



# Islamabad POST

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**Canada will abide by ICC arrest warrants for Netanyahu: Trudeau**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Ahsan vows to increase ports' efficiency**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Sinner inspires Italy to Davis Cup semis**

Detailed News On Page-06



**Bajwa calls allegations 'baseless'**

## Will crush any attempt to harm Pak-KSA ties: PM

Maryam also slams Bushra's statement, saying "apolitical woman attacked Pakistan closest ally state"

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Taking a strong exception to the statement of Bushra Bibi, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder's wife, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Friday that the nation would break any hand that dared to sabotage Pakistan-Saudi Arabia friendship. "No one could even think about levelling such allegations," said the premier addressing the inauguration ceremony of the restoration project of Kachhi Canal at Taunsa Canal, Kot Addu. "If someone spews venom against Saudi Arabia, then what would they say about Pakistani nation, government, and its politicians," he added. Regretting the sowing the seeds of hatred, the premier said such statements were driven by personal and political agendas.

A day earlier, Bushra issued a rare video message ahead of the PTI's "do-or-die" protest, accusing Saudi Arabia of being involved in ousting her husband's government. Censuring the major opposition party, PM Shehbaz said, "People of such nature fail to realise how much damage their statements can cause to Pakistan." Praising the Kachhi Canal project, the premier credited Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti for his efforts to launch the restoration work.

Continued on Page 06

**Imran on Bushra's remarks**

**'Have excellent ties with Saudi Arabia'**

Bushra's statement was "deliberately taken out of context to draw Kingdom into a needless controversy," says former PM

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A day after Bushra Bibi accused Saudi Arabia of being involved in the ouster of her husband's government, incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan jumped to his spouse's rescue and said that her statement was "deliberately taken out of context to draw our brotherly country into a needless controversy". "She [Bushra] didn't mention Saudi Arabia at all," the former premier — who remains incarcerated at the Adiala jail since August last year — said in a statement issued on his official X handle. The former first lady, a day earlier, issued a rare video message ahead of PTI's "do-or-die" protest, accusing Saudi Arabia of being involved in ousting her husband's government. She alleged that when the former prime minister went to Madina "barefoot", the then-army chief Gen (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa started receiving "their calls", implying that the Saudi officials had a role in his ouster. The former first lady claimed that Bajwa was asked, "Who is this person you have brought with you [...] we don't want such personalities. Since then, they launched a smear campaign against us and started calling Imran a Jewish agent," she alleged.

Continued on Page 06



**TAUNSA BARRAGE/ KOT ADDU:** Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presses the button to open gates for flow of water from Indus River into Kachhi Canal. — DNA

**Parachinar massacre: who is responsible**

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Stock of questions arises as not only banned militants disowned targeting of innocent civilians including women and children who were on way to home in Kurram but also the convoy was escorted by personnel of security forces. All personnel of security forces remained safe and sound but the helpless and innocent civilians shot killed for undone sin. Retired Inspector General Police Syed Irshad Hussain Shah is right in his words that no other than state organs are involved when the innocent civilians including women and children are being killed in presence of security forces personnel.

Continued on Page 06

**Iran, US condemn deadly Kurram attack**

Fighting terrorism 'shared goal' of Iran, Pakistan: Araghchi

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The international community has united in condemning the horrific terrorist attack in Pakistan's Kurram district, which claimed the lives of over 38 innocent people and left many others critically injured. Both the United States and Iran have expressed their grief and solidarity with Pakistan during this challenging time. In a statement, the United States reaffirmed its unwavering support for Pakistan, emphasizing the right of the Pakistani people to

Continued on Page 06

**Lauds Gandapur's efforts**

## COAS vows to dismantle hostile terrorist networks

Pakistan Army in collaboration with LEAs will "relentlessly hunt down enemies of peace", says army chief

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Amid rising terror incidents in Pakistan, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir on Friday reiterated the army's firm resolve to eradicate the illegal spectrum undermining national security, a statement from the military's media wing said. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), he expressed this resolve during his visit to Peshawar as a follow-up to the National Apex Committee meeting held last Tuesday and a prelude to the provincial apex committee meeting. Highlighting the collective determination of the nation and its security forces to combat terrorism, the army chief stressed thwarting the nefarious designs of inimical elements remains a top priority. He assured that through synchronised and robust operations, the Pakistan Army in collaboration with law enforcement agencies will "relentlessly hunt down the enemies of peace to ensure

Continued on Page 06

**Security forces eliminate seven terrorists in Balochistan, KP IBOs**

An intelligence based operation was conducted in Awaran district of Balochistan

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: As many as seven terrorists were killed by security forces in different operations in Balochistan and KP. According to ISPR, an intelligence based operation was conducted in Awaran district on reported presence of terrorists. After intense exchange of firing, two terrorists were killed. Both high value targets were identified as Niaz alias Ghuman and Zareef alias Shah Jahan.

Continued on Page 06

### Briefs

**Sri Lankan envoy leaving Pak**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Pakistan hosted a farewell lunch in honor of the outgoing High Commissioner of Sri Lanka, H.E. Admiral Ravindra C. Wijegunaratne. Mr. Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Additional Secretary (Asia & Pacific) at MoFA, conveyed his deep appreciation for Admiral Wijegunaratne's significant contributions in strengthening the cordial and cooperative relationship between Pakistan and Sri Lanka during his tenure. In his remarks, Admiral Wijegunaratne highlighted the enduring and brotherly bond between the two nations and expressed his gratitude to MoFA and other officials for their unwavering support in facilitating his duties.

**No one is allowed to hold protest**

Rules out any talks talking going on with PTI: Says mobile phone service will be suspended in Islamabad: No contact with Adiala Jail

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has declared that no one is allowed to hold a rally or protest in Islamabad as per the court orders and stern action will be taken if anyone violates the Section 144. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad on Friday, Mohsin Naqvi maintained "We are bound by the law and the government will implement the verdict of IHC in this regard in letter and spirit."

### Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. — Editor

**In £190m case**

## Bushra's non-bailable arrest warrant issued

NAB official raised the objection that the medical report Bushra's lawyer was showing was issued by Peshawar's Lady Reading Hospital, while the notary attestation was done in Islamabad

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: An accountability court issued on Friday a non-bailable arrest warrant for Bushra Bibi, the wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, in the £190 million settlement case, also referred to as the Al-Qadir Trust case. Trial court judge Nasir Javed Rana issued the orders for the former first lady's arrest for her continued absence from the case's proceedings for at least eight hearings. The judge directed police to arrest Bushra and present her before the court on November 26. The court also issued a show-cause notice to the guarantor of Bushra's bail. During the hearing, the PTI founder — who is currently incarcerated in Adiala prison — was presented before the court, while a lawyer sought exemption for Bushra from today's proceeding on a medical basis. However, a NAB official raised the objection that the medical report Bushra's lawyer was showing was issued by Peshawar's Lady Reading Hospital, while the notary attestation was done in Islamabad. Moreover, neither Khan nor

Continued on Page 06

**Establishment, PTI talks in progress**

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The key PTI leader and member of the think-tank Rauf Hassan has claimed that talks between the Establishment and the PTI are in progress. While talking a TV talk show on Friday Rauf said that the talks were taking place at a very high level. He dispelled the impression as if the Interior Minister was leading the talks. He said it was something beyond the limits of the interior minister. He added that if talks succeed then the protest date may be changed from November 24 to some other date.

Bushra submitted their statement under Section 342 of CrPC, 1898. The couple had been handed over a 79-point questionnaire provided for final statements at the second last hearing of this case.

Continued on Page 06

## PTI adamant on holding protest despite IHC order

Motorways closed, section 144 enforced in Punjab

**Politics has stooped to its 'ugliest' face**

PTI's political ship is sinking, says Asif

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif lamented on Friday that politics has stooped to its "ugliest face" after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's wife, Bushra Bibi, levelled allegations against Saudi Arabia. "Our politics has never witnessed such a low [...] she (Bushra) has declared herself as Sharia, how much lower can they stoop," the top official said during a press conference in Islamabad. Khan's wife, in a rare video message shared on PTI's official X handle, alleged that when the former prime minister went to Madina "barefoot", the then-army chief Gen (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa started receiving "their calls", implying that the Saudi officials had a role in his

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

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# Ahsan for timely completion of PSDP projects

Highlighting the importance of prioritizing projects nearing completion, Ahsan Iqbal directed that projects with 80 percent completion status be expedited with the necessary funding. Externally funded projects should also be completed promptly to create a place for new projects in the next PSDP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday chaired a meeting to assess the progress of projects being executed under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) during the current fiscal year. Senior officials of the Ministry of Planning provided a detailed briefing on the allocation, releases and expenditure of funds for PSDP projects across the country, a news release said. Addressing the meeting, the minister directed the ministry to develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure the timely completion of all ongoing PSDP projects. Reviewing road infrastructure projects of Balochistan amounting to Rs400 billion, Ahsan Iqbal directed that these projects must be completed within three years. He said the government was committed to prioritizing development initiatives in Balochistan, includ-

ing Balochistan three projects of N-25 dualization of the Khuzdar-Kuchlak section of National Highway, the dualization and rehabilitation of the Karachi-Quetta-Chaman road from Karachi-Karoro & Wadh-Khuzdar and the dualization of Karoro-Wadh Section and Kuchlak-Chaman Section at a total cost of Rs224 billion. Other projects of M-8 include the construction of the Hoshab-Awaran-Khuzdar Section-II and Hoshab-Awaran-Kiwzer Package-I, Construction of the Gwadar-Ratodero road project and construction of Wangu Hills Tunnel at a total cost of Rs96 billion, and two projects for the dualization & Improvement of existing N-50 from Yarik-Sagu-Zhob Bypass at Rs. 76 billion cost; and Rehabilitation & Upgradation of long Awaran-Jhaljao Road worth Rs7 billion. The minister directed the Planning Ministry to ensure the timely utilization of funds by other ministries under the development budget. He also stressed the importance of coordinating with ministries regarding their financial

requirements for the next quarter, particularly for projects funded by external assistance to avoid any delays in fund disbursement. Highlighting the importance of prioritizing projects nearing completion, Ahsan Iqbal directed that projects with 80 percent completion status be expedited with the necessary funding. Externally funded projects should also be completed promptly to create a place for new projects in the next PSDP. The minister further said the upcoming PSDP for the next fiscal year would be aligned with the "5Es" framework and the objectives of the five-year development plan. "Projects that meet these objectives will be given priority," he informed. He emphasized that PSDP projects were not only important for national development but also essential for public welfare. He urged all stakeholders to ensure the timely completion of these projects so that the benefits could be passed on to the public without further delay.

## Haji balloting held for CDA employees

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, along with the IG Islamabad Police Syed Nasir Ali Rizvi, participated in a ceremony arranged for the Hajj balloting for the employees of CDA. The event was attended by CDA Board members, and the General Secretary of the Workers Union (CBA), Chaudhary Muhammad Yaseen while a large number of CDA employees were also present there. The Hajj balloting was held among the non-gazetted employees of CDA from Grade 1 to Grade 16. During the occasion Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa stated that this year, 60 employees, instead of 50, would proceed for the blessed journey of Hajj. The computerized balloting was conducted by IG Islamabad Police by pressing a button meant for the balloting. As a result of this balloting, about 60 male and female employees were chosen for upcoming Hajj 2025. While addressing the gathering, Chairman CDA, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, said that those employees who were selected for Hajj through the balloting are the luckiest ones, as Allah has chosen them for this spiritual journey and worship. He congratulated the selected employees and said that performing Hajj is a supreme act of worship. He further urged the selected employees that while praying for your family during Hajj, special prayers should also be made for the progress and prosperity of the country and also urged to remember CDA in the prayers for its betterment and development. He prayed that Allah may enable you to perform Hajj with full dedication, sincerity and good intentions. Chairman CDA further stated that all the employees working at CDA are his team and a source of pride for him.—DNA

## Global moot urges for collective action to mitigate climate change

MIRPUR (AJK): A global conference of experts titled 'Empowering Communities: The Case for Locally Led Adaptation in Climate Resilience', hosted in Azerbaijan's Baku city, emphasized the urgent need for collective action against climate change to mitigate the impacts of disasters. Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, addressed a distinguished forum at a special event hosted in the Pakistan Pavilion during the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan, says a message reaching and released to the media here on Friday. The event saw the participation of prominent figures, including Romina Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, representatives from the German Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red

Crescent Societies (IFRC), national societies, and other key humanitarian stakeholders. A thought-provoking panel discussion featured distinguished speakers, including Member Managing Board Jamaican Red Cross Audrey Mullings, Ms. Ninni Ikkala Nyman, and Manzoor Ali from IFRC, Head of Delegation German Red Cross in Pakistan Asif Aman, and PRCS Deputy Director Climate Change Sajjad Ali, who focused on the significance of locally driven adaptation strategies. Chairman of PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari was the keynote speaker of this exclusive session. In his remarks, Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari underscored PRCS's extensive humanitarian work in Pakistan, especially during the 2022 monsoon floods. He gave the details regarding the organization's ongoing recovery programs and proactive measures to tackle climate challenges, reaffirming PRCS's dedication

to easing the hardships of vulnerable communities. He emphasized the critical role of community-led adaptation, advocating for building local capacities and learning from grassroots experiences to enhance disaster response and recovery. Highlighting Gilgit-Baltistan as a case in point, he addressed the threats posed by glacier melting and glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF) in the region. A documentary showcasing PRCS's humanitarian initiatives and climate adaptation efforts provided attendees with an in-depth understanding of the organization's work. Chairman Laghari also acknowledged the support extended by partner organizations including IFRC, ICRC, Norwegian Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent, German Red Cross, Kuwait Red Crescent, Saudi Red Crescent, Qatar Red Crescent, Egypt Red Crescent, Iran Red Crescent, and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center.

