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Bangladesh keen to expand relations with Pakistan: M Younis

Detailed News On Page-08

Export-led growth vital for economy

Detailed News On Page-08



Japan keen to expand cultural ties with Pak

Detailed News On Page-03



Indian military drills

Pakistan to close airspace temporarily

The Indian authorities have also closed their airspace near Gujarat and Rajasthan during the period amid the massive drills

BUREAU REPORT

KARACHI: Pakistan has decided to temporarily close its airspace for two days from October 28 to 29, according to a NOTAM (notice to airmen) issued by the Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA). The airspace will remain closed during these two days from 6am to 9am, meaning the airspace will remain temporarily closed for three hours on both days, the NOTAM issued to all airlines and aviation companies read. According to sources privy to the development, the decision was taken in the light of potential Indian military exercises near the Pakistani border. According to Indian media reports, India is conducting the tri-Service combat exercise, Trishul 2025, along the western border with Pakistan from October 30 to November 10. The Indian authorities have also closed their airspace near Gujarat and Rajasthan during the period amid the massive drills, as per the reports. The joint exercise of the Indian military on a large scale is being held amid the tension between the two neighbouring countries. In a recent visit to forward posts in Creeks Area, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf affirmed that the Pakistan Navy stood ready to defend the country's maritime frontiers. The conflict was sparked by a terrorist attack on tourists in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir's (IIOJK) Pahalgam area on April 22, 2025, for which New Delhi blamed Pakistan without offering any evidence.

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Briefs

Trump says he would not run for vice president

DNA

WASHINGTON:: US President Donald Trump on Monday ruled out running for the vice presidency in the 2028 US election, an approach some of his supporters have floated to allow the Republican president to serve an additional term in office. "I'd be allowed to do that," Trump said, in an exchange with reporters aboard Air Force One. But he added: "I wouldn't do that. I think it's too cute. Yeah, I would rule that out because it's too cute. I think the people wouldn't like that. It's too cute. It's not — it wouldn't be right." The remarks were Trump's latest on the subject, which he has teased in public remarks and with "Trump 2028" hats he hands out at the White House.

Inflation to remain in range of 5-6 %

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Finance Division has projected Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation to remain in the range of 5-6% in October. In its Economic Update and Outlook report for the ongoing month, the Finance Division said that flood-related supply disruptions and temporary border closures put "upward pressure" on prices of a few essential commodities. The projection follows September's 5.6% inflation, compared with 6.9% in the same month of last year. During the first three months (July-September) of the fiscal year 2025-26, CPI inflation was recorded at 4.2%, against 9.2% during the same period of the last fiscal year.

Pak, Afghan 'hold third round of talks in Istanbul

Makes it clear that no tolerance for TTP

CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Afghanistan on Monday commenced the third round of crucial talks in Istanbul, Türkiye, aimed at defusing recent border tensions and addressing Islamabad's security concerns stemming from cross-border terrorism. The negotiations, brokered by Qatar and Türkiye, follow intense clashes earlier this month along the Pak-Afghan frontier. According to security sources, Pakistan has conveyed its final position to the Afghan Taliban, making it "absolutely clear" that the presence or patronage of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) on Afghan soil will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Islamabad has demanded verifiable and time-bound action from the Taliban regime against all terrorist networks targeting Pakistan.

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Billawal, Fazl meeting holds significance

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Monday met with Jamiat Ulama-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, where the two discussed the country's political landscape, PPP's media cell said. The meeting comes amid political turmoil in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) after 10 legislators — all elected on PTI tickets in the July 2021 general elections — announced on Sunday that they were joining the PPP, which has been eyeing the premier's slot in the region. This has significantly increased the likelihood of the PPP becoming the ruling party. In a post on X today, the PPP said that Bilawal met with the JUI-F chief at his residence in Islamabad today, where the two "discussed the country's political landscape". The PPP chairman was accompanied by PPP leaders Nayyar Hussain Bukhari, Humayun Khan and Jamil Soomro, while JUI-F's Mualana Asad Mahmood attended the meeting as well. Separately, state-run Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) reported that the two leaders "exchanged views on national issues and other matters of mutual interest." In the 53-member assembly, the PPP now enjoys

Continued on Page 06

PML-N, PPP join hands in bid to oust AJK PM

Both parties to move no-trust motion; PML-N not to become part of new govt

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on Monday announced its decision to support the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in bringing a no-confidence motion against Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq. The announcement came after a joint meeting between senior leaders of both parties and President Asif Ali Zardari in Islamabad. Later, Rana Sanaulah, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs, made the decision public during a joint press conference alongside PPP leaders Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Qamar Zaman Kaira, and others. Rana Sanaulah said the two parties agreed that political stability and cooperative governance in AJK were essential for the continuation of democratic processes.

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AMMAN: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is on an official visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, called on His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Supreme Commander of the Jordan Armed Forces. — DNA

Friendship bonds

King of Jordan lauds role of Pak armed forces

COAS conveyed warm regards from the people, Government, and Armed Forces of Pakistan to His Majesty the King and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening fraternal ties with Jordan

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is on an official visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, called on His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Supreme Commander of the Jordan Armed Forces. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II was also present during the meeting. During the meeting, both dignitaries discussed matters of mutual interest, with particular focus on enhancing bilateral cooperation in defence and security, and exchanging perspectives on regional developments. COAS conveyed warm regards from the people, Government, and Armed Forces of Pakistan to His Majesty the King and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening fraternal ties with Jordan. His Majesty appreciated the professionalism and contributions of the Pakistan Armed Forces towards regional peace and stability and expressed his desire to further strengthen defence collaboration between the two brotherly countries. Earlier Field Marshal Asim Munir also called on Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Jordan Armed Forces (JAF), Major General Yousef Ahmed Al-Huneiti, at the General Headquarters, Amman. The Field Marshal was warmly welcomed and presented with a Guard of Honour at his arrival at the General Headquarters.

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SBP maintains key policy rate at 11%

This marks the fourth straight MPC meeting where the central bank has extended a pause in monetary easing

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Monday announced its decision to maintain the existing policy rate unchanged at 11%. This marks the fourth straight MPC meeting where the central bank has extended a pause in monetary easing as policymakers weighed inflation risks from flood damage against a fragile economic recovery. The policy committee had reduced the interest rate by 1 percentage point to 11% in its meeting on May 5 this year. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Monday announced its decision to maintain the existing policy rate unchanged at 11%. This marks the fourth straight MPC meeting where the central bank has extended a pause in monetary easing as policymakers weighed inflation risks from flood damage against a fragile economic recovery.

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FPCCI chief slams decision

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), has strongly criticized the State Bank of Pakistan's decision to maintain the policy interest rate at 11%, calling it "anti-growth" in light of the current economic conditions. Sheikh expressed deep concerns over the adverse impact of this decision on the business sentiment and the broader economy. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh emphasized that, given the prevailing inflation rates, the policy interest rate should ideally be reduced to 7% to align with economic realities and foster growth. He highlighted that a reduction in

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Black Day: Pakistan reaffirms unwavering support for Kashmiris

President, PM urge international community to hold India accountable for its human rights violations in IIOJK

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support for the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in their struggle for the right to self-determination. Every year on October 27, Pakistanis and Kashmiri people around the world mark Black Day to remember and protest the entry of Indian military forces into Jammu and Kashmir in 1947. In their separate messages issued on the occasion of Kashmir Black Day, both leaders called on the international community to take tangible steps toward the peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in accordance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. President Zardari called on the United Nations, global human rights bodies, and the international community to hold India accountable for grave and systematic human rights violations in IIOJK. He emphasised that lasting peace and stability in South Asia depend on a just and durable settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, urging renewed international attention to the issue. "On its part, Pakistan will continue its unwavering moral, diplomatic, and political support to the people of IIO-

JK who continue to endure oppression on daily basis. We stand united with our Kashmiri brethren in their struggle for justice, peace and self-determination," President Secretariat Press Wing, in a press release, quoted the president as saying. On this day in 1947, he said, Indian forces entered Srinagar in blatant violation of international law, moral principles, and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. Since then, generations of innocent men, women, and children in IIOJK had endured unimaginable suffering under occupation, marked by violence, repression, and denial of their fundamental rights, he added. "Every year, we observe this day as Kashmir Black Day to honour the valiant struggle and sacrifices of our Kashmiri brothers and sisters who continue to resist tyranny in their pursuit of the inalienable right to self-determination. Despite decades of Indian brutality, the spirit of resistance among the Kashmiri people remains unbroken," the president reiterated. After August 5, 2019, President Zardari further said this brutal campaign had only intensified, adding India had unilaterally revoked occupied Kashmir's special status, imposing a military siege, destroying properties of Kashmiris to inflict 'collective punishment' and enforcing draconian laws that strip the Kashmiri people of their fundamental freedoms.

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CM opens TRACS to usher for smart traffic management

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah inaugurated the Traffic Regulation and Citation System (TRACS) at CPO, marking a significant milestone in the province's digital transformation and governance reforms. Speaking at the launch event, the chief minister said the introduction of TRACS represents "far more than a technological upgrade – it is a manifestation of Sindh's commitment to transparency, modernisation, and improved citizen services." He explained that the new system replaces the outdated manual ticketing process with a fully automated e-ticketing mechanism, utilising advanced AI-integrated CCTV cameras to detect violations such as over-speeding, red-light jumping, and helmet non-compliance. The system removes human discretion, confrontation, and potential bias, ensuring fairness and accountability on the roads. "Through TRACS, we are harnessing the power of technology to serve and protect our citizens more effectively. It's not just a Police Department project – it's a reform for every citizen," the Chief Minister emphasised. Sahulat Centres at major traffic offices and police stations will now offer support to citizens for paying fines, clarifying violations, and contesting challans. This groundbreaking initiative is set to transform the province's approach to traffic management, exemplifying a strong commitment to transparency, modernisation, and citizen well-being. The inauguration ceremony, held at CM House, was attended by provincial ministers Ziaul Hassan Lanjar (Home), Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Zulfikar Ali Shah, and Riaz Shah Shirazi. Inspector General of Police Ghulam Nabi Memon, Additional IGs, DIGs,

and other senior police officers, both active and retired. Technological leap in traffic enforcement, TRACS replaces the outdated manual ticketing system with a fully automated, AI-driven e-ticketing platform. Equipped with advanced CCTV cameras, the system detects traffic violations such as speeding, running red lights, and helmet infractions, thereby removing human bias and ensuring a fair, accountable process. "TRACS is much more than a technological update – it embodies Sindh's vision for transparent and modern public service," the Chief Minister stated. The integration of TRACS with key government databases, including Excise & Taxation, Driving License System, NADRA e-Sahulat, and modern payment gateways, allows citizens to view and pay traffic fines securely online or via their mobile devices. The new TRACS mobile app further simplifies the process, empowering users to monitor violations and settle challans in real time. In its initial phase, 200 cameras have been installed across Karachi, with plans to expand to 12,000 cameras city-wide and eventually to other districts in Sindh. Public facilitation remains a priority, with TRACS Sahulat Centres at major traffic offices and police stations providing support for paying fines, clarifying violations, and contesting challans. The system's integration with the Citizen-Police Liaison Committee ensures transparent oversight and redress. Citing Karachi's 684 traffic accident victims between August 2024 and October 2025, the Chief Minister highlighted TRACS' potential to improve road safety through strict, technology-backed enforcement. Officers have already undergone extensive training

to ensure a smooth transition to the new system. "If you want to know how civilised a nation is, look at its traffic," remarked the Chief Minister, underlining the importance of collective responsibility in obeying traffic regulations. He proposed a two-step penalty system, initially a warning and apology, followed by a stricter penalty for repeat offences, to encourage safer, more responsible driving. The launch of TRACS builds upon previous digital initiatives by Sindh Police such as the S4 (Sindh Smart Surveillance System), the Talash App for instant criminal identification, and the OTELI App for employee verification. "Sindh Police has set a new benchmark in digital transformation," Chief Minister Shah said. Mr Shah reiterated his government's vision for expanding digital reforms across various sectors, reflecting a broader commitment to good governance, public safety, and operational efficiency. The Chief Minister also praised law enforcement agencies for their achievements in crime reduction and modernisation, especially in challenging regions. "I congratulate Sindh Police, Rangers, and all our partners for their vital role in propelling Sindh Police into the digital era. With systems like TRACS, we are building not only safer roads but also restoring public trust and making governance truly citizen-centric," he concluded. The implementation of TRACS commences immediately, promising safer roads and a more transparent traffic management system for the people of Karachi and, ultimately, all of Sindh. "I congratulate the Sindh Police for their rapid progress towards digitalisation," said the chief minister. —APP



Riyadh: Deputy Governor of Riyadh Prince Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Abdulaziz receiving Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif upon his arrival at King Khalid International Airport to attend the 9th Edition of Future Investment Initiative being held in Riyadh.

PA okays inclusion of Gojri language in official KP assembly rules

PESHAWAR :The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Monday unanimously approved the inclusion of the Gojri language in the Assembly Rules of Business, marking a significant step towards promoting the province's cultural and linguistic diversity. The historic amendment was presented by former provincial law minister Aftab Alam and received unanimous support from all members of the House during the session chaired by Speaker Babar Saleem Swati. Speaking on the occasion, the Speaker said that earlier, assembly proceedings were conducted in English, Urdu, and Pashto, later expanded to include Saraiki and Hindko. With the addition of Gojri, it has now become the sixth recognized language for use in the Assembly. He said that Gojri is spoken widely across various regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and has been an integral part of the province's culture and traditions for over twelve centuries. The language, he noted, has a rich heritage of literature, philosophy, and poetry and is also used in radio broadcasting. —APP

Katchery Chowk remodeling project kicks off

RAWALPINDI: The Punjab government has started its mega project of construction of three underpasses and two flyovers aimed to combat increased traffic mess at Katchery Chowk, Jinnah Park (Annexy Chowk) on Airport Road and Ifikhar Janjua Chowk on G.T. Road. Collectively approved by the Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP), these projects bear a combined estimated cost over Rs. 13.3343 billion. The project will overhaul the commute between within and without seamless traffic connectivity where estimated 482,000 vehicles navigate daily. Frontier Works Organization (FWO) is executing the projects. Initial work has started for which pil-

ing tests are underway at the site adjoining Fatima Jinnah Women university and the the district courts. At the heart of the mega trio-project is Katchery Chowk, which is solely handling approximately 200,000 vehicles per day while linking Saddar, Annexy, Rashid Minhas Roads and the Mall Road from/towards GT Road. The Rs. 5.974 million scheme includes a 1,394-foot underpass for Saddar-bound traffic from Annexy Chowk (Jinnah Park), and a four-lane divided flyover (two lanes per direction) spanning a 56.5-foot width. At-grade upgrades will rehabilitate 2.97 kilometers of slip roads, as per the docs received by APP. Land acqui-

sition stands at 24.2 kanals for the single core section at Katchery chowk. At the Jinnah Park project on Old Airport Road with experiencing 142,035 vehicles per day, a 1,263-foot underpass will be facilitating Mushtaq Baig Shaheed Road-bound traffic from Katchery, along with a 1,509-foot two-lane flyover to Airport Road. Over 2.22 kilometers of at-grade rehabilitation will enhance connectivity. For this, 5.95 kanals land has been acquired. Ifikhar Janjua Chowk on G.T. Road addresses over 146,000 vehicles per day where single-barrel two-lane underpass (1,165 feet long, 26.25 feet wide). —APP

One-window MoU signed for overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD :The Pakistan Business Forum Jeddah (PBFJ) and the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Jeddah aimed at providing a "one-window solution" for overseas Pakistanis to resolve business and real estate-related issues swiftly and effectively. The signing ceremony was attended by prominent business figures and community leaders. The MoU was signed by ICCI President Sardar Tanveer Mahmood and PBFJ President Aqeel Arain. Speaking on the occasion, Sardar Tanveer Mahmood said overseas Pakistanis hold a special place in the nation's heart and that the ICCI is fully committed to facilitating them in all possible ways. He announced the establishment of a one-window platform at the Islamabad Chamber to address overseas Pakistanis' business and investment concerns on a priority basis. He added that Pakistan offers numerous investment opportunities, particularly in the real estate sector, where investors can find secure and profitable options. "The ICCI will ensure that all overseas investments are fully protected, as overseas Pakistanis are vital to our economy through remittances. —APP

Rally held to mark 'Youm-e-Siyah' Kashmir

KARACHI: A 'Youm-e-Siyah' Kashmir (Black Day) Rally was held at Mazar-e-Quaid on Monday, organized by the Karachi administration, to express solidarity with the people of Kashmir. Provincial Minister Nasir Hussain Shah led the rally which started from People's Secretariat and ended at Mazar-e-Quaid Azam. Speaking at the event, Provincial Minister Nasir Hussain Shah said that October 27, 1947, is

a dark day in history when India attacked on Kashmir and occupied Kashmir, violating the principles of partition and against the will of the Kashmiri people. He said that the people of Pakistan stand with their Kashmiri brothers, and their hearts beat for them. He added that Kashmir's freedom is the right of its people, and Pakistan's government and people support the Kashmiri people. Shah praised Chairman

Bilawal Bhutto for raising a strong voice for Kashmir's freedom on the international forum and playing a historic role in shaping global public opinion. He said that Pakistan's foreign policy is clear, and Field Marshal Asim Munir, President Asif Zardari, and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have effectively supported the Kashmiri people on the global platform and urged world leaders to play their part for the independence of Kashmir. —APP

Women empowerment imperative for fast track uplift: Experts

PESHAWAR: Busy like a honeybee in tailoring of women suits, Nishat Bibi (50), a seamstress of Pabbi, Nowshera district with scattered unstitched clothes, scissor and spools around her sewing machine was working against the clock to meet the set declines' orders placed by the customers in the wake of wedding, engagements and academics' results season. Nishat Bibi, who inherited the pain-sticking tailoring profession from her mother, was busy in measurement of ladies and children suits with measuring tape before its cutting to help his husband in meeting the household expenses in the wake of high inflation and price-hike in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Enjoying 'Dil Dil Pakistan' national song playing in the background at her room's window by the radio along with her daughter and son, the motivated lady tailor told APP on Monday that she had entered the pain-sticking profession after untimely death of her mother few years ago and had been associated with it for the last 28 years. "I learnt the art from my mother, who started sewing clothes for brides, children and relatives during occasions of marriages, engagements, Eid and birthday parties from a very young age," Nishat, wearing eyes' glasses, told APP with a smiling face. Feeling proud of her family's profession, she said, "presently I prefer to work on fancy suits of brides due to high profit margin as compare to normal stitching of ladies suits," she said, adding she stitches three suits a day and in case of no electricity load-shedding, she could easily sew about six to eight suits per day. "Presently, I am charging Rs500 for a normal suit and Rs1,000 for a designers' suits against the prevailing market rate of Rs1,200 for normal and Rs2,000 designers suits," she said, adding the cost of stitching material have increased manifold in the wake of high inflation and price-hike in the country. Nishat said she was very happy in carrying forward the legacy of her mother as due to this profession she managed to educate her daughter and a son up to post graduation levels from University of Peshawar, arranged their marriages and also performed Umrah and was now planning to expand her business to Peshawar. "Apart from the government jobs, a woman can also prove her abilities in private profession and by starting her own business, which she said is more lucrative than the low paid jobs in public sector," she reiterated. She complained that the eight to 10 hours power loadshedding in her home town were hindering her work and because of that the tailors' community also faces economic losses, adding that she could earn more if the issue gets resolved. —APP

Isphanyar, Manmeet discuss facilitating Sikh pilgrimage

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Journalist-cum-social activist Ms. Manmeet Kaur, along with her father Javed, a four-time councillor, and other family members, met with Isphanyar Bhandara to discuss facilitating a special Sikh pilgrimage to holy sites across Punjab. The pilgrimage, scheduled for the auspicious occasion of Guru Nanak Gurpurab, aims to bring elderly Sikhs from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to revered sites, including Panja Sahib, Nankana Sahib, and Kartarpur. Mr. Bhandara extended his support for the noble initiative, which promotes inter-faith understanding and harmony. During the meeting, he learned about Ms. Kaur's academic pursuits in philosophy and religions and gifted her the book "Gems and Jewels: The Religions of Pakistan" in appreciation of her studies and commitment to inter-faith dialogue. The gesture reflects the spirit of mutual respect and understanding between communities.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

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Oct 01/China
National Day

Oct 01/Cyprus
National Day

Oct 01/Republic of Korea
Armed Forces Day

Oct 01/Nigeria
Armed Forces Day

Oct 02/Guinea
National Day

Oct 03/Germany
Unification Day

Oct 03/Republic of Korea
National Foundation Day

Oct 05/Indonesia
Armed Forces Day

Oct 06/Egypt
Armed Forces Day

Oct 09/Uganda
Independence Day

Oct 12/Spain
National Day

Oct 23/Hungary
National Day

October 24/United Nations
United Nations Day

Oct/25/Romania
Armed Forces Day

Oct 26/Austria
National Day

Oct 27/Turkmenistan
Independence Day

Oct 28/Czech Republic
National Day

Oct 29/Turkey
Republic Day



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DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

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Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224

Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343



Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Japanese Foreign Minister’s commendations 2025 conferred

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has conferred Japanese Foreign Minister’s Commendations 2025 upon Ms. Neveen Syed, Chairperson of the Lahore Floritage Sogetsu Study Group in recognition of her significant contributions towards the promotion of cultural relations between Japan and Pakistan. On August 28 this year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan had announced the conferment of award to Ms. Neveen. Lahore Floritage Sogetsu Study Group is a cultural organisation of Japanese-style flower arrangement, Ikebana. The Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, presented the Commendations to Ms. Neveen on the occasion of an annual Ikebana flower arrangement exhibition hosted by the Lahore Floritage Sogetsu Study Group. Ms. Neveen Syed, Chairperson of the Lahore Floritage Sogetsu Study Group, has been working selflessly and with full dedication to spread Japanese culture by providing opportunities to introduce Japanese culture to Pakistani people by holding Ikebana flower arrangement classes and exhibitions in Pakistan. While congratulating Ms. Neveen upon receiving the commendations, Ambassador Akamatsu said that the conferment of Japanese Foreign Minister’s Commendations is the acknowledgement of her



efforts and dedication towards enhanced cultural relations and people-to-people interactions between Japan and Pakistan.

In addition, Ambassador expressed his expectation that Ms. Neveen continues to play an essential role in the promotion

of Ikebana in Pakistan and has acted as a bridge of friendship and goodwill between the two countries.

ICCI calls for treating cold storage sector as industry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Tahir Ayub has expressed serious concern over the commercial electricity tariff being applied to the cold storage sector, emphasizing that food storage is an integral component of the industrial value chain and should be treated as part of the agro-industrial infrastructure rather than a commercial service.

While talking to a delegation from the fruit, vegetable, and cold storage business community, he said that cold storage plays a critical role in value addition, food preservation, and price stabilization across the agricultural supply chain. Many fruits and perishable commodities such as apples, citrus, mangoes, and potatoes are highly dependent on temperature-controlled storage facilities. Applying high commercial

electricity tariffs on such essential infrastructure, he warned, would undermine the entire farm-to-market ecosystem, hurting both producers and consumers. Tahir Ayub cautioned that the differential cost of electricity would substantially increase operational expenses, forcing cold storage operators to pass on the burden to traders and retailers. This would further inflate the prices of fruits and vegetables, which are already slipping beyond the reach of ordinary citizens.

He urged the government to reclassify the cold storage sector as an industry, thereby allowing it to benefit from industrial tariffs, tax reliefs, and incentives available to manufacturing and processing units. Such a policy, he said, would not only reduce post-harvest losses currently estimated at over 30% of total produce in Pakistan but also enhance food security, export competitiveness, and rural incomes. Citing international best practices,

the Acting President noted that countries such as India, China, and Turkey have already integrated cold storage and logistics into their agro-industrial frameworks, offering subsidized energy rates, concessional financing, and policy support. These measures have transformed their perishable goods sectors into major contributors to GDP and export earnings. Pakistan, he added, must follow a similar approach to modernize its agricultural value chain and ensure food affordability and supply stability.

Tahir Ayub reaffirmed ICCI’s commitment to advocating business-friendly and evidence-based reforms that promote sustainable agriculture, industrial development, and consumer welfare. He also called upon the government to engage stakeholders from the perishable goods, logistics, and storage sectors in policy discussions to ensure inclusive and long-term solutions.

Over 5,700 students graduate as NUST

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) successfully concluded its annual Convocation Week on Monday, celebrating the academic achievements of a new cohort of graduates. During the convocation week, as many as 5,736 graduates from all NUST schools received their UG, MS and PhD degrees in the seven core disciplines of Engineering and Technology, Computing and Information Technology, Life Sciences and Medicine, Arts and Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Business and Management. The convocation week was inaugurated by the Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Khalid Hussain Magasi, who graced the Master Convocation Ceremony as the chief guest. During the event, he pre-

sented medals to high-achieving graduates and delivered an inspiring address to the gathering. In his speech, Khalid Magasi extended his heartiest felicitations to the graduates, their parents, and the faculty. Emphasising the importance of education, he stated that the graduates had the privilege of pursuing their higher studies at one of the finest institutions in the country. Sharing a few life lessons, he remarked that Allah Almighty has blessed us with a great country, and we must do everything in our capacity to contribute to its growth and progress. Earlier, in his welcome address, Rector NUST, Dr. Muhammad Zahid Latif, congratulated the graduates, their parents and the faculty. He said that convocation day marks not just the end of an academic chapter

but also the beginning of countless possibilities.

Reflecting on the fast-paced evolution of NUST over more than three decades since its inception, Rector said that the university has become a place where curiosity fuels innovation, ideas flourish and young people learn not only how to excel but also how to serve.

Addressing the graduates, Rector NUST, Dr. Zahid Latif said, “The degrees you receive today are not just symbols of academic excellence; these are added responsibilities, and a call to use your talent for your own good, for the good of your families, for societal contributions and above all, for our beloved country, Pakistan and the countries which our international students come from.”—APP

Global community must enforce UN Resolutions on Kashmir: Danyal

Concluding his message, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry paid tribute to the brave Kashmiri men and women who continue to sacrifice for their inalienable right to self-determination. He reiterated Pakistan’s commitment to highlighting the Kashmir cause at every international platform until a just and lasting peace is achieved in the region.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry, reaffirmed Pakistan’s unwavering moral, political, and diplomatic support for the Kashmiri people at all international forums, stating that October 27, 1947, remains the darkest day in Kashmir’s history when Indian forces occupied Srinagar in blatant violation of international law and the will of the Kashmiri people.

In his message on the occasion of Kashmir Black Day, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry said that for the past 78 years, the people of Jammu and Kashmir have courageously resisted India’s brutal occupation, and their struggle for freedom continues with full determination.

He emphasized that the international community must hold India accountable for its grave human rights violations and take concrete steps to ensure the implementation of UN resolutions guaranteeing the Kash-

miris’ right to self-determination. He underlined that peace and stability in South Asia hinge on the just and lasting resolution of the Kashmir dispute. Pakistan, he added, will continue to raise the voice of Kashmiris across the globe, as the 240 million Pakistanis stand shoulder to shoulder with their Kashmiri brothers and sisters. Barrister Chaudhry stated that every year, Kashmiris around the world observe October 27 as Black Day, marking the Indian invasion of Jammu and Kashmir which trampled its freedom and sovereignty. “This day is not just a historical event but an ongoing tragedy—an unfinished promise still haunting the political horizon of South Asia,” he remarked. Referring to India’s actions post-August 5, 2019, he said that New Delhi further intensified its aggression by revoking the region’s special status, imposing a military lockdown, and enforcing draconian laws that stripped Kashmiris of their fundamental rights. The valley

remains under restrictions on movement, communication, and assembly, while extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and custodial torture have become disturbingly routine.

The Parliamentary Secretary also warned that India is pursuing a systematic plan to turn the Kashmiri population into a minority in their own land, a move that blatantly violates international law. He urged the United Nations, global human rights bodies, and the international community to play an active role in stopping Indian atrocities and ensuring justice for the Kashmiri people.

Concluding his message, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry paid tribute to the brave Kashmiri men and women who continue to sacrifice for their inalienable right to self-determination. He reiterated Pakistan’s commitment to highlighting the Kashmir cause at every international platform until a just and lasting peace is achieved in the region.—DNA

Groundbreaking held for relocated schools, rehabilitation under Dasu HPP

ISLAMABAD: The groundbreaking ceremony for the relocated Government Girls Primary School (GGPS) Sigloo at Khursil and the rehabilitation of Government Boys Primary School (GPS) Shah Jahan Abad was held Saturday under the Dasu Hydropower Project (HPP). The event was attended by Shoaib-ur-Rehman Afridi, Director (Social & Resettlement Unit) of the Dasu HPP, along with other senior WAPDA officials, teachers, students, and community members, according to Gwadar Pro. During the visit, WAPDA officials also inaugurated the camp office of the contractor responsible for the works. The ceremony marked another step in improving educational and social infrastructure in the project area. According to WAPDA, the initiatives reflect its ongoing commitment to community development and access to quality education as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Resettlement and Rehabilitation Program under the Dasu project.—APP

Fazl condemns Indian atrocities in Kashmir

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has denounced India’s continued occupation and human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir, declaring 27 October as a Black Day in the region’s history. In a statement issued on Monday, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that for the past 78 years, India has persistently violated the fundamental human rights of the Kashmiri people. “For nearly eight decades, India has trampled on the rights of Kashmiris, denying them their basic freedoms and suppressing their aspirations for self-determination,” he stated. Paying tribute to the resilience and courage of Kashmiris, the JUI-F leader said, “Our Kashmiri brothers’ steadfast struggle against Indian aggression is admirable. Despite oppression and injustice, their determination remains unwavering.” Rehman emphasised that India’s continued brutalities in the region will forever be remembered as one of the darkest chapters in history. He reaffirmed his party’s commitment to standing by the Kashmiri people, saying, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam will remain stand shoulder to shoulder with Kashmiris in their just struggle for freedom. The veteran politician expressed optimism that the long fight for self-determination would ultimately succeed. “The sacrifices of the Kashmiri people will not go in vain. Their struggle for liberation will one day bear fruit,” he added. October 27 is observed annually as Kashmir Black Day to mark the day in 1947 when Indian forces landed in Srinagar, leading to the division and decades-long conflict over the disputed territory.—APP

IFC grants \$1.8m to boost Pak’s electric vehicle industry

ISLAMABAD: The International Finance Corporation (IFC) has provided a grant of US\$1.8 million to encourage private sector investment in local production of electric vehicles in Pakistan. The development comes as part of a broader initiative spearheaded by the Ministry of Industries and Production (MoIP) as a key component of Pakistan’s green economic strategy. The IMF subsequently adopted the EV initiative as a major element of a US\$1.4 billion arrangement under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) The IFC also showed interest and provided a grant of US\$1.8 million to encourage private sector investment in local electric vehicle (EV) production in Pakistan. Secretary of Industries and Production Saif Anjum told a recent meeting of Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue that the IFC grant was a turning point in aligning Pakistan’s industrial policy with global sustainability standards. He said the IFC’s involvement would catalyse local manufacturing, reduce import dependence, and attract more private investment into clean transport technologies.

The policy, backed by both the IMF and IFC, is expected to be rolled out later this year, marking a significant milestone in Pakistan’s transition toward cleaner, more sustainable transportation systems Beyond the industrial dimension, the EV policy carries strong economic and environmental implications. Under Pakistan’s commitment to the Paris Agreement, the country aims to ensure that 30 percent of all new vehicle sales are electric by 2030.—DNA

Briefs

Shaza vows to use technology to improve citizens' lives

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja reaffirmed the government's commitment to harnessing technology to improve citizens' lives and make governance more efficient, transparent, and accessible on Monday. Addressing an event titled "Future in Focus: AI and Innovation," organised in collaboration with Meta, she said the true purpose of technology extends beyond acquiring knowledge, earning profits, or running businesses – it is to enhance the quality of citizens' daily lives. "Technology must lie at the heart of every developmental effort, improving how people live, work, and interact with the government," she said. "At the heart of every technological development is the citizen. Our goal is to make the life of every Pakistani easier – economically, socially, and administratively." Shaza Fatima appreciated Meta's regional leadership for supporting the government's vision, as outlined by the Prime Minister, to transform Pakistan into a "Digital Natio.—APP

Musadik urges world action on Kashmir rights

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr Musadik Malik, has called on the international community to break its silence over what he described as systematic and continuing human rights violations against the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), as Pakistan marked Kashmir Black Day on Monday. In a strongly worded message, Dr Malik said the global community's indifference towards the suffering of Kashmiris exposes a troubling double standard" in the defence of human rights. "The world that speaks so loudly about women's rights remains silent on the atrocities committed against Kashmiri women," he remarked. Highlighting what he termed the hypocrisy of global institutions and governments, the minister said that when it comes to Kashmir, the world seems to forget its own principles of justice, human dignity, and self-determination. Dr Malik reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering political, moral, and diplomatic support for the Kashmiri people in their struggle for self-determination, as enshrined in United Nations Security Council resolutions. "Pakistan stood with the Kashmiris yesterday, stands with them today, and will continue to stand with them until their just cause is realised," he asserted.—APP

Balakot Hydropower project reaches key milestone as River Kunhar changes

ISLAMABAD: Balakot Hydropower project reaches key milestone as River Kunhar changes, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. Under a clear blue sky in Balakot, with just a few small clouds adding to the beauty of the mountains, trucks and excavators lined the rocky banks of the River Kunhar. With the final shovel of earth dropped, the river's flow was successfully diverted into the newly built diversion tunnel, marking a major milestone in the Balakot Hydropower Project (BHPP). On Saturday, the dam of the BHPP, which is undertaken by China Gezhouba Group Company Limited (CGGC), a core member of China Energy Engineering Group, achieved river diversion and closure, moving the project into its main phase of dam construction. The diversion used a single-side blocking method, with cofferdams built from both banks toward a pre-designed sluice opening, guided by hydraulic calculations to ensure stability. The ceremony was attended by Chinese officials and representatives from Pakistani departments, including the Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO).—APP

RC Board holds solidarity walk on Black Day

Speaking on the occasion, Additional CEO Zia Hussain said the purpose of the walk was to draw the attention of the international community to the grave human rights violations being committed in occupied Kashmir

DNA

RAWALPINDI: To mark Kashmir Black Day, the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board organized a solidarity walk on Saddar Bank Road, expressing unwavering support for the Kashmiri people and their right to self-determination. The walk was led by Additional CEO Rawalpindi Cantonment Board, Zia Hussain, along with Deputy CEO Nasir Kamal, and was attended by a large number of civil society members. Participants carried banners denouncing Indian atrocities and showing solidarity with the oppressed people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Speaking on the occasion, Additional CEO Zia Hussain said the purpose of the walk was to draw the attention of the international community to the grave human rights violations being committed in occupied Kashmir. He said that on October 27, 1947, India illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir in blatant violation of UN Security Council resolutions. "The Kashmiri people have rendered unmatched sacrifices in their struggle for freedom, and our hearts beat with



them," Zia Hussain said, reaffirming the board's solidarity with the Kashmiri cause. Deputy CEO Nasir Kamal said the observance of Kashmir Black

Day symbolizes Pakistan's renewed commitment to the just struggle of the Kashmiri people for their right to self-determination. He urged the Unit-

ed Nations to play its due role and called upon the international community to take immediate steps to stop Indian oppression in occupied Kashmir.

Young Pakistani accountant achieves int'l distinction

ISLAMABAD: DA young and dynamic professional accountant from Peshawar, Mr. Hamza Shahid, has added another remarkable achievement to his academic and professional journey by earning the Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Applied Accounting from the prestigious Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom. The degree was officially conferred by the University's Board during the convocation ceremony held at the Pullman Kuala Lumpur City Centre, Ma-



aysia. The event brought together graduates and professionals from various

countries, marking a moment of pride for Pakistani representation on the international academic stage. Expressing his gratitude, Hamza Shahid attributed his success to his consistent hard work, dedication, and the heartfelt prayers of his parents. He also shared that this milestone motivates him to continue striving for excellence in the field of accounting and finance. Hamza Shahid is the proud son of Muhammad Ahmad Shahid,

a seasoned Fellow Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP), who has been serving the accounting profession with distinction and integrity since more than 35 years. The accomplishment of Mr. Hamza Shahid not only highlights his personal commitment to academic and professional growth but also reflects the growing presence and recognition of Pakistani talent in globally recognized institutions.—DNA

China's anti-pollution measures in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD : China's anti-pollution measures in Pakistan amid rising smog challenges, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Monday. Pakistan is not alone in combating pollution and smog. China, time-tested friend, has joined Pakistan in embattling worst air pollution, smog and hazardous gases through zero-emission strategies featuring influx of New Electric Vehicles (NEVs), E-scooters, electric buses, anti-smog guns and orange train. It is unfortunate that over the last few years, Pakistan has been victim of awful air pollution and smog. Among worst hit urban cities, Lahore has ranked as the world's most polluted city for the past three days, with air quality plummeting to hazardous levels as smog blanketed the city and the overall Air Quality Index (AQI) hitting 412. Residents are urged to avoid unnecessary outdoor activity, particularly in the morning and evening, and to wear masks when outside.

PM2.5 concentrations in Lahore's air are multiple times above global safety thresholds, raising risks of respiratory and cardiovascular illness among other serious health issues, especially for children and the elderly. Under insufferable air pollution level, pouring of Chinese New Electric Vehicle on Pakistan's roads is breath in fresh air as they produce zero pollution in comparison to petrol-driven and diesel-run four wheelers plying in the length and breadth of Pakistan. In just few years or so, Pakistan has seen a surge of Chinese EVs. Popular Chinese brands like BAIC, Changan Automobile, JAC Motors, Great Wall Motors (GWM), MG, FAW, and Chery that are gaining traction, with some entering joint ventures to manufacture locally. China's BYD, top brand of Chinese car-maker and Pakistan's Mega Motor Company (MMC) have begun delivering New Energy Vehicles (NEVs) in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad, rolling out 100 units. BYD Pakistan has also announced showroom locations, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable mobility. With the launch of the SEAL and ATTO 3 models, both companies reaffirm confidence in Pakistan's automobile market and plan to establish up to 15 centers nationwide by the end of 2025. In a fight against smog and air pollution, the arrival of a Chinese E-Scooter brand like Horwin, Yadea, Evey has created a positive ripple reflecting a shift of consumer preferences toward electric mobility.

Strategic clarity in Pakistan can shift the Kashmir equation

ISLAMABAD: Institute of Regional Studies marked Kashmir Black Day today, reaffirming its unshakeable commitment to the Kashmiri people in their struggle against decades of unlawful occupation and grave human rights abuses in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). Ambassador Jauhar Saleem reminded the audience that India deployed forces into Jammu & Kashmir on 27 October 1947 despite a binding Standstill Agreement, without credible evidence of legal accession, and that the United Nations later recognized the right of Kashmiris to self-determination through numerous resolutions, including the requirement of a plebiscite. Senator Pervaiz Rashid, member Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Affairs stressed that Pakistan's national stance on Kashmir has remained consistent regardless of changes in government. He underlined the urgency of building stronger outreach to Kashmiris themselves and mobilizing global opinion, especially since India's 2019 revocation of Articles 370 and 35-A opened doors to demographic engineering in the region. Ex advisor to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs, Qamar Zaman Kaira, underscored that the dispute can only be resolved through the will of the Kashmiri people. He noted that while the UN was created by powerful nations, Pakistan must continue to amplify Kashmiri voices and sustain diplomatic pressure to prevent normalization of repression. Former DG ISI Lt. Gen. (R) Asad Durrani highlighted that durable progress demands a coherent long-term policy. He cited Pakistan's successful nuclear program as an example of unified national effort and urged structured coordination between the government, institutions, and civil society to effectively challenge India's status quo.—DNA

Khichi reaffirms Pakistan's unwavering support for IIOJK people

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, has reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support for the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), marking October 27 as Black Day to condemn India's illegal occupation of the region since 1947. In his message, the Minister said that October 27, 1947, marked a dark chapter in history when Indian forces unlawfully entered Jammu and Kashmir against the will of the Kashmiri people and in violation of international norms and United Nations resolutions. "This day reminds the world of the unfulfilled promises made to the Kashmiri people regarding their right to self-determination," he stated. Khichi emphasized that Pakistan will continue to extend political, moral, and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people until they achieve their legitimate right to self-determina-

tion as enshrined in UN Security Council resolutions. He called upon the international community, human rights organizations, and global powers to take immediate notice of the grave human rights violations being committed by Indian forces in IIOJK and to play their role in ensuring justice and lasting peace in South Asia. The Minister reiterated that cultural, historical, and human values uphold the principles of freedom and dignity, which the people of Kashmir have maintained despite decades of oppression. He added that the Government of Pakistan remains steadfast in its solidarity with the Kashmiri people and will continue to highlight their plight on every international platform. The minister also conveyed that a series of events are being arranged by the literary and cultural organizations to mark the day.—DNA

From architectural aesthetics to clean air: A Biophilic invitation for Pakistan

AYSAL ELHAM

When cities cease to be mere assemblies of stone, cement, and glass and instead become breathing, life-giving systems the very meaning of architecture transforms. In the streets of Singapore, buildings no longer just rise; they purify the air, turn human touch into healing, and convert every step into an act of environmental care. This is the moment where aesthetics, science, and human consciousness converge. The idea of living, breathing architecture is no longer a distant dream. Singapore's urban innovations have brought it to life. In its modern developments, plastic railings embedded with algae are being installed not just as support structures, but as living air-purifying systems. When touched, the

warmth and motion of the human hand activate the algae's natural process of photosynthesis. These railings absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, turning every touch into a small act of ecological restoration. The algae are encased in a transparent, flexible polymer that allows sunlight to pass through while protecting the organisms. Throughout the day, human interaction keeps the algae in motion, maintaining internal circulation and enhancing the cleaning process. Some systems even incorporate micro-pumps or natural wicks to ensure a steady supply of nutrients, making them low-energy, self-sustaining ecosystems. This innovation is especially effective in spaces where traditional air systems fall short stairwells, lobbