to emphasise that Pakistan remains governed by a democratically elected administration.

"Pakistan already has a parliament, judiciary, and political parties," says Fayyaz Hassan, co-founder of the Texas-based group 'Stand With Pakistan'. "It's not perfect, but we have a functioning democracy."

Envoy to US holds hectic meetings with lawmakers; pro-govt group calls for ending US 'interference' as PTI ramps up campaign over Nov 26 'killings'

However, supporters of Imran Khan, gathered at the National Press Club in Washington on Tuesday, strongly disagreed. "You do not open fire at political rallies in a democracy," argued Dr Malik Usman, representing the Pakistani American Physicians Association (PAPA).

The National Press Club event featured several prominent voices, including Sajjad Burki, a PTI representative who recently met US President-elect

Donald Trump and other Republican leaders.

While Burki described the meetings as "very positive" and "encouraging", he refrained from sharing specific outcomes. When asked if Trump had promised to secure Imran Khan's release, he sidestepped the question, stating, "It's the people of Pakistan who will restore democracy to their country, not external powers." Other speakers highlighted the alleged violence during the Nov 26 protest in Islamabad, reading out the names of a dozen individuals they claim were killed during the demonstration.

"Many, many more are missing, and no one is sharing information about them," said Imran Khan's sister Aleema, speaking via video link from Pakistan. She alleged that security forces had opened fire on peaceful protesters, removed bodies from the scene, and erased hospital records.

These accusations were coupled with calls for international intervention. "Since justice in Pakistan seems unattainable, Pakistanis abroad must raise awareness," said Barrister Ehtesham Amiruddin. He urged collaboration with organisations like Amnesty International to bring the matter before the International Criminal Court.

Burki joined other speakers in urging Pakistani Americans to consider reducing remittances to Pakistan as a means of increasing pressure on the rulers in Islamabad. However, he clarified that PTI had not endorsed calls for civil disobedience.

Diplomatic counter-efforts Ambassador Sheikh's engagements with US lawmakers have also touched on these issues, as Islamabad seeks to counter PTI's campaign. On



Wednesday alone, he held six meetings with members of Congress, focusing on enhancing bilateral relations and addressing the narratives surrounding Pakistan's domestic politics.

In his meeting with Congresswoman Maxine Waters, the ambassador stressed the importance of "deepening trade, investment, defence, and security ties" while fostering people-to-people contacts. Similar discussions occurred in meetings with Congressman Neal Dunn and John Rutherford, with a focus on engaging with the incoming Republican administration.

Yet, the embassy's statements have remained deliberately vague. For instance, after meeting with Congressman Dunn, the embassy stated: "They had an engaging discussion on the broad spectrum of bilateral relations and discussed enhanced cooperation with the upcoming Congress." Competing campaigns

Meanwhile, the Stand With Pakistan campaign announced plans for nationwide rallies, news conferences, and meetings to counter what they describe as "politically motivated anti-Pakistan propaganda".

Their statement criticised the perceived US Congressional interference in Pakistan's affairs, emphasising the need for Pakistani Americans to foster a "balanced understanding of Pakistan's political dynamics". The group underscored Paki-

stan's strategic importance as the world's fifth most populous country, with the sixth-largest military and a critical location near India, China, Afghanistan, and Iran.

"Pakistan has made significant strides in democratic development," the group's statement read, "achieving peaceful transitions of power through elections."

However, Imran Khan's supporters dismissed these assertions, claiming that true democratic development requires accountability and an end to state violence.

"What we're seeing in Pakistan is not democracy; it's authoritarianism disguised as governance," said Dr Usman. The conflicting narratives among Pakistani Americans reflect a broader struggle happening across Pakistan. While one side seeks to preserve the status quo, emphasising national sovereignty and gradual reform, the other demands immediate action to address human rights violations and restore democratic norms.

For both groups, the US remains a critical arena to influence global perceptions of Pakistan.

As Ambassador Sheikh continues his outreach to lawmakers, and as rallies and press conferences unfold, the diaspora's role in shaping Pakistan's international image grows increasingly significant.

Courtesy: Dawn

PM for swift installation of smart meters to curb overbilling

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said overbilling by power utility companies is “unacceptable” and called for the installation of smart meters to measure electricity use accurately.

These meters, he said, would ensure transparency in the billing system and called for concrete steps to prevent electricity theft.

The prime minister issued these directives while chairing a review meeting on the performance of power distribution companies (Discos).

The meeting discussed the affairs of Lahore Electric Supply Company (Lesco), Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) and Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco),



said a press release issued by the media wing of PM Office. Orders Discos to improve recovery, cut losses

The premier vowed that strict action would be taken against officers involved in overbilling. He expressed concern over the delay in the appointment of chief executive officers of Discos and said recruitment should be done promptly and transparently. The recruitment of human resources in distribution companies should be merit-based, he further added. PM Shehbaz further said that all available resources should be utilised to meet the targets of the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority.

The meeting was informed that the recovery rate, one of the targets set by the power regulator, has been improved.

The recovery rate in fiscal 2025 up to November was 96.82pc for Lesco, 87.98pc for Pesco and 97.57pc for Fesco.

The transmission and distribution losses in the same period have been reduced to 13.04pc for Lesco, 33pc for Pesco and 6.1pc for Fesco.

The meeting was apprised that Lesco had installed 49,470 three-phase smart meters out of the total 223,365.

Pesco has moved 51,173 out of 152,559 connections to smart meters. The number for Fesco stood at 11,276 out of 192,311.

The three power utility companies were also facilitating consumers in addressing their complaints. They are offering these

services via call centres, emails, websites, interactive voice response systems and Nepra's mobile and web services.

Moreover, free access to the 118 helpline from all mobile operators was being ensured for complaints related to electricity transmission.

Lesco managed to address 99.2pc of complaints it received, Pesco 99.9pc and Fesco 99.7pc, the meeting was told. Economic Affairs Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Power Division Minister Sardar Owais Ahmad Khan Leghari, State Minister for Information Technology and Telecom-munication Shaza Fatima, State Minister for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervez Malik, Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ahsan Afzal and senior government officials attended the meeting.

Courtesy: Dawn

PIA to add eight more aircraft by next year, says CEO



Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) will add eight aircraft to its fleet next year, its CEO has told a National Assembly committee.

The meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Aviation, chaired by MNA Nawabzada Iftikhar Ahmed Khan Babar, was held on Monday at the Islamabad International Airport, said a press release.

In his briefing, PIA CEO Khuram Mushtaq said the new wide-body Boeing 777 aircraft would be used on long routes.

He said the ban on PIA's flights to Europe had been lifted after four years. The airline's operation to the continent would resume with a flight to Paris on January 10. The national carrier would operate two flights a week on this route.

Says wide-body Boeing 777 will be used on long routes; NA body dissatisfied with ongoing projects at airports

The CEO further said that PIA's agreement with Air France would facilitate passengers travelling to other European countries.

While responding to committee members' complaints about food served on PIA flights, the CEO said its quality has already been improved.

The CEO further revealed that daily flights from Karachi to Sukkur will start on Wednesday (today), adding that the construction of motorways has reduced the number of travellers on domestic flights.

The Pakistan Airports Autho-

rity DG gave a briefing on the development of airports.

He said the runways of Lahore and Quetta airports had been upgraded, while parking and transportation issues had also been solved at the Quetta airport.

The committee was also briefed on the Aviation Division's strategic initiatives for airport development projects.

The members expressed dissatisfaction with the ongoing projects and appointed a sub-committee to assess their progress and performance.

The sub-committee, including MNAs Dr Mahreen Razzaq Bhutto (convener), Abdul Aleem Khan, Rana Iradat Sharif Khan and Ramesh Lal, would evaluate these projects in detail.

The NA committee remains committed to addressing these critical issues to ensure transparency, accountability, and the continued development of aviation infrastructure, said a press release issued after the meeting.

The committee expressed displeasure over the continued absence of the secretary/president of Multan Flying Club from the meetings despite multiple invitations.

The club's official was called to attend the meetings to address unresolved matters such as student fee refunds and employee concerns.

The committee has decided to issue a formal summon for him to attend the next meeting scheduled for January 9 in Multan.

Courtesy: Dawn

Pakistan set to host ICC event after 28 years



The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the eight-team ICC Champions Trophy 2025 schedule to be hosted by Pakistan from February 19 to March 10.

The matches will be played at the three venues of Pakistan – Rawalpindi, Karachi and Lahore, while at least four matches will be hosted by Dubai International Cricket Stadium in Dubai. Karachi's National Bank Stadium and Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium will host three group matches each, while Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host a minimum of four matches. All matches will begin at 2pm local time.

The tournament will kick-off with a Group A fixture involving defending champions Pakistan and New Zealand at the National Bank Stadium on Wednesday, February 19. The second group match of Pakistan will be against India at the Dubai International

Cricket Stadium (DICS) on Sunday, February 23. The hosts will play their third and final group match at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi against Bangladesh on Thursday, February 27. PM says govt mulls options to slash electricity prices

Afghanistan, Australia, England and South Africa are placed in Group B. The top two sides from each group will play the semifinals, with the first semifinal scheduled at the DICS on Tuesday, March 4. The second semifinal will be staged at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on March 5. Both the semifinals have been allotted reserve days as well.

The final of the marquee event is scheduled on Sunday, March 9, with the venue, Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium or Dubai's Dubai International Cricket Stadium, to be confirmed closer to the match. The March 10 will be the reserve day for the final.

Sharing his views, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi said: "We are pleased that an agreement has been reached based on the principles of equality and respect, showcasing the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that defines our sport. "Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to the ICC members who played a constructive role in helping us achieve a mutually beneficial solution. Their efforts have been invaluable in promoting the interests of international cricket.

"Hosting the Champions Trophy is a significant milestone for Pakistan, highlighting our commitment to promoting cricket at the highest level and showcasing our capabilities as a premier event organizer. We are dedicated to ensuring that this tournament will be a memorable experience for players, officials, and fans alike. "Pakistan is elated to welcome the world to the Champions Trophy, and we

look forward to extending our renowned hospitality to all," added the PCB chairman.

Pakistan's white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan said: "As a cricket loving country, we are all very excited to host the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. Having done well with the help of Almighty in the ODIs recently adds to the excitement and build-up towards the mega-event, and we eagerly look forward to playing in front of our home crowd and excelling in the eight-team tournament. "Hosting the ICC Champions Trophy is a great occasion as Pakistan welcomes first ICC event to its shores in 28 years and especially as we are the defending champions. We will try to meet the expectations of our fans. Our country is known for its great hospitality and I am sure the fans will not only support our team, but also appreciate the performances of other teams," he added.

Courtesy: The Nation

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