## Police asked to sign MoUs with hospitals for cops' healthcare

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: DIG Welfare Muhammad Kashif Mushtaq Kanju has directed the heads of Dera region to ink agreements with best hospitals in their respective districts for providing treatment and healthcare services to Dera range personnel. Similarly, the DIG Welfare also directed authorities concerned of the district police to ensure that children of policemen had access to higher education by signing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with different schools, colleges, and universities. He issued these directives during his visit to the Dera Ismail Khan region, aimed to address the welfare issues of police personnel and officers in the region. In this regard, he held a "Darbar" at the district's police lines in line with the instructions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Akhtar Hayat Khan. According to police spokesman Muhammad Kashif Mushtaq Kanju was presented a salute by a smartly turned-out police contingent upon his arrival at the police lines. He also laid a floral wreath at the martyrs' memorial and prayed for their departed souls. He also conducted a video link session with police officers and personnel from Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, Upper South Waziristan, and Lower South Waziristan to discuss and resolve welfare issues of the policemen. While earlier addressing the Darbar, DIG Welfare highlighted the significant measures taken by the Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Akhtar Hayat Khan, for the welfare of police personnel and the families of martyrs. He informed that agreements had been made with various hospitals across the province to ensure better healthcare facilities for police personnel and their families. Thus, he directed the high-ups of the district's police to make similar agreements with hospitals and educational institutions for welfare of the police personnel of the region. He also lauded the dedication and sacrifices of all police officers and personnel in the Dera region, especially their courageous actions against anti-state elements. He acknowledged their invaluable contribution in safeguarding the nation.—DNA

## NADRA showcases biometric solutions at IDEAS 2024

Chairman NADRA Tariq Malik emphasized the authority's commitment to developing indigenous technologies to reduce dependency on foreign imports

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has unveiled its cutting-edge biometric technologies at IDEAS 2024, the prestigious international defense exhibition held biennially in Karachi. This marks the organization's first-ever participation in the event, signaling its ambition to cement Pakistan's position as a technological innovator in the realm of digital identity solutions. NADRA's exhibit featured an array

of advanced, locally assembled biometric devices developed through a collaboration between NADRA Technologies Limited and the National Radio and Telecom Corporation (NRTC). Among the showcased innovations were, Compact and portable devices designed to facilitate seamless identity verification in remote locations. Lightweight systems enabling public service delivery. The showcased technology garnered significant interest from international and local delegates,

with many expressing curiosity about their potential deployment across various sectors. Chairman NADRA Tariq Malik emphasized the authority's commitment to developing indigenous technologies to reduce dependency on foreign imports. "Our innovations are a testament to Pakistan's capability to lead in biometric technology, offering secure, efficient and affordable solutions tailored to global standards," he said. The IDEAS 2024, which serves as a platform for defense manufacturers and innovators

worldwide, continues to attract participants from over 50 countries. NADRA's presence at the event highlights Pakistan's strides in home-grown technological advancements and opens avenues for international collaborations in the biometric sector. The exhibition will continue until November 25, with NADRA's booth drawing keen interest from defense and tech industry representatives eager to explore the integration of biometric systems into their operations.



LAHORE: Members of the Executive Committee of the APNS in a group photo with Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari. The minister briefed the members about challenges facing the print media industry.—DNA

## Nation stands united to eradicate terrorism: SCBA

ISLAMABAD: Mian Muhammad Rauf Atta, President, and the 27th Executive Committee of the Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan (SCBAP) has called upon the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), to ensure the law and security situation instead of exhausting all its resources on petty political issues. In a statement issued by Salman Mansoor, Secretary, Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan, on behalf of the President and leadership, the SCBA has expressed grief and sorrow over the killing of innocent citizens in Parachinar, Kurram district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "We understand that yesterday another vicious and brutal act of terror was unleashed by ruthless terrorists, who resorted to kill more than 42 innocent and harmless people, including men, women, and children, and leaving dozens more injured near Parachinar. Our hearts go out to the families of those who lost their lives in this highly condemnable act of terror, and we pray for the early recovery of the wounded ones. This incident is one of numerous recent incidents wherein civilians have been targeted and killed. Incidents such as this one is nothing less than grave security lapse wherein the concerned provincial government and the law enforcement agencies failed to predict and anticipate imminent perils of potential terrorist activity in the area. Provincial government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa is under obligation by the constitution to ensure the law and security situation instead of exhausting all its resources on petty political issues.—APP

## PJN, UNDP holds workshop for strengthening DRC

The DRCs are an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) forum established under the KP Police Act 2017 and provide alternative dispute resolution services at the police station, subdivision, and district level

MARDAN: In an effort to strengthen the Dispute Resolution Councils (DRC) of Mardan Division, a consultative workshop was held on Friday that was attended by DRC representatives from Mardan, Nowshera, Charsadda and Swabi at Police Lines Mardan organized by Peace & Justice Network (PJN) in collaboration with UNDP Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police. The activity was held through the EU-funded "Deliver Justice Project" aimed at making justice more accessible and inclusive in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. The DRCs are an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) forum established under the KP Police Act 2017 and provide alternative dispute resolution ser-

VICES at the police station, subdivision, and district level. A statutory forum, the DRC provides services to the masses at the grass root level enabling citizens to benefit from out of court services for dispute resolution. During the opening session of the workshop on strengthening Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs) in Mardan Division, the District Police Officer (DPO) of Mardan Zahoor Babar Afridi emphasized the importance of DRCs, highlighting their operational framework and the positive impact they have in resolving community disputes effectively. He appreciated the effort of UNDP Pakistan and Peace & Justice Network for organizing this important workshop. During the session, District &

Sessions Judge Muhammad Zeb Khan also highlighted the critical role of ADR and DRCs in addressing court pendency and supporting speedy justice. Ms. Caitlin Chittenden, Rule of Law & Justice Reforms Specialist, Rule of Law Program UNDP Pakistan and Syed Raza Ali CEO Peace & Justice Network also highlighted that the strengthening of Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is crucial to enhancing their ability to serve communities effectively in resolving disputes. By addressing existing gaps—such as inadequate resources, limited training for members, lack of inclusivity, and insufficient public awareness—DRCs can become more efficient, accessible.—APP

## Zafar Bakhtawari with family visit Quaid's mausoleum

DNA

KARACHI: Zafar Bakhtawari, member of the Board of Governors of the Ideology of Pakistan Institute, Zahid Bakhtawari, health advisor to the Punjab government, and Abid Bakhtawari, director of the D. Watson Group, along with their families, paid a visit to the Quaid's Mausoleum in Karachi. They prayed for the elevation of the soul of Quaid-e-Azam and for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan. During the visit to the mausoleum, the Pakistan Air Force contingent stationed there presented them with a salute, which further enhanced the grandeur of this memorable moment. On this occasion, the Bakhtawari family praised

the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam and reaffirmed their commitment to conveying his message to the younger generation. Zafar Bakhtawari, Zahid Bakhtawari, and Abid Bakhtawari's father, Gulam Nabi Bakhtawari, was a gold medalist of the Pakistan Movement. He received this gold medal from the Pakistan Movement Workers and the Ideology of Pakistan Trust. Speaking during the visit to the mausoleum, Zafar Bakhtawari stated that Quaid-e-Azam's vision is still a source of guidance for us and that we must work for Pakistan's development in the light of his principles and ideologies. He said that the nation must understand and practice the power of unity, faith, and discipline. "Quaid-e-Azam's dream of a free,

self-governing, and prosperous Pakistan remains a great source of guidance for us. We must serve our country by following his ideologies and principles so that we can turn his dream into reality." He further stated that the secret to Pakistan's development lies in the underlying principles of faith, unity, and discipline, which should reside in the hearts of every Pakistani. Zafar Bakhtawari, member of the Board of Governors of the Ideology of Pakistan Institute said, "It was the guidance of the Quaid that led us to freedom, and thanks to his vision, we obtained our country. Today, we must walk the paths shown by this great leader to propel Pakistan further along the path of development."

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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

- NOVEMBER**
- Nov 01/Algeria National Day
  - Nov 04/Italy Armed Forces Day
  - Nov 07/Russian Federation Socialist Revolution
  - Nov 09/Cambodia National Day
  - Nov 11/Poland Independence Day
  - Nov 14/Jordan Birthday of King Hussein
  - Nov 15/Belgium Kings Day
  - Nov 15/Brazil Republic Day
  - Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus National Day
  - Nov 18/Oman National Day
  - Nov 18/Morocco Independence Day
  - Nov 21/Bangladesh Armed Forces Day
  - Nov 22/Lebanon Independence Day
  - Nov 25/Suriname National Day
  - Nov 28/Mauritania National Day
  - Nov 28/Albania Flags Day

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- Emergency Ambulance.....1122
- & Rescue Services.....4451122
- Motorway Police.....9266044
- Motorway Police.....9270601-20
- Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
- Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



## Enquiry

- Edhi Ambulance.....115
- PIA Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Enquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange.....9270831-5
- WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
- CAA.....9281092



## Hospitals

- CMH.....5611111
- MH.....5611116
- Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
- DHQ.....5556311-4
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- Holy Family.....9290322-7
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- Polyclinic.....9218300-09
- Shifa International 4603666



## Departments

- CDA.....9221334-43
- CDA.....9208301-04
- Met Office.....9250360-6
- RDA.....5555864
- TMA.....5770886
- Cantonment Board 9270151-3

## Water Tank

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# Iran's patience is transforming into nuclear deterrence

Mr. Dmitry Stefanovich, Research Fellow and a renowned weapon technology expert at Center for International Security, Moscow, laid emphasis on Iran-Russia technological cooperation. He argued that Iran and Russia were the only two states that resisted against the western arms technology and their partnership was mutually beneficial in the fields of system engineering and information sharing

**MAHNOOR ANSAR**  
ISLAMABAD: "Gaza War has led to the transformation in Iran's strategic thinking which is increasingly inclined towards nuclear deterrence", said Dr. Nabi Sonboli, an international affairs expert at Institute of Politics and International Studies (IPIS), Tehran. He was speaking on an event organized by Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) on "Gaza War and Transformative Nature of Iran-Israel Conflict" in Islamabad. Dr. Nabi, while discussing a wide array of issues, mentioned that Gaza War debunked the myth of Iran as a destabilizing state in the region.

Instead, it tarnished the Israeli image which had disrupted the regional peace and stability, he added. Dr. Nabi pointed out that region had observed the political realignment where Arab states were joining hands with Iran in condemning the Israeli actions and advocating for Palestinian statehood. Dr. Nabi was pessimistic about the future as he forecasted temporary ceasefire instead of any permanent solution of this ongoing conflict. Mr. Dmitry Stefanovich, Research Fellow and a renowned weapon technology expert at Center for International Security, Moscow, laid emphasis on Iran-Russia technological cooperation. He argued that Iran and

Russia were the only two states that resisted against the western arms technology and their partnership was mutually beneficial in the fields of system engineering and information sharing. Mr. Stefanovich also added that the relative power of the US was diminishing and hence, cooperation between Russia and Iran was also crucial for global military stability. Mr. Stefanovich defended that Russo-Iranian military collaboration in Syria equipped both these states with the knowledge of using advanced technological weapons by avoiding civilian casualties. Mr. Pooya Mirzaei, a renowned foreign affairs correspondent in Tehran, highlighted that Iran

employed 'Parthian Model of Fighting' which was based upon exploiting hidden underground facilities. He refuted the claims of success made by Israeli officials and argued that Israeli strikes on Iran were successfully thwarted by Iranian missile defense system. Mr. Pooya also raised doubts on Israeli capabilities by questioning the absence of any footages of Israeli attack. Mr. Pooya celebrated Iran's "Operation True Promise II" against Israel and likened Hamas with French resistance during WWII. In the end, Mr. Pooya argued that Iran's nuclear strategy might change in the wake of any external pressure. Earlier, Amb.

Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, shared his concerns regarding the expansion of the conflict in the Middle East. He stressed on the ceasefire and shared his optimism towards de-escalatory efforts by the US. Amb. Jauhar also mentioned that the ongoing crisis could lead to nuclear proliferation, supply lanes disruption, mass migration and terrorism surge in the Middle East. In the end, Mr. Fraz Naqvi, Head of Iran Program at IQS, thanked the speakers and concluded that both Iran and Israel were likely to continue their confrontation in various ways which had the potential to engulf the entire region into its flames.



ISLAMABAD: National flags of Pakistan and Belarus hanging on poles along constitution avenue in connection with the 3 day visit of President of Republic of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko to Pakistan.

# Tough decisions resulted in economic stability

Mian Zahid Hussain said that for many decades, whenever a country starts going bankrupt, the IMF saves it

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, the President of All Karachi Industrial Alliance, the Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board, and the President and former provincial minister, Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Friday that economic stability has come to the country due to the government's unpopular decisions. However, more steps must be taken to increase the growth rate, many of which will be politically difficult, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain added that economic stability has been achieved, but more tough

decisions are necessary for its development so that the people's incomes increase and the unemployed get jobs. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that until the growth rate begins, it is not possible to increase the purchasing power of the people, which is a significant obstacle to national development. The risk of default has been averted, the deficit is under control, prices are not increasing daily, restrictions on imports have been eased somewhat, the rupee depreciation has stopped, and the condition of foreign exchange reserves is improving, which is very encouraging. The business leader said that the coun-

try has achieved economic stability due to its current policies, but the same policies will hinder the growth rate if an attempt is made to increase it. Such a move will trigger inflation and deplete forex reserves, as it has been experienced over a dozen times. He noted that reforms must be intensified to ensure economic growth without jeopardizing the country's slowing economy. Several vital sectors, including the power sector, are still losing trillions of rupees. To save 7500 jobs, PIA was allowed to lose trillions of rupees, which would have allowed thousands of hospitals and schools to be built. He observed that steel mills, railways,

and other departments are the same. Focusing on exports is also necessary because the textile sector alone cannot solve the country's problems, and heavy subsidies are needed to run it. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that for many decades, whenever a country starts going bankrupt, the IMF saves it. Still, no government has ever tried to make fundamental reforms, so after every IMF program, the country starts going bankrupt again. Every government seems to say that it has found the country's economy in a terrible condition and is trying to improve it, but real improvement is still a dream.

# ISSI hosts round-table on "Pak US relations" with CSIS delegation

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a Roundtable Discussion on "Pakistan-U.S. Relations," with delegation from Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), comprising Senior Vice President Daniel Runde and Senior Associate Ambassador Rob-in Raphael. The event was attended by practitioners, academics, think-tank experts, and researchers. In his welcome remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood emphasized the significance

of CSIS as a renowned U.S. think-tank, particularly in shaping the discourse and influencing U.S. policy. He noted that the timing of the visit was crucial, as it coincided with the conclusion of the U.S. Presidential and Congressional elections and the time of Cabinet formation before the new Administration takes office in January 2025. With global attention focussed on what Trump 2.0 would mean for America and the rest of the world, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood dilated on the historically cyclical pattern of Pakistan-U.S. relations

- alternating between engagement and estrangement. He emphasized the need for long-term sustainability and stability, including through efforts to broaden the relationship's scope that would benefit both nations. He also highlighted the vital importance of economic relations with the U.S. for Pakistan, suggesting that besides the traditional areas of bilateral trade and investment attention should be focused on new areas of cooperation such as energy, IT, and climate change. These were vital for evolving a more rounded relationship beyond the historical focus on security and strategic events. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood further highlighted the often adverse effect of the situation in Afghanistan and the U.S.-India strategic partnership on the trajectory of Pakistan-U.S. relations. He called for evaluating the future prospects in the context of a multi-polarizing world, the U.S.-China competition, and key regional developments. Lastly, he underlined the need to enhance think-tank engagement between Pakistan and the U.S., observing that the current discourse largely reflected 'minimalism.—DNA



## IMCG Bhabrahu Islamabad holds investiture ceremony

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: An active Student Council serves as a liaison between the students and the administration of an institution. IMCG BHARAKAHU Islamabad holds the Investiture Ceremony of Student Council 2024-25. The honourable Chief Guest for the occasion was Prof. Dr. Tassawar Hayat, while Principal Prof Abida Parveen presided the ceremony. Worthy Area Education Officer and guests from Quaid-e-Azam University also attended the ceremony. The programme started with the recitation of Holy Quran and translation followed by Naat-e-Rasul-Maqbool (p.b.u.h). The host of the ceremony Mehak Zahra welcomed the Chief guest on the stage. Mrs. Ayesha A. Hameed, Head of the Department of English, presented the College Annual Report and threw light on the academic and co-curricular achievements of the college in the past academic session. She also highlighted the role of Student Council in organizing the Inter-House and Inter-Collegiate competitions. The chief guest took the oath of office from the newly elected President Malika Afridi, Vice President Ms. Anna Bibi, General Secretary Mehak Zahra, Joint Secretary Rimsha Saeed and Discipline Secretary Masfa Ijaz. The secretaries of various societies Literary, Science, Media, Environmental, and Sports, Dania Abbasi, Hafsa Wajid, Maryam Khan, Arwa Abbasi and Aiman Noor respectively also took their oath along with all the class representatives. Former president Mahnoor handed over her charge to the new President. Chief guest Prof. Dr. Tassawar Hayat expressed his delight at being invited to IMCG BHARA KAHU. He congratulated Principal Madam Abida Parveen for her exemplary leadership and proactive approach. He urged students and teachers to embrace critical thinking and problem-solving skills, encouraging students to become job creators, instead of job-seekers. Highlighting the importance of Mathematics as a foundation for knowledge, he invited the college faculty and students to visit the Pakistan Academy of Sciences. The Principal, presented a token of gratitude to the Chief Guest. The ceremony concluded with the rendition of the National Anthem.

# Chinese drone tech to transform agri in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Chinese drone technology will help to transform agriculture in Pakistan, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. According to the report, a major Chinese power company has highlighted the potential of integrating smart agriculture with low-altitude drone technology in Pakistan. In a statement, PowerChina emphasized the role of advanced drone technology in modernizing farming practices and enhancing efficiency. The company is committed to supporting sustainable, modern farming initiatives in Pakistan and beyond. In China, drones equipped with multispectral and thermal imaging cameras are used to analyze soil fertility, moisture levels, and other parameters. The data, processed through artificial intelligence, guides targeted farming actions, improving productivity while reducing costs and environmental impact. To bring these cutting-edge technologies to Pakistan, Chinese companies are introducing solutions such as precision farming, smart irrigation, and data analytics. Earlier this year, the University of Agriculture Faisalabad launched the Pakistan-China Joint Lab for Artificial Intelligence and Smart Agriculture. This initiative aims to boost agricultural productivity, especially in Punjab, which accounts for 76% of Pakistan's annual grain output. Dr. Iqar Ahmad Khan, Vice Chancellor of the University of Agriculture Faisalabad, highlighted the potential for drone spraying technology in Punjab's 25,000 villages. He stated that large-scale implementation could increase productivity, reduce costs, and promote intelligent agriculture across the region. However, high costs and economic constraints may hinder the adoption of drone farming in Pakistan. Dr. Muhammad Adnan, Executive Manager at LTEC International—a Chinese company working on chili farms in Punjab—told Gwadar Pro that overcoming these barriers requires targeted strategies. He proposed the following measures to facilitate drone adoption: • Government subsidies to alleviate financial burdens on farmers. • Public-private partnerships to offer affordable drone rental services. • Local manufacturing of drone technology to lower costs and reduce reliance on imports. • Farmer training programs to ensure proper use of drones, maximizing benefits while minimizing operational expenses. With strategic investments and collaborations, Chinese drone technology could pave the way for a more efficient and sustainable agricultural future in Pakistan.—DNA

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## Briefs

## Pakistani girl named Global Youth Leader

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Farah Gul Rahuja, a girl from Dadu district of Sindh province has been recognized as a Global Youth Leader at the 2024 World Internet Conference (WIC) Wuzhen Summit being held in Wuzhen, China, from November 19 to 22. This year's summit, which drew guests from more than 130 countries and regions both online and offline, focused on artificial intelligence (AI) with the theme "Embracing a Digital Future That Puts People First and Promotes Intelligent Goodness - Jointly Building a Cyberspace Community with a Shared Future," Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. Rahuja was among the 18 youth from 17 countries and regions, including China, the United Kingdom, Brazil and Egypt, who were recognized as Global Youth Leaders at the conference. The young leaders were selected after a rigorous evaluation process from a pool of registrants from 61 countries and regions across six continents. "I am honored and humbled to be recognized among such a talented group of young leaders from around the world," said Rahuja. "This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of my team and me in the field of AI and machine learning." Rahuja, who holds a bachelor's degree in bio-informatics from COMSATS University Islamabad, has made remarkable contributions to the field of AI and machine learning.

## National highway cordoned off

QAZI SHOAB KHAN

ATTOCK: The national highways on the inter provincial bordering route of KPK and Punjab has been cordoned off by the district authorities of Attock by erecting container containers to avert any untoward incidence during the protest rally of Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf on November 24, while a contingent of Pakistan Rangers Punjab has also been deployed in three districts include Attock, Rawalpindi, and Jhelum on Friday. The well placed sources told this scribe on Friday that in response to a proposal submitted to the Federal Ministry of Interior, it has been recommended to deploy two wings of Rangers in Rawalpindi and Attock and one company of Rangers in Jhelum. A spokesperson for the Punjab Home Department said that Rangers has been deployed in Rawalpindi and Attock from Friday, Nov 22, and stay there till further orders. However, it has been recommended to deploy Rangers in Jhelum from Nov 22 to 27. The decision to deploy Rangers was taken on the recommendation of the district administration, added the spokesperson.—APP

## RCCI urges to intensify collective efforts for addressing smog issue

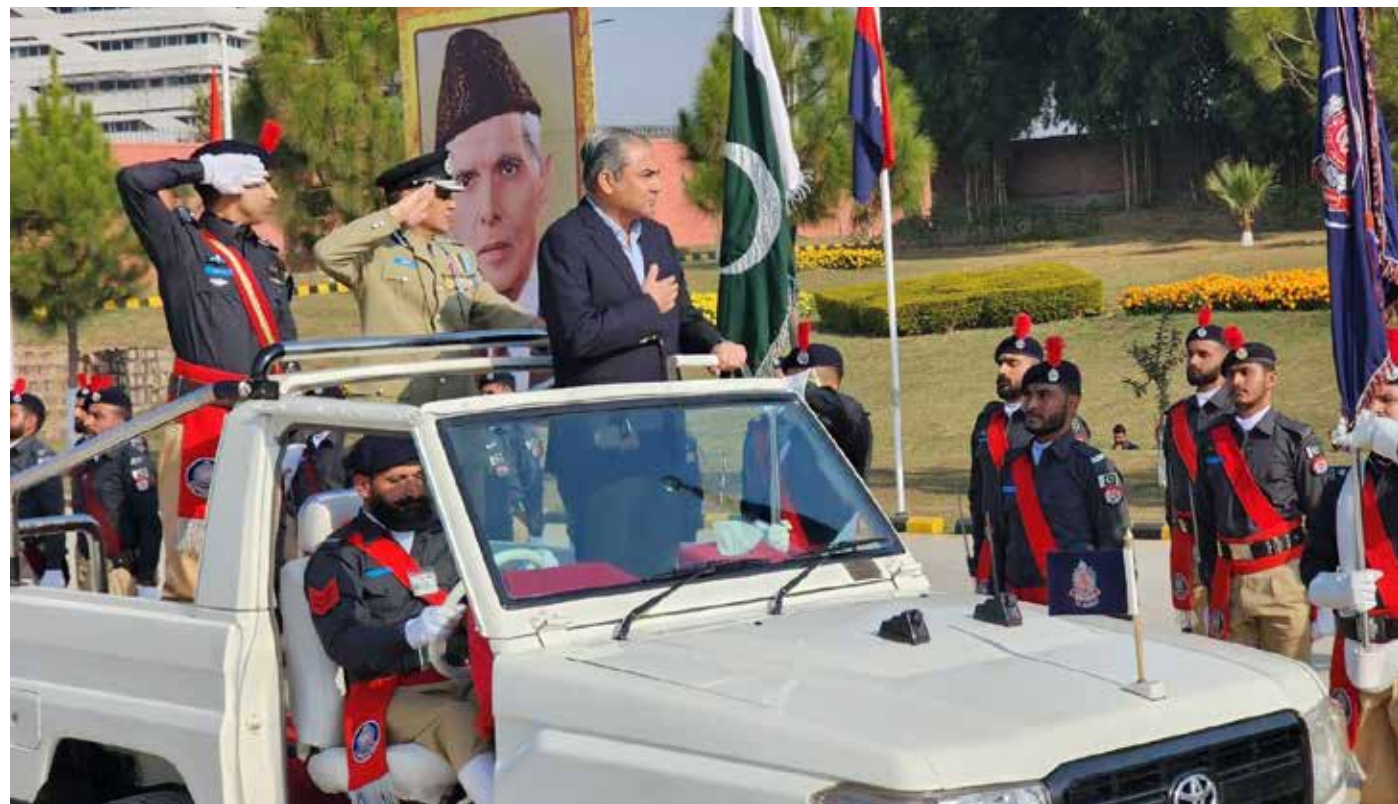
RAWALPINDI :The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged for urgent attention on increasing the challenge of smog by collaborating with relevant stakeholders. President RCCI, Usman Shaikat on Friday underlined the need to counter highly impacting climate issues through massive awareness and initiatives. Addressing a press conference here at the chamber house, along with Dr. Zaigham Abbass, Director Environment Protection Agency, the president highlighted that the wide ranging impact of smog has affected health, logistics, trade and economic cost. He observed that 30 percent of the smog in Pakistan was a result of combustion from the Indian side. "We need to initiate diplomatic dialogue with Indian authorities", he said. He noted that smoke emitting vehicles, industrial activities and other man made machinery were among the main smog contributing factors. However, he stressed for a consistent policy to overcome the issue instead of

## Naqvi lauds role of NPA in training officers of Police Service of Pakistan

Muhammad Idrees Ahmed, Commandant NPA says it has been the endeavour of the National Police Academy to incorporate the latest research in its curriculum so that the officers are abreast of latest policing trends

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD. An impressive Passing out Parade of the ASsP (UT) of 26 th ICC/50th STP was held at National Police Academy (NPA) Islamabad. Honorable Minister for Interior, Mr. Mohsin Raza Naqvi, was the chief guest on the occasion. The chief guest congratulated all the graduating officers on the successful completion of their basic training. He appreciated the role of NPA in training the officers of Police Service of Pakistan. He said that the role and duties of law enforcing agencies is of pivotal importance for the stability and socio-economic advancement of our country. He also said that the whole nation is indebted to police for its sacrifices in the war against terrorism. He reiterated government's commitment to fulfill the requirements of police and promised to meet demands of NPA at earliest. Earlier, Mr. Muhammad Idrees Ahmed, Commandant NPA in his welcome address expressed his gratitude to the Chief Guest for sparing time for NPA and the graduating officers and said that the passing out batch consisted of 31 officers, including 03 lady officers and one PAF Officer. This occasion marks the culmination of a rigorous 18 month calendar which incorporates extensive academic syllabi including various aspects of police management, criminal justice administration, law enforcement,



community policing, crime management and policing by objective, physical training as well as acquainting the officers with real time policing. It has been the endeavour of the National Police Academy to incorporate the latest research in its curriculum so that the officers are abreast of latest policing trends. The officers have also been sensitized about the subjects of public dealing, police

media relations and security and safety of vulnerable groups. The course also includes antiterrorism training for Assistant Superintendents of Police. The Commandant also stated that the NPA's mission is to impart best possible training not only to the Assistant Superintendents of Police but to all segments of law enforcement irrespective of the fact that they belong to Police or not. This is

done keeping in view the complex developments and challenges being faced in the context of the overall crime picture as well as law and order.

We have developed capacity building courses for all law enforcement agencies including Frontier Constabulary, FIA, Intelligence Bureau, Punjab and Sindh Rangers etc. He also expressed his extreme gratitude to the Inter-

national Criminal Investigation and Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) run by the Government of The United States, British High Commission, ICRC, UNODC, NCA, Islamabad based N.G.O in the finalization of these courses. He said that these agencies have supported us generously and there is no hesitation in saying that they are true friends of National Police Academy.

## ICCI President calls for national dialogue to address political, economic challenges

"The nation demands leadership that transcends political rivalries, prioritizes the public good, and sets a foundation for enduring economic resilience and growth"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), has issued an urgent appeal to political stakeholders, emphasizing that political stability is the cornerstone of economic progress and national prosperity. He urged all parties to set aside their differences and engage in a constructive national dialogue to formulate comprehensive, long-term economic policies that serve the nation's interests and uplift its people.

Highlighting the critical link between political harmony and economic recovery, Qureshi asserted that Pakistan's mounting financial challenges, including industrial closures, soaring power tariffs, excessive taxation, and escalating unemployment, can only be addressed through a stable and collaborative political framework. He stressed that the worsening political polarization aggravates these issues, deterring entrepreneurial activity, and stifling economic growth. In a statement issued on Friday, Qureshi painted a stark picture of the current crisis, citing deteriorating law and

order, pervasive corruption, nepotism, and a volatile political climate as key barriers to attracting foreign direct investment. These factors, he noted, have severely undermined Pakistan's economic potential, leaving industries and businesses on the brink of collapse. For Pakistan to emerge from this dilemma, Qureshi underscored the need for robust governance, institutional integrity, and unwavering commitment to policy continuity. He called upon political leaders to prioritize the nation's economic stability over Pakistan interests, emphasizing that good governance and cohesive

## Hurriyat leaders targeted to silence voices for self-determination in IIOJ&amp;K

ISLAMABAD :An Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K), the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) Friday expressed serious concern over the ongoing crackdown by Indian military and police forces against the pro-freedom leaders and activists in the territory. According to Kashmir Media Service, APHC spokesman Advocate Abdul Rashid Minhas, in a statement issued in Srinagar, condemned the continued targeting of Hurriyat leaders and activists. "The aim of this repression is to silence those advocating for the legitimate right to self-determination, as outlined in the United Nations Security Council resolutions," he emphasized. "The Indian government's actions, including the suppression of political space, denial of freedom of expression and the strangulation of civil liberties, have exposed the false narrative of normalcy propagated by India in the besieged and illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Minhas highlighted. The APHC also condemned the actions of the Hindutva-driven Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government, stating, "New Delhi and its appointed Lieutenant Governor are actively working to alter IIOJ&K's demographic makeup in order to undermine the effectiveness of the UN's Kashmir resolutions." "India's efforts to settle non-locals in the occupied territory are aimed at changing the its Muslim-majority status into a minority. However, he reaffirmed that the Kashmiri people would never allow India to succeed in its nefarious designs," Minhas underscored.—APP

## National training workshop

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Program, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan has said that the comprehensively articulated and concerted efforts of character-building of kids initiated from the platform of Allama Iqbal Open University would soon transform Pakistani society into a peaceful abode for the countrymen. He was addressing the closing ceremony of the four-day workshop on "The Art of Parenting" at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). He said, "Nations with a passion and zeal for progress among their youth are destined for success." Rana Mashhood congratulated AIOU's Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, for organizing the workshop which aimed to prevent children from falling into wrongdoings and to guide them toward a virtuous life. He said that the master trainers of the workshop represent the vision of Pakistan for which Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah struggled, Allama Iqbal envisioned, and the elders of the nation sacrificed. Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Planning and Development, Wajih Akram, addressed the ceremony as the guest of honor. She remarked, "Development does not come from wealth but from raising children to become responsible citizens." Wajih Akram assured that she would stand shoulder to shoulder with AIOU and other partner organizations in this nation-building endeavor. During the event, a signing ceremony was also held between AIOU and the National Counter-Terrorism Authority (NACTA) to collaborate on efforts to promote peace in the country. On behalf of the university, the agreement was signed by the Director of the Department of International Affairs, Dr. Zahid Majeed, while NACTA was represented by its Director General, Dr. Khalid Chauhan. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Khalid Chauhan highlighted their focus on human development. He mentioned that creating awareness among the new generation to counter extremist ideologies and mindsets faced challenges like globalization and social media. Senior Professor of AIOU's Faculty of Science, Dr. Irshad Ahmed Arshad, stated, "AIOU has always been at the forefront of advancing the educational landscape." He shared, "The master trainers of this workshop have been equipped with essential skills to train children effectively." Dr. Muhammad Athar Hussain noted that the workshop comprised a total of 24 sessions, with six sessions conducted daily. A total of 75 master trainers were trained, who will now work within the community to promote harmony, brotherhood, and love. At the conclusion of the ceremony, certificates were distributed among the master trainers of the workshop.—DNA



sudden closure of brick kilns, smoke releasing vehicles etc. "Supply chain closure due to smog has resulted in delaying delivery of consignments. Medicines and other essential goods are being transported due to the is-

sue", he said and urged that relevant stakeholders should chalk out the practicable way forward in this regard. While highlighting the RCCI's strategy, Usman said that the business community would collaborate

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## Different food outlets inspected in Commercial market

RAWALPINDI: Member of National Assembly (MNA), Tahira Aurangzeb, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi and Rawalpindi Food Authority here on Friday conducted raids and inspected different food outlets in Commercial Market area. According to a district administration spokesman, during the inspection, a food point was sealed due to extremely poor cleanliness arrangements. One food point was imposed fine amounting to Rs 30,000, he added. He informed that the authority was taking action in accordance with the law against the rules violators and fines were being imposed. During inspection, notices were also issued, the spokesman said. The elements playing with the health and lives of the citizens do not deserve any concession, Tahira Aurangzeb said. Punjab Food Authority is doing a very good job and making efforts to ensure provision of quality food to the citizens including milk, meat and other edibles in the open market, Tahira Aurangzeb said.—APP

## Calligraphy workshop held at PAC

RAWALPINDI :Workshop was organized at the Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with the Iranian Cultural Center. Renowned Iranian calligrapher Saeed Reza Kamrani, along with Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, Shabbir Ahmed Zia, and Muhammad Azeem Iqbal, trained young calligraphers during the workshop. The event was attended by a considerable number of students from the Arts Council, Rawalpindi Women University, Fatima Jinnah University, National College of Arts, and Rawalpindi Medical University. The workshop concluded with a certificate distribution ceremony, Director General of the Iranian Cultural Center in Rawalpindi, Dr. Mehdi Taheri on the occasion stated that Pakistan and Iran are two brotherly Islamic countries with closely aligned cultures. He expressed that the calligraphy workshop brought the people of both nations closer and announced plans for more cultural activities in collaboration with the Punjab Arts Council in the near future. Naheed Manzoor, Resident Director Punjab Arts Council, highlighted that the council was tirelessly working for the promotion of the art of calligraphy. She emphasized the dedication of today's youth to learning calligraphy, calling it commendable.—APP



## World peace is shattering

WHILE the wars in Ukraine and Gaza hold us spellbound in horror, a more tragic reality sits just out of sight: 59 military conflicts are being waged across the world, more than at any time since the second world war. As a result, defence budgets are rising relentlessly, which not only augurs ill for peace, but has created the worst possible squeeze for governments as they face a long and intimidating queue of spending demands – from post-Covid healthcare costs and subsidies on household energy bills, to the daunting costs of arresting global warming – and no obvious evidence of where the needed funds will come from. Most governments are already wrestling with record debt. The International Monetary Fund expects global public debt to pass US\$100 trillion this year. As governments wring their hands over rising defence spending squeezing the bread-and-butter parts of the budget, the irony is that military hawks in the United States are anguished that spending on debt service is set to rise to US\$870 billion this year, surpassing for the first time the defence budget (US\$822 billion). While we pray the conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine are soon resolved, the reality is that the huge economic costs are likely to burden us for decades. A recent Atlantic Council report on the cost of the Gaza war, drawing on an interim assessment from the World Bank, United Nations and European Union, puts the damage to infrastructure alone at nearly US\$18.5 billion. Clearing up the 37.4 million tonnes of debris could take up to 14 years. Restoring the economy may take seven decades. Amid the tragic human losses, Gaza's economy in the first quarter has shrunk to just 14 per cent of what it was a year ago, with the combined economy of the Palestinian Territories down by 35 per cent. Even Israel saw its economic activity fall by 21 per cent in the fourth quarter last year. That it is now regarded as a pariah by most of its Muslim neighbours means economic restoration is likely to take decades. Even if the conflict does not spread more widely, countries across the region are likely to be economically scarred for decades. Countries like Saudi Arabia and Qatar are already among the world's highest military spenders per capita, and the events of the past year mean they divert funds from defence at their peril. The Ukraine conflict has even larger implications for regional security. Ukraine's government has been forced to boost its military spending, by 51 per cent last year to US\$64.8 billion – and that takes no account of the billions in military aid from countries like the US, Germany and Britain. Defence spending now accounts for 37 per cent of Ukraine's economy and 58 per cent of government spending, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Whether Russian leader Vladimir Putin regrets his decision to mount his "special operation" in Ukraine, it has forced him to boost military spending by 24 per cent to an estimated US\$109 billion – accounting for 16 per cent of government spending and 5.9 per cent of Russia's economy, said SIPRI. A perverse consequence of Putin's invasion has been to force Europe's Nato allies to fundamentally rethink their security needs – fuelled also by US president-elect Donald Trump's equivocal comments on the sustainability of America's commitment to Europe's defence.



## Hezbollah setting new equations

WHILE the current phase of the war between Lebanon and the Zionist entity began with a series of Israeli tactical victories, it is clear that the tide has turned and the initiative is on the side of Hezbollah. The recent strikes on central Tel Aviv have demonstrated that if this conflict continues to escalate, the price will be heavy for the settler entity. Although the Israeli pager attacks and string of assassinations against Hezbollah's senior leadership in mid-September had achieved a series of tactical victories for the Zionist Entity, it now appears that they overplayed their hand. Lulled into a false state of comfort, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu not only opened up a new front to his war against Gaza, but has done so while draining his cabinet of any dissenting voices. What appeared to have been the Zionist regime's first big break in the ongoing war, returning an image of power back to it in September, was quickly ruined on October 1, with Iran's ballistic missile attack that shattered the idea of the Israeli regional dominance and seized back the strategic initiative for the Axis of Resistance. Up until the Israeli Premier decided to transform the Lebanese front into an open war, it had remained only a support front that sought to pressure the Zionist regime and its US backers to secure a ceasefire, ending the slaughter in the Gaza Strip. However, the Zionists couldn't help themselves and decided to raise the stakes regionally, forcing the regional resistance forces to escalate. Suddenly, all that had been achieved by the Israelis over the course of two weeks was being undone and they had now decided to enter southern Lebanon on the ground. Despite the blows that were dealt against Hezbollah, the resistance proved its capacity to emerge from a decapitation strike against the majority of its senior leadership, and over a month later, it took the initiative in the ongoing war. The Israeli ground invasion has achieved nothing of military value, failing to even secure any villages under its control and only succeeding at blowing up civilian infrastructure, as the situation allows for its troops to steal women's underwear so that they can make perverted social media videos. The claims of defeating Hezbollah, clearing it from the south of Lebanon, and even wiping out up to 80% of its weapons reserves, are all contradicted by the events we see transpiring on the ground. While the initial goals set forth by Netanyahu and his coalition were returning some 100,000 settlers to their settlements in the north of occupied Palestine, as they strived to simultaneously eliminate Hezbollah's capacity to attack them from south of the Litani River, they now declare victories that not even their own brainwashed public believe. Instead of returning the settlers to northern Palestine, the very opposite has occurred, the settlements have been transformed into closed military zones and the scope of Hezbollah's fire has expanded to include Tel Aviv and beyond. Haifa has become the subject of daily rocket bombardment, while suicide drones roamed the skies freely and hit their military targets with precision. Despite the evident power of Hezbollah's rocket, missile, and drone capabilities, it is important to note that the use of such weapons has been primarily reserved for military targets that fall outside of populated areas.

# Military role in Pakistani politics

Aleesha Shafique



The recurring involvement of the military in civilian governance has significant ramifications for Pakistan's democracy. The military's primary mandate is to safeguard the nation's sovereignty and defend its borders. However, its frequent incursions into civil administration undermine this role and lead to a range of adverse consequences. Excessive military involvement in governance diverts its focus from national security, dilutes professionalism, and increases the risk of corruption. Furthermore, military dominance fosters mistrust between civilian leaders and military officials, weakening state institutions and national...

PAKISTAN'S political landscape has long been defined by the pervasive influence of its military establishment. The recent transition of power, which saw Shahbaz Sharif ascend to the prime ministerial office following the suspension of Imran Khan, underscores the enduring role of the military in shaping governance. This change, widely perceived as orchestrated by then-Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, reflects the systemic entanglement between Pakistan's civilian political institutions and its military. Central to this crisis was a growing rift between Imran Khan and General Bajwa, exacerbated by disagreements over key national issues, including the contentious appointment of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief. Such developments illuminate the military's continuing dominance, a trend deeply rooted in Pakistan's historical and institutional frameworks.

The military's involvement in Pakistan's politics dates back to the nation's early years following independence in 1947. A combination of weak civilian institutions, political instability, and external security challenges created an environment where the military emerged as a central powerbroker. This dominance was formalized with Pakistan's first military coup in 1958, led by General Ayub Khan. The coup dismantled the constitutional order established by the 1956 Constitution and set a precedent for repeated military interventions. Over the decades, Pakistan has witnessed three significant coups—in 1958, 1977, and 1999—each of which underscored the fragility of its democratic framework. Under General Ayub Khan and his successor General Yahya Khan, the military institutionalized its control over governance. Ayub Khan's era saw an effort to legitimize military rule through economic and administrative reforms, yet his regime failed to address the growing political and regional disparities within Pakistan. Yahya Khan's tenure culminated in the catastrophic loss of East Pakistan in the 1971 war, a defining moment that marked the limits of military rule and exposed the vulnerabilities of Pakistan's political and military structures. The return to civilian rule in 1972 under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was short-lived. General Zia-ul-Haq's coup in 1977 marked the beginning of a prolonged period of military dominance, characterized by the expansion of the military's influence beyond

defense into civil administration, education, infrastructure, and economic planning. Zia's regime also entrenched the military's role in shaping Pakistan's ideological and foreign policy direction, particularly through its support for the Afghan jihad against Soviet forces, which deepened ties with Islamist groups and fostered a complex security landscape. The third military intervention in 1999, led by General Pervez Musharraf, reinforced the army's grip on Pakistan's political institutions. Musharraf's rule institutionalized mechanisms that entrenched the military's role in policy-making, such as the establishment of the National Security Council. Simultaneously, the National Accountability Bureau was used as a tool to marginalize opposition leaders, further consolidating military control. Despite Musharraf's promises of economic growth and modernization, his tenure exemplified the challenges of military rule, including political suppression, lack of accountability, and weakened democratic institutions.

The recurring involvement of the military in civilian governance has significant ramifications for Pakistan's democracy. The military's primary mandate is to safeguard the nation's sovereignty and defend its borders. However, its frequent incursions into civil administration undermine this role and lead to a range of adverse consequences. Excessive military involvement in governance diverts its focus from national security, dilutes professionalism, and increases the risk of corruption. Furthermore, military dominance fosters mistrust between civilian leaders and military officials, weakening state institutions and national cohesion. The political implications of military rule extend far beyond administrative inefficiencies. Military interventions erode public trust in democratic institutions such as the judiciary and parliament. The suppression of democratic freedoms, including press liberties and civil rights, creates an environment where dissent is stifled, and accountability is absent. This authoritarian culture not only weakens the rule of law but also hampers the development of a robust and participatory political culture. Moreover, the military's involvement in areas like bureaucracy, law enforcement, and intelligence consolidates its influence, further marginalizing civilian oversight and creating a parallel power structure. Economically, prolonged military dominance has detrimental effects. Military regimes, often operating without legislative

oversight, lack the accountability mechanisms necessary for transparent governance. This lack of accountability facilitates corruption and mismanagement, resulting in economic stagnation. Internationally, military takeovers damage Pakistan's credibility, leading to diplomatic isolation and economic sanctions. These external pressures exacerbate domestic challenges, including poverty, unemployment, and social unrest, which undermine long-term development.

The recent political developments in Pakistan, culminating in the installation of Shahbaz Sharif as prime minister, highlight the enduring challenge of civil-military relations. While the military does not directly govern, its influence over political transitions and key policy decisions underscores its entrenched role in the political system. This dominance poses a significant obstacle to Pakistan's democratic consolidation. Civilian governments often struggle to assert authority over military institutions, creating an imbalance that perpetuates cycles of political instability and authoritarianism. Addressing the military's role in politics requires comprehensive reforms aimed at strengthening civilian institutions. Efforts must focus on enhancing the capacity and independence of democratic structures, including the judiciary, parliament, and electoral bodies. Institutional reforms should also ensure transparency and accountability within the military, limiting its involvement in non-military domains. Additionally, fostering a political culture that prioritizes dialogue and consensus-building is essential to reducing the appeal of military intervention as a solution to political crises.

The military's dominance in Pakistan's politics reflects broader structural challenges that have defined the country's post-independence history. While the military has played a central role in shaping national security and foreign policy, its involvement in governance has often come at the expense of democratic development. The events surrounding the recent transition of power underscore the pressing need for Pakistan to redefine its civil-military relations. Achieving this balance is critical not only for democratic consolidation but also for ensuring long-term stability and prosperity. In the absence of meaningful reforms, the cycle of political instability and military dominance is likely to persist, undermining Pakistan's potential as a democratic state.

— Student BS English at University of Sahiwal  
Email: aleeshashafique144@gmail.com

# ICC arrest warrants: Netanyahu is certainly a criminal, but...

Belén Fernández

Well, yeah. And that "reasonable basis" had already been around for, oh, seven decades or so. Anyway, Bensouda's ruminations were still more than the Israelis could handle. The Jerusalem Post, for example, ran a dispatch by Israeli attorney Nitsana Darshan-Leitner – titled "Refusing to Play the Palestinians' ICC game" – in which the author accused the court of serving as a "concealed weapon" against Israel. Contending that there was "nothing sexier for Bensouda than the Israeli-Palestinian conflict", Darshan-Leitner concluded

YESTERDAY, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defence minister, Yoav Gallant, "for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed from at least 8 October 2023 until at least 20 May 2024", as per the ICC press release. An arrest warrant was also issued for Hamas military commander Mohammed Deif, although this particular detail will continue to be entirely ignored by the Israeli establishment, which prefers to remain up in arms over its allegedly singular victimisation. In the eyes of Israel, the ICC decision constitutes a horrifying display of anti-Semitism and even support for "terror". Among the war crimes charges against Netanyahu and Gallant are that "both individuals intentionally and knowingly deprived the civilian population in Gaza of objects indispensable to their survival, including food, water, and medicine and medical supplies, as well as fuel and electricity, from at least 8 October 2023 to 20 May 2024". The latter date refers to the day that the ICC prosecutor filed the applications for the arrest warrants and is not, obviously, an indication that Israeli war crimes in the Gaza Strip have abated over the past six months. Officially, the Israeli military has killed nearly 45,000 Palestinians in Gaza since October 2023, although the true death toll is undoubtedly many times higher. And while a United Nations committee recently found Israel's methods of warfare in the Gaza Strip to be "consistent with genocide", the ICC has stopped short of calling Israel out on this front, instead specifying that the court "could not determine that all elements of the crime against humanity of extermination were met". Of course, any and all international recognition of Israel's criminal behaviour is morally significant given the country's modus operandi, according to which international law is made to be broken – but only by Israel itself. It's no accident that neither Israel nor the United States, Israel's primary

backer and current accomplice to genocide, are not parties to the ICC. Were international "justice" not completely selective and governed by an egregious double standard, the US would have its own plethora of war crimes to answer for – like the wanton slaughter of civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq under the guise of the so-called "war on terror". Meanwhile, it's not quite clear why the ICC has stopped short of detecting "all elements of the crime of against humanity of extermination" on the part of Netanyahu and Gallant. After all, knowingly depriving a civilian population of everything "indispensable to their survival" would seem to be a pretty surefire way of ensuring, well, extermination. It's also kind of "indispensable to survival" to not be bombed to death while having your entire territory pulverised. And to that end, perhaps, the ICC has "found reasonable grounds to believe" that both Netanyahu and Gallant "each bear criminal responsibility as civilian superiors for the war crime of intentionally directing an attack against the civilian population". But assigning such individual guilt is a mere drop in the bucket of "justice". At the end of the day, the state of Israel as a whole bears "criminal responsibility" for usurping Palestinian land and engaging in 76.5 years (and counting) of ethnic cleansing, displacement and massacres. All of this while driving a sector of the Palestinian population to armed resistance and thereby converting them into targets for continued Israeli criminality. Given Israel's lengthy history of flouting United Nations resolutions, the country's presumption that it should also be immune from ICC rulings comes as no surprise. While Israel does not recognise ICC jurisdiction domestically, Netanyahu and Gallant could in theory be arrested if they travel to any of the court's 124 member states. Needless to say, this is not an eventuality that will be encouraged by the world's reigning superpower. And yet this is not Israel's first run-in with the ICC. Back in 2019, after nearly five years

of "preliminary investigation", the court announced that then-prosecutor Fatou Bensouda was "satisfied" that there was a "reasonable basis to initiate an investigation into the situation in Palestine". This did not mean, of course, that said investigation was set to commence – eternal bureaucracy and foot-dragging being the hallmark of international criminal law. Rather, it had simply been established that there was a "reasonable basis to believe that war crimes have been or are being committed in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip". Well, yeah. And that "reasonable basis" had already been around for, oh, seven decades or so. Anyway, Bensouda's ruminations were still more than the Israelis could handle. The Jerusalem Post, for example, ran a dispatch by Israeli attorney Nitsana Darshan-Leitner – titled "Refusing to Play the Palestinians' ICC game" – in which the author accused the court of serving as a "concealed weapon" against Israel. Contending that there was "nothing sexier for Bensouda than the Israeli-Palestinian conflict", Darshan-Leitner concluded: "We knew that Bensouda was tired of pursuing African dictators and brutal tribal leaders, and wanted to show that the ICC was a court with a truly international reach". Speaking of sexy, Al Jazeera has noted that, as a result of Bensouda's ongoing perceived insolence, Israeli spy chief Yossi Cohen "intensified the covert war on the court that Israel has been waging since Palestine joined the ICC in 2015". The Mossad went about intercepting Bensouda's communications, and she reported being "personally threatened". She stepped down as prosecutor in 2021, the same year the "investigation into the situation in Palestine" finally got under way. Now, it remains to be seen just what the Israelis have up their sleeves in this latest international legal showdown. But as the "situation in Palestine" proceeds apace and genocide rages, there's a reasonable basis to believe justice is not ultimately an option.



## Briefs

**Will crush any attempt to harm...**

FROM PAGE 01  
He blamed former military ruler Pervez Musharraf for destroying the irrigation project initiated by former premier Nawaz Sharif in 1998 after being handed over to a contractor without any tender. The premier emphasised that efforts were needed to generate resources for the completion of the Kachhi Canal project and expressed hopes that it would open doors of prosperity and development to the Balochistan people. Addressing the same event, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz also came down hard on the former first lady's statement, saying: "A woman with no political background has attacked an ally country of Pakistan." "Saudi Arabia, which has always supported Pakistan in difficult times." She said PTI had once again launched an assault on an ally state, driven by a dangerous agenda. Commending the incumbent government's policies, she said that good news was coming every day to Pakistan after a gap of several years as the stock market broke all previous records today and nationals felt relief after a reduction in inflation. Maryam said that the canal project would help populate lands and bring prosperity to Balochistan. The Punjab chief executive criticised the Imran Khan-founded for giving calls for protests and sit-ins despite witnessing positive developments in the country.

**'Have excellent ties with...**

FROM PAGE 01  
The statement drew strong backlash from government officials, calling it a "suicide attack" to harm friendly relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. However, Imran rebuffed the government's impression, saying that he has "excellent relations" with Saudi Arabia. "When I was attacked in Wazirabad, one of the first calls I received was, through the embassy, from Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman," he wrote, noting that the Kingdom has always stood by us in difficult times. Khan was shot in the leg on November 3, 2022, as he waved to crowds from a truck-mounted container while leading a protest march to Islamabad to pressure the government into announcing an early election - but it was cut short in Rawalpindi.

**Bushra's non-bailable arrest...**

FROM PAGE 01  
It may be noted that Bushra was released from Adiala jail on bail last month after remaining behind bars for around nine months in the new Toshakhana case. The development comes a day after the former first lady issued a rare video message, sparking controversy with her allegations against Saudi Arabia of playing role in the ouster of the Imran Khan-led government in 2022. She also urged PTI supporters to join much-hyped protest on November 24 in Islamabad. The NAB had filed the reference against Khan, Bushra, and others last year in December.

**Parachinar massacre...**

FROM PAGE 01  
Similarly, only people from Shia school of thoughts have been targeted after confirmation of their identity. Syed Irshad Hussain Shah is a noble and decent person and he was never witnessed in such a distress as he was shown in releasing the video message. He is right in his demand for a judicial inquiry into this recent massacre. Sectarian tension in Kurram is not new or sectarian unrest is confined to this part of the country. Earlier couple of years ago similar massacres of Shia Hazara in Quetta remained routine but the Shia people came out on roads. They denounced and held no other than custodians of law and order responsible for such massacres. As a result of Shia Hazara community protests now the situation is normal.

# PAF-Serena Hotels Squash Championship concludes



DNA  
ISLAMABAD: Winner and the runners-up of the Chief of the Air Staff-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship posing for a picture with the top management of the Serena Hotels and officials of the Pakistan Air Force. The final was played at the Mushaf Squash complex Islamabad. The Serena Hotels management assured to continue patronizing sports under its Sports Diplomacy initiative.



## Premier League clubs approve changes to APT rules

LONDON: Premier League clubs have voted to approve changes to rules governing commercial deals, despite opposition from Manchester City, Newcastle United, Nottingham Forest and Aston Villa. At a meeting in London on Friday, clubs took under 30 minutes to approve the changes to Associated Party Transaction regulations (APTs). Clubs voted 16 in favour and four against. Manchester City and Aston Villa had both written to rival clubs before the meeting to seek support. For changes to be approved, a minimum of 14 Premier League clubs needed to vote in favour. Friday's vote came after an independent panel found aspects of the Premier League's rules to be unlawful earlier this year, following a lawsuit instigated by Manchester City. APT rules were formed by the Premier League to prevent clubs from profiting from commercial or sponsorship deals with companies linked to their owners that are deemed above "fair market value". The Premier League said the rule changes relate to "integrating the assessment of shareholder loans" and "include the removal of some of the amendments made to APT rules earlier this year."

"The purpose of the APT rules is to ensure clubs are not able to benefit from commercial deals or reductions in costs that are not at fair market value by virtue of relationships with

associated parties," read a Premier League statement. Sources have told BBC Sport that representatives from Chelsea and Manchester United both spoke at the meeting before the vote, urging clubs to vote through the changes. Manchester City's representative declined to speak. Today's vote was seen as a landmark test of the top-flight's ability to uphold rules that it claims are crucial in maintaining competitive balance and fairness, by ensuring commercial deals that clubs agree with companies linked to their owners represent fair market value and are not artificially inflated. Had seven or more clubs voted against the league's proposed changes and vetoed the amendments, the fear was that state-connected clubs such as Manchester City and Newcastle United could have full scope to secure ever more lucrative sponsorship deals, fuelling wage inflation. After all, the changes the league was proposing - after a tribunal panel found elements of the APTs were unlawful - will weaken the rules. Clearly 16 clubs were loathe to loosen them even more. The Premier League may also have been concerned that defeat today could have had an adverse impact on the ongoing case that has seen City face more than 100 charges of alleged financial rule breaches. City deny wrongdoing in a saga that could prove seismic for the club's future. However, today's vote also risks deep-

ening the unprecedented division that is now coming to define a league once known for its unity. City made clear they felt the amendments are unlawful and insisted no vote should take place before the panel issued a further determination. We now know three clubs agreed with them. Losing today's vote may mean City now take the further litigation they were threatening, adding to the league's already spiralling legal bills and exacerbating the power struggle that the league is having to navigate. This dispute had already escalated into an unseemly war of words, with the Premier League accusing the champions of "baseless assertions", before City then claimed the top-flight was "rushing through" what it labelled "unlawful" rule changes. Sources have told BBC Sport that City's position around APTs remains unchanged despite Friday's vote. Last week, City wrote to the other 19 Premier League clubs to say they were "concerned" about "unlawful amendments" to the APT rules. They feel last month's tribunal ruling, which demanded changes to the Premier League's rules, effectively meant they need to be completely replaced, not tweaked as has happened. Clarification from the tribunal is still to be received but City feel its recommendations will end up siding with them, which will effectively make today's vote irrelevant. - Agencies

## Jay Shah to contact Mohsin Naqvi amid Champions Trophy row

*Shah is likely to meet the ICC officials as well*

DUBAI: Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah is likely to hold a telephonic conversation with Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi amid the ongoing ambiguity surrounding the ICC 2025 Champions Trophy, Pakistani media reported. According to the report, Shah is likely to travel to Dubai, where he will hold a meeting with the International Cricket Council (ICC) officials. The meeting is likely to end the ongoing ambiguity surrounding the tournament, the report added. Details further shared that a telephonic conversation between BCCI's Shah and PCB's Naqvi is also expected. The development came after the highly-anticipated schedule of the eight-team tournament was delayed further. According to the details, the PCB is firm on its stance of opposing the hybrid model and also on boycotting all of India's matches if the BCCI does not send its national men's team to the country, which made the schedule announcement unlikely in the given time. Furthermore, the broadcasters of the tournament, who were assured a cycle that includes Pakistan-India clashes, which typically generate the highest viewership and revenue, have also refused to accept a schedule that does not include the blockbuster matches. The broadcasters further threatened to take legal action if the ICC fails to fulfill their demands. Sources further shared that the announcement of the schedule would be possible in a couple of days if the stakeholders show some flexibility. Stakeholders are in favour of holding the event with mutual consensus, they added. Meanwhile, the international cricketing body is striving to come up with a solution before BCCI Secretary Jay Shah takes charge as ICC Chairman on December 1. - Agencies

## Azhar Ali gets another major role in PCB

Azhar was included in the men's selection committee last month

DNA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Thursday, appointed member of Men's National Selection Committee, Azhar Ali, as the Head of Youth Development following a recruitment process. According to the cricket board, Azhar would be responsible for 'shaping the future' of Pakistan cricket by designing and implementing comprehensive youth cricket strategies, establishing robust grassroots cricket structures and talent pathways. He has also been tasked to collaborate with regional cricket associations to strengthen age-group programmes, educating emerging cricketers under the PCB's Pathways Programme, and organising seminars and clinics to build awareness of off-field development essentials for aspiring players, the cricket board shared. Reacting to his appointment, Azhar shared he was upbeat to take up the role and also that he was wary of the importance of grassroots development in shaping the future. "I am honoured and excited to take on this important role. Having risen through the age-group ranks and played extensive club and domestic cricket, I understand the critical role grassroots development plays in shaping future stars," Azhar was quoted as saying. "Significant strides have already been made in this area and I look forward to working with my colleagues to further elevate our youth development programme further."

## Sinner inspires Italy to Davis Cup semi-finals

MADRID: Jannik Sinner inspired reigning champions Italy to a comeback victory over Argentina which set up a Davis Cup semi-final against Australia. World number one Sinner kept Italy in contention after Lorenzo Musetti's loss to Francisco Cerundolo with a commanding straight-set win over Sebastian Baez. The 23-year-old then partnered Matteo Berrettini to a 6-4 7-5 victory against Andres Molteni and Maximo Gonzalez in the deciding doubles match to complete the turnaround in Malaga. In a repeat of last year's title decider, Italy face Australia for a place in Sunday's final after they beat the United States 2-1 earlier on Thursday. Italy are seeking to become only the sixth nation to retain the Davis Cup since the final stage was introduced 52 years ago, and first since the Czech Republic in 2013. Germany beat Canada on Wednesday to confirm a semi-final against the Netherlands on Friday, who knocked out Spain in the final tournament of Rafael Nadal's career. Seeking to complete an outstanding individual season by helping

Italy retain the Davis Cup, Sinner broke Baez's serve twice in both sets in a straightforward win. The in-form Sinner won the ATP Finals title on Sunday to cap a year in which he also won the first two Grand Slam titles of his career, however he has also been embroiled in an ongoing doping controversy. World number 30 Cerundolo produced an outstanding performance to give Argentina the perfect start, closing out a 6-4 6-1 win over 17th-ranked Musetti by winning 12 of the last 15 games after suffering an early break. But Sinner, who only arrived in Spain on Tuesday - two days after triumphing in Turin - returned following his singles victory to partner the excellent Berrettini and maintain Italy's hopes of winning back-to-back titles. Established pairing Simone Bolelli and Andrea Pavonetto were originally selected to play doubles for Italy, but Italy captain Filippo Volandri's decision to choose two of his star names paid off. "The court is very fast and I haven't had much time to adapt, but the most important thing was to

keep Italy alive," said Sinner. Volandri, speaking about Sinner's contribution, said: "He never practised on this court since he arrived. Within three minutes [of his singles match] he was perfectly comfortable. "He is a special one." In a meeting between the two most successful nations in the tournament's history, American world number four Taylor Fritz defeated Alex de Minaur, after Ben Shelton lost to Thanasi Kokkinakis to force a deciding match. But Matthew Ebden and Jordan Thompson sent Australia, runners-up in the past two editions, through to the last four with a straight-set win over Shelton and Tommy Paul. In a thrilling opening contest, Kokkinakis saved four match points to edge a 30-point third-set tie-break against Shelton, putting Australia ahead with a 6-1 4-6 7-6 (16-14) victory after two hours and 17 minutes in Malaga. Fritz, who rose into the world's top four after finishing runner-up to Sinner at last week's ATP Finals, responded with a clinical 6-3 6-4 win against the ninth-ranked De Minaur to force a decider.

## Bumrah leads India's fightback against Australia

*Australia trail by a further 83 runs*

WEB DESK

PERTH: Jasprit Bumrah's four-wicket haul scripted India's astounding comeback after being skittled for a modest total on the first day of the opening Test against Australia here at Optus Stadium on Friday. At the stumps on the first day, hosts Australia were reeling at 67/7 in response to India's 150, trailing by a further 83 runs. Wicketkeeper batter Alex Carey and Mitchell Starc - unbeaten for 19 and six respectively - will resume the hosts' first innings on the second day. The home side had a dismal start to their innings as Bumrah ran through their top-order, dismissing both openers Nathan McSweeney (10) and Usman Khawaja (8) before claiming the prized scalp of veteran Steve Smith (0). Mohammed Siraj further dented Australia's batting expedition by getting rid of Marnus Labuschagne (2) and Mitchell Marsh (6), while

debutant Harshit Rana sent Travis Head back to the pavilion. Meanwhile, Bumrah, fuelled with momentum got rid of his Australian counter-



terpart Pat Cummins to further reduce the hosts to 59/7. Following the slump, Carey and Starc batted cautiously to see off the remain-

ing overs. The duo had added eight runs to the total before stumps were called. Earlier, Australian pacers booked the inexperienced India's batting unit on a meagre 150. India had lost half of their side with just 59 runs on the board before wicketkeeper batter Rishabh Pant and Nitish Kumar Reddy offered some fightback against the ruthless Australian bowling attack. The duo put together a crucial 48-run partnership which pushed the total past the 100-run mark. Skipper Cummins provided Australia with a much-needed breakthrough by getting rid of Pant, who scored 37 off 78 deliveries with the help of three fours and a six. Reddy then put together brief partnerships with Harshit Rana and Jasprit Bumrah before finally falling victim to Cummins. He top-scored for India with a 59-ball 41, laced up with seven boundaries including a six. Josh Hazlewood was the standout bowler for Australia, picking up four wickets, while Starc, Cummins and Marsh bagged two wickets each.

## PTI adamant on holding protest...

FROM PAGE 01  
suspended in Pakistan, forcing the nation to come out to protest and make sacrifices. The nation must decide whether to wear the yoke of slavery ... or to wear the crown of freedom." He said the people should remain focused on Sunday, expressing hope that it would be a successful protest. Ahead of the PTI's protest, public gatherings have been banned in Islamabad for two months and in Rawalpindi till November 26. Today, a similar prohibition was announced across Punjab for three days from Saturday till Monday under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, Section 144 is a legal provision that empowers district administrations to prohibit an assembly of four or more people in an area for a limited period. It is usually imposed to prevent potential disturbances, maintain law and order, and curb any activities that might escalate into violence.

## Politics has stooped to...

FROM PAGE 01  
ouster. "2.8 million Pakistani citizens are employed in Saudi Arabia. Why was a statement about Saudi Arabia even made?" he asked. The PTI's political ship is sinking, he said, and Bushra made the statement to save it. "There is a conflict between the sisters-in-law; the family is embroiled in a dispute over inheritance." He further alleged: "Bushra Bibi has laid claim to the political inheritance." Asif also criticised former General Qamar Javed Bajwa, saying: "General Bajwa himself should issue a denial of this statement." Asif highlighted the irony of the situation by stating: "[PTI] used to criticise others for engaging in dynastic politics, but here, [Khan's] heirs are fighting among themselves."

## COAS vows to...

FROM PAGE 01  
lasting stability and security." During his visit, Gen Mumir was provided a comprehensive briefing on the prevailing security situation and the progress of ongoing counter-terrorism operations in the region. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and field commanders were also present on the occasion. Paying profound tribute to the martyrs and "ghazis", COAS emphasised the unparalleled sacrifices being rendered for the defence of the motherland. He remarked that these sacrifices serve as a cornerstone of national resilience, inspiring and unwavering dedication of the armed forces and law enforcement agencies.

## Security forces...

FROM PAGE 01  
In another operation in Dera Bugti, a terrorist was also killed by the security forces. In yet another engagement in Kech District, the troops, while conducting an intelligence based operation, killed another terrorist in Kech District. These terrorists were involved in numerous terror activities against security forces as well as the innocent civilians and were highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies. Meanwhile, three terrorists were killed and two others got injured during an intelligence based operation by security forces in Bannu district of KP.

## Iran, US condemn...

FROM PAGE 01  
live free from harm and danger. "Our sympathies and condolences go out to the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives, and we wish the injured a full and speedy recovery," said a U.S. representative. The U.S. pledged to remain a steadfast partner in Pakistan's efforts to ensure the safety and security of its citizens, standing in solidarity with the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during this tragic time. Similarly, Iran's Foreign Minister, Dr. Syed Abbas Araqchi, strongly condemned the attack, calling it a "heinous act of terrorism."



## Briefs

## PSX continues with bullish trend

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Friday, gaining 469.83 points more points, a positive change of 0.48 percent, closing at 97,798.23 points as compared to 97,328.40 points on the last trading day. Pakistan's cuisine A total of 1,249,092,089 shares were traded during the day as compared to 969,907,357 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 45.475 billion against Rs. 35.167 billion on the last trading day. As many as 449 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 112 of them recorded gains and 296 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 41 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 177,135,830 shares at Rs 1.39 per share, K-Electric Limited with 124,131,268 shares at Rs 5.31 per share and Hascol Petrol with 105,013,176 shares at Rs.11.23 per share. —APP

## Gold price increases by Rs.2,500 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.2,500 and was sold at Rs.280,500 on Friday against its sale at Rs. 278,000, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also went up by Rs.2,143 to Rs.240,483 from Rs. 238,340 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold increased to Rs.220,443 from Rs. 218,479. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.3,450 and Rs.2,957 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$25 to \$2,693 from \$2,668, the Association reported. —APP

## Rupee records marginal gain against US dollar

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee recorded a marginal gain against the US dollar, appreciating 0.07% in the inter-bank market on Friday. At close, the currency settled at 277.76, a gain of Re0.20 against the greenback. On Thursday, the rupee had settled at 277.96, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Internationally, the US dollar stuck close to a 13-month high on Friday as investors assessed the outlook for the Federal Reserve's interest rate path and uncertainty in Europe kept the euro on the back foot, while bitcoin eyed the \$100,000 level. The yen, meanwhile, held its ground against the greenback after domestic core inflation figures remained above the Bank of Japan's (BOJ) 2% target in a sign conditions for further interest rate hikes were falling in place.

The US dollar index edged down 0.05% to 107.01, not far off Thursday's one-year high of 107.15, its highest level since Oct. 4, 2023, with little data this week to dent its march higher. —APP

## Weekly inflation up by 0.67%

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), went up by 0.67 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on November 21, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 324.11 points as compared to 321.94 points during the past week. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 4.92 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16=100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. —APP

## Minister vows to increase ports' efficiency, boost trade

After detailed discussions, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the importance of resolving these challenges for national economic growth, directing the formation of a committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Planning, Port Qasim Authority, Ministry of Maritime Affairs, National Highway Authority (NHA) and Ministry of Railways

DNA  
ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday reaffirmed the government's strong commitment to strengthening seaports' efficiency, boosting trade and ensuring sustainable economic development in the country. He expressed this resolve while chairing a consultative meeting on enhancing the efficiency of Karachi ports by improving hinterland connectivity. Among others, the meeting was attended by Secretary

Planning Awaiz Manzoor Sumra, Member Infrastructure Waqas Anwar, CEO of the Public Private Partnership Authority, besides senior representatives from the Ministries of Maritime Affairs, Communications, Railways, Aviation Division and Commerce Division, a news release said. During the meeting, Member Infrastructure Waqas Anwar presented a detailed briefing on improving port efficiency, providing a progress update from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs regarding a committee constituted by the Prime Minister's Office

to address cross-cutting issues at Karachi Port. He highlighted that Pakistan's merchandise trade as a percentage of GDP stood at 26 percent, significantly lower than the global average of 44 percent. "From 2015 to 2020, Pakistan's ports handled over 3 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of container traffic annually, with approximately two-thirds managed at Karachi's three terminals and the remainder at Port Qasim." Pakistan's cuisine He pointed out that rail access to Karachi Port was underutilized, with nearly all cargo transported via

road, leading to congestion and environmental challenges. "Existing rail facilities are insufficient for efficient goods transfer due to their limited capacity for loading and unloading operations." Karachi Port faces significant road congestion due to ban on trucks movement from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., affecting traffic flow into and out of port areas. Port Qasim, on the other hand, benefits from better road connectivity (N-5 and M-9 via Eastern Bypass) but may face road access congestion by 2030 if rail connectivity is not improved. To address these

challenges, the Member Infrastructure proposed short and long-term measures. The short-term measures include implementing 24/7 port operations while scheduling freight truck movements to reduce congestion. Freight trucks would use port gates only during pre-arranged schedules. For long-term solutions, it was recommended to develop an elevated expressway as a priority project to ease road congestion. Simultaneous investments in rail infrastructure were also proposed to enhance up-country freight transport efficiency and reduce overall transportation

costs. Both projects should progress concurrently to maximize long-term benefits. After detailed discussions, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the importance of resolving these challenges for national economic growth, directing the formation of a committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Planning, Port Qasim Authority, Ministry of Maritime Affairs, National Highway Authority (NHA) and Ministry of Railways. The committee has been tasked with reviewing the issues comprehensively and presenting a consensus-based solution within two weeks.

## PBBC chairman, Tanveer for enhancing coop in agri, industrial sectors

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Pakistan-Britain Business Council (PBBC) John Tucknott CMG MBE on Friday met with Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain and discussed ways and means to increase cooperation in diverse fields including industry and agriculture. During the meeting, the two sides also agreed to work together to further enhance the trade relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom (UK), said a news release. The PBBC delegation includes the Council's CEO Rashid Iqbal, Head of Trade and Investment UK Adeel Khan, Senior Advisor for Trade and Government Relations Saima Amjad, Director of Trade and Investment Waqar Ullah and Chief Coordinator for UK and Pakistan Umamah Riaz.

Rana Tanveer emphasized that both countries should increase trade volume and highlighted the potential for British companies to invest in the electric vehicle manufacturing sector. John Tucknott agreed to enhance bilateral relations in the agricultural and industrial sectors. The meeting was also attended by Secretary of the Ministry of Industries Saif Anjum and Director General Mukhtar Ahmed. —APP

## Monitor raises toll in Israel strikes on Syria's Palmyra to 92

BEIRUT: A Syria war monitor said on Friday that Israeli strikes on the city of Palmyra this week killed 92 pro-Iran fighters, after a United Nations representative said they were likely the deadliest to date. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Wednesday's attack targeted three sites in Palmyra, with one hitting a meeting of pro-Iranian groups that also involved commanders from Iraq's Al-Nujaba group and Lebanon's Hezbollah. The toll has risen to "92 dead: 61 Syrian pro-Iran fighters," 11 of them working for Hezbollah, "and 27 foreign nationals mostly from Al-Nujaba, plus four from Hezbollah," the Observatory said. The Britain-based war monitor, which relies on a network of sources inside Syria, had previously reported 82 dead, while the Syria defense ministry on Wednesday said 36 people were killed. The UN deputy special envoy to Syria, Najat Rochdi, told the Security Council on Thursday that the raid was "likely the deadliest Israeli strike in Syria to date." The Observatory said the strikes also targeted "a weapons depot near the industrial area" in Palmyra, a modern city adjacent to globally renowned Greco-Roman ruins. Since civil war erupted in Syria in 2011, Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes in the country, mainly targeting the army and Iran-backed groups. Israel rarely comments on individual strikes in Syria but has repeatedly said it will not allow Iran to expand its presence in the country. —APP

## Pakistani envoy, US lawmaker discuss ways to boost bilateral ties

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, discussed with Congressman Ron Estes, Republican of Kansas, ways and means for strengthening relations between the two countries when he met the U.S. lawmaker on Thursday. A press release issued by the Pakistani Embassy said that during the talks, their focus was on economic and security domains. They also exchanged views on forging stronger Pak-US cooperation in trade, investment, healthcare as well as enhancement of cooperation with the state of Kansas. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Yousaf Raza Gillani along with Manzoor Ahmed Kakar, Senator from Baluchistan visited National Emergencies Operations Center (NEOC) at NDMA Headquarters.

## Palestinians welcome ICC arrest warrants for Israeli PM

Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving prime minister who has spent 17 years in office during three spells in charge since 1996, denounced the decision by the ICC to issue the warrant as "antisemitic"

LONDON: Palestinians welcomed the decision by the International Criminal Court to issue arrest warrants for Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former minister of defense, Yoav Gallant. The Palestinian Authority said the court's decision comes as Israeli forces continue to bomb Gaza in a conflict that has killed nearly 45,000 Palestinians since the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas, and it hopes the ruling will help restore faith in international law, the official Palestinian Wafa news agency reported. Netanyahu and Gallant are the first leading officials from a nation allied with the West against whom the ICC has issued arrest warrants since the court was established in July 2002. It also issued an arrest warrant for Mohammed Deif, the head of the military wing of Hamas. Israeli authorities said in August he was killed by their forces in an attack the previous month, though Hamas have not confirmed this. All three men are accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity over their actions during the war in Gaza or the Oct. 7 attacks. The PA said the decision to issue warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant was important because Palestinians "are being subjected to genocide and war crimes, represented by starvation as a method of warfare," as well as mass displacement and collective punishment. The PA, which signed up to the ICC in 2015, called on all UN member states to ensure the warrants are acted upon and to "cut off contact and meetings with the international wanted men, Netanyahu and Gallant." Israel is not a member of the ICC. The EU's chief diplomat, Josep Borrell, posted a message on social media platform X on Thursday in which he described the court's decisions as "binding" on all those who have signed up to it. "These decisions are binding on all states party to the Rome Statute (the treaty that established the ICC), which includes all EU member states," he wrote. Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving prime minister who has spent 17 years in office during three spells in charge since 1996, denounced the decision by the ICC to issue the warrant as "antisemitic." He said it would "have serious consequences for the court and those who will cooperate with it in this. —APP

## UN chief tells COP29 delegates that 'failure is not option'

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged negotiating teams at the UN Climate Change Conference in Baku on Thursday to take ambitious decisions to limit global warming to the 1.5-degree Celsius target. "Failure is not an option," said Guterres, who returned to Azerbaijan ahead of the conference's final day on Friday, according to a statement released at UN Headquarters in New York. The UN climate talks, known as COP29, had to set a new goal for assisting developing countries, so that they would be able to present climate targets in line with limiting warming to 1.5 degrees, the UN chief said. Advertisement - Financial pledges to poorer countries to help them cut greenhouse gas emissions have been at the centre of intense discussion in Baku, with conflict over which countries should pay and from what sources the money should be drawn. The UN chief warned that the result of inaction at COP29 could be "catastrophic." Just 24 hours before COP29 is due to wrap up, negotiators reportedly remained at loggerheads over a new climate finance goal to help developing countries combat flash flooding, drought, wildfires. —APP

## Iran to launch 'advanced centrifuges' in response to IAEA censure

TEHRAN: Iran said Friday it would launch a series of "new and advanced" centrifuges in response to a resolution adopted by the IAEA that censures Tehran for what the agency called lack of cooperation. "The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran issued an order to take effective measures, including launching a significant series of new and advanced centrifuges of various types." The censure motion brought by Britain, France, Germany and the United States at the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board followed a similar one in June. But it comes with tensions running high over Iran's atomic programme, with critics fearing that Tehran is attempting to develop a nuclear weapon — a claim the Islamic republic has repeatedly denied. The resolution — which China, Russia and Burkina Faso voted against — was carried with 19 votes in favour, 12 abstentions and Venezuela not participating, two diplomats told AFP. The confidential resolution seen by AFP says it is "essential and urgent" for Iran to "act to fulfil its legal obligations". The text also calls on Tehran to provide "technically credible explanations" for the presence of uranium particles found at two undeclared locations in Iran. In addition, Western powers are asking for a "comprehensive report" to be issued by the IAEA on Iran's nuclear efforts "at the latest" by spring 2025. The resolution comes just as the IAEA's head Rafael Grossi returned from a trip to Tehran last week, where he appeared to have made headway. During the visit, Iran agreed to an IAEA demand to cap its sensitive stock of near weapons-grade uranium enriched up to 60 percent purity. In 2015, Iran and world powers reached an agreement that involved the easing of international sanctions on Tehran in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme to guarantee that Tehran could not develop a nuclear weapon — something it has always denied seeking to do. But the United States unilaterally withdrew from the accord in 2018 under then-president Donald Trump and reimposed biting economic sanctions, which prompted Iran to begin rolling back on its own commitments. Tehran has since significantly decreased its cooperation with the agency by deactivating surveillance devices monitoring the nuclear programme and barring UN inspectors. At the same time, it has ramped up its nuclear activities, including by increasing its stockpiles of enriched uranium and the level of enrichment to 60 percent. That level still falls short of the 90 percent plus level required for a nuclear warhead but is substantially higher than the 3.67 percent limit it agreed to in 2015. — Agencies

## UNHCR launches \$10b appeal to address global refugee crisis

UNITED NATIONS: The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) has launched a \$10 billion appeal for 2025 to meet critical needs and implement sustainable solutions for millions of refugees, displaced persons and stateless people worldwide. Announced earlier this week, the agency's Global Appeal comes amid escalating humanitarian crises, as conflict, persecution and the growing impacts of climate change continue to force millions from their homes. "We live in an era of relentless emergencies. Of crises without end," High Commissioner Filippo Grandi said, emphasizing the scale of the challenges in a foreword accompanying the appeal. He highlighted recent and ongoing conflicts in Sudan, Ukraine and Lebanon, which have driven massive displacement, while also noting the protracted nature of many refugee situations, including those involving displaced populations from Myanmar and

the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Fully funded, the appeal aims to support more than 139 million refugees and other vulnerable groups in some 136 countries and territories. The appeal focuses on three primary areas: emergency response, inclusion, and long-term solutions. UNHCR remains committed to its frontline role in emergencies, providing life-saving aid to displaced individuals, Mr. Grandi said, adding: "When conflict breaks out, UNHCR is among the first to respond." The appeal also goes beyond immediate assistance, calling for sustainable approaches that integrate displaced individuals into local and national systems. UNHCR aims to work with governments, civil society and development actors to promote inclusion in education, healthcare, and employment. Of the 139.3 million targeted beneficiaries, 34 million (24 per cent) are refugees, 68

million (48 per cent) internally displaced, 12 million are returnees, and about 4.5 million are stateless people under the agency's mandate. Around \$2.1 is required for UNHCR programmes in Middle East and North Africa, \$1.2 billion in Europe, \$957 million in Asia and the Pacific, and \$815 million in the Americas. Across the African continent, \$2.1 billion is needed in East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes, \$1.2 billion in West and Central Africa and \$451 million in Southern Africa. UNHCR said it anticipates that the Asia-Pacific region in 2025 could face increased displacement due to conflict, persecution, climate change impacts and yet more disasters. It projects a rise in the complexity and scale of emergencies, compounded by diminishing donor support, which threatens to fall short of escalating needs. In response, UNHCR said it will focus on fulfilling the

pledges from the Global Refugee Forum, including more than 60 commitments from States to strengthen protections and find solutions for Afghan refugees and stateless Rohingya populations. Afghanistan remains the top country of origin for the region's displaced, where over nine million forcibly displaced are located. Neighbouring nations Iran and Pakistan bear the brunt, sheltering 3.9 million and 2.4 million Afghan refugees respectively. Similarly, Bangladesh continues to host over one million stateless Rohingya driven from their homes in neighbouring Myanmar over several years. Driven from their homes in Myanmar, over a million Rohingya Muslim refugees have sought refuge in Bangladesh. Grandi also highlighted the importance of innovation and collaboration, reiterating that addressing forced displacement requires a united global effort. "We do not work alone. Reaching

those in need — both displaced people and their hosts — requires partnerships with governments, local actors, academia, and the private sector." UNHCR plans to build on the progress made at the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, where thousands of pledges were made to support displaced populations. A key focus for 2025 will be turning these promises into tangible action, supported by technical expertise and funding from the international community. Grandi also acknowledged the unpredictable nature of global crises, expressing confidence in UNHCR's readiness. "Our determination and experience enable us to face the future — as uncertain as it may be — with conviction," he said. With forced displacement reaching record levels, he stressed the importance of global solidarity, urging governments, donors, and the private sector to contribute to the \$10 billion target. —Agencies



## Briefs

**Cdre Ateeq ur Rehman promoted to Rear Admiral**



NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Commodore Ateeq ur Rehman Abid has been promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral with immediate effect. Rear Admiral Ateeq ur Rehman Abid got commission in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1995. The Flag Officer is a graduate of Pakistan Naval Academy, Karachi, Naval War College, USA, and Royal College of Defence Studies, UK. The Flag Officer has completed various professional courses from national and international institutes. He has done International Security and Strategic Leadership Studies Course from UK, Naval Staff Course from USA, Pakistan Navy Staff Course from PN War College Lahore and National Security and War Course from National Defence University, Islamabad. The Admiral has an illustrious career covering vast experience of various Command and Staff appointments.

**SC seeks report on Nai Gaj Dam delay**

### COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court's constitutional bench has sought a report from the federal government on the delay and costs associated with the Nai Gaj Dam project in Badin. A six-member bench, headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan, heard the case. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail questioned why the dam project remains incomplete. The construction consortium's lawyer stated that allocated funds had not been released. Justice Mandokhail criticised the government, saying its inaction burdens the courts. The Additional Advocate General noted that timely funding could ensure project completion.

Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi pointed out that the project was supposed to finish in two years, but its cost surged from Rs30 billion to Rs100 billion. The lawyer further revealed that the plan is being revised for the third time, citing delays due to floods. Justice Mandokhail stressed the need for agreement adherence and requested a final timeline and budget after consultations. The hearing was adjourned for six weeks.

# Pakistan, Malaysia vow to enhanced military partnership

The Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force lauded Pakistan Air Force's achievements through indigenization and technological advancements



### STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: During his first ever visit to Pakistan, General Tan Sri Dato' Sri Mohd Asghar Khan bin Goriman Khan, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air

Force at Air Headquarters Islamabad. The meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, military cooperation, joint training and collaboration in the industrial domain. On his arrival, a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented Guard of Honour to General Tan Sri Dato' Sri Mohd Asghar Khan bin Goriman Khan. During the meeting, Chief of the Air Staff highlighted

the robust bilateral defence ties that exist between Pakistan and Malaysia. He conveyed his warm wishes to Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force on his maiden visit to Pakistan and highlighted the importance of collaboration in training, joint exercises and technology sharing. The Air Chief also reaffirmed his commitment to enhancing military partnership between the two Air Forces

through joint training initiatives, particularly within the realm of air power. These initiatives will encompass provisioning of both basic and tactical level training for personnel of the Malaysian Air Force. The Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force lauded Pakistan Air Force's achievements through indigenization and technological advancements. The visiting dignitary expressed his keen desire to further consolidate the existing bilateral ties through enhanced collaboration in training, maintenance and operational excellence. General Tan Sri Dato' Sri Mohd Asghar Khan bin Goriman Khan expressed his deep admiration for the state of the art technological ecosystem witnessed by him during his visit to National Aerospace Science & Technology Park Silicon.

He also appreciated the innovative projects, cutting-edge technologies and indigenously developed systems displayed at PAF NASTP pavilion during the ongoing International Defence Exhibition IDEAS-2024. Later, the dignitary visited various installations and technological infrastructure established at Air Headquarters, Islamabad including National ISR & Integrated Air Operations Centre and PAF Cyber Command, where he was briefed about the operational capabilities of Pakistan Air Force. The meeting between Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force and Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force signifies a resolute commitment to reinforce military partnership, fostering collaboration and promoting robust relations between the two countries.

## Iran activates advanced centrifuges

TEHRAN: Iran has condemned an "unjustifiable" resolution passed by the UN nuclear agency against the country's peaceful atomic program, ordering the activation of advanced centrifuges in a reciprocal response. In a joint statement released early on Friday, Iranian Foreign Ministry and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said directives had been issued to "initiate the operation of a substantial number of advanced centrifuges of various models."

The measure, which is taken to safeguard Iran's national interests and address its growing need for civilian nuclear program, lies within the framework of the country's rights and obligations under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, they said. Joint Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Regarding the Unjust Resolution Adopted by the IAEA Board of Governors on Iran's Peaceful Nuclear Program In the final hours of the #IAEA Board of Governors meeting on 21 Nov 2024.

The joint statement came after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s Board of Governors voted 19 to 3, with 12 abstentions, for the resolution that alleged Tehran had a poor cooperation with the agency and requested a "comprehensive" report on its nuclear activities "at the latest" by spring 2025. The statement said that the "non-consensus" motion was approved under the "pressure and insistence" of Britain, France, Germany and the United States, despite lacking the support of approximately half of the 35-member Board of Governors. - Agencies

## LHC orders school buses to transport students

### BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday ordered all schools to provide transport to students, while also seeking a fitness policy for vehicles within 15 days as part of efforts to curtail smog. Dense smog, caused by toxic pollutants, has engulfed several cities in Punjab over the past few weeks, with Lahore and Multan being the worst hit. The AQI reading in Multan has already crossed 2,000 twice, setting a new record for air pollution. Last Friday, the Punjab government declared an emergency in Lahore and Multan, where a "complete lockdown" would be imposed on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays due to the intensity of smog. Justice Shahid Karim presided over today's proceedings, where he heard a petition filed by citizen Haroon Farooq and other residents.

## India's global criminal activities prove Pak stance

### KHAYAM ABBASI

Islamabad: Speaking at a well-attended seminar organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), and Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed said that the recent exposé of India's international criminal activities by the US and Canada bolsters Pakistan's longstanding stance about India's state terrorism. He cautioned that New Delhi's increasing involvement in transnational terrorism activities not only undermines the stability of the region, but also poses a serious

challenge to global peace and security. He noted that only two countries globally—India and Israel—employ targeted assassinations and killings as state-executed and state-sponsored policies beyond their borders. He suggested that Pakistan should leverage its membership in the Security Council to garner support for its longstanding position against India's state-sponsored terrorism. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, highlighted that Indian involvement in terrorism has been evident since 1947, arguing that New Delhi has systematically used its intelligence apparatus to infiltrate and coordinate with various

non-state actors, primarily terrorist groups, that has led to widespread acts of terrorism in Pakistan, resulting in great loss of lives and damage to economy. Amb Saleem also pointed out the irony that, despite being victims of India's state-sponsored, Pakistan faces blame from the international community and allegations of supporting terrorism by India. He expressed concern that under the Modi government, India's network of terrorism had expanded to countries such as Canada, the U.S., and the U.K., threatening global peace and security, which calls for urgent and action from the international community.

## Gaza hospitals to stop services 'within 48 hours'

### DNA

GAZA: The health ministry in Gaza warned Friday all hospitals in the Strip would have to stop or reduce services "within 48 hours" for lack of fuel, blaming Israel for blocking its entry. "We raise an urgent warning as all hospitals in Gaza Strip will stop working or reduce their services within 48 hours due to the occupation's (Israel's) obstruction of fuel entry," Marwan al-Hams, director of Gaza's field hospitals, said during a press conference. "We call on international institutions to exploit the decision of International Criminal Court to stop the genocidal war in Gaza Strip," he added.

The ICC issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant on Thursday "for crimes against humanity and war crimes" committed between October 8, 2023, and May 20 this year. The court also issued a warrant for the arrest of Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif, whom Israel says it killed in a July airstrike, but whose death Hamas has not confirmed.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan, Alexandra Berg von Linde, calls on the DPM/FM Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar. He expressed appreciation for the positive trajectory in bilateral relations between Sweden and Pakistan. - DNA

## Death toll in Kurram vans attack rises to 42

### SHAMIM SHAHID

KURRAM: The death toll in yesterday's gun attack on passenger vans in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lower Kurram has risen to 42, while more than 30 people were injured, the local deputy commissioner said on Friday. Kurram Deputy Commissioner (DC) Javedullah Mehsud confirmed the casualties, adding that the deceased included seven women and a nine-year-old girl. Thursday's attack had occurred in the Mandori Charkhel area, a region with a history of sectarian tensions and land disputes. DC Mehsud said yesterday the convoy, consisting of some 200 vehicles, was on its way from Parachinar to Peshawar when it came under heavy gunfire. Separately, he had told AFP that two separate convoys of Shia passengers were targeted in two attacks. Efforts were underway to save the lives of those injured, the DC said, stating the bodies of the deceased had been moved to Parachinar. "We will try to restore the routine life as quickly as possible and then a grand jirga will be called," DC Mehsud said, adding that schools and markets have been closed since the attack. No group had immediately claimed responsibility for the incident. Sources told that the attack, which occurred at around 1:20pm, appeared to be in retaliation for an Oct 12 assault that claimed 15 lives, including those of two women and a child. Local officials expressed concerns that the situation might escalate further, with tensions running high in the tribal district.

## Israeli strikes batter Lebanon, killing 5 medics

Hezbollah said it had fired rockets at Israeli troops east of Khyam at least four times on Friday

### NEWS DESK

BEIRUT: Israeli strikes battered southern Lebanon and the outskirts of the capital Beirut on Friday, killing at least five medics, as ground troops clashed with Hezbollah fighters in the south. Israel has pushed on with its intense military campaign against the Iran-backed armed group Hezbollah, tempering hopes that efforts by a US envoy could lead to an imminent ceasefire. US mediator Amos Hochstein said earlier this week in Beirut that a truce was "within our grasp." He traveled on to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz before returning to Washington, according to the news outlet Axios. His trip aimed to end more than a year of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah along Lebanon's southern border, which escalated dramatically when Israel ramped up its strikes in late September and sent ground troops into Lebanon on Oct. 1. Israeli troops have fought Hezbollah in a string of towns all along the border and this week pushed deeper to the edges of Khyam, a town some six km (four miles) from the border. Hezbollah said it

had fired rockets at Israeli troops east of Khyam at least four times on Friday. Lebanese security sources told Reuters that Israeli troops had also advanced in a string of villages to the west as well. They said Israel was most likely trying to isolate Khyam ahead of a major attack on the town. Israeli strikes on two other villages in southern Lebanon killed a total of five medics from a rescue force affiliated with Hezbollah, the Lebanese health ministry said. The more than 3,500 people killed by Israeli strikes over the last year include more than 200 medics, the health ministry said. Israel says its aim is to secure the return home of tens of thousands of people evacuated from Israel's north due to rocket attacks by Hezbollah, which began firing across the border in support of Hamas at the start of the Gaza war in October 2023. Israel also mounted more strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs, a once densely populated stronghold of Hezbollah. It issued evacuation orders on the social media platform X for several buildings in the area on Friday. Reuters footage showed one of the strikes appearing to pierce the center of a multi-story building, sending the whole structure toppling in a massive cloud of smoke.

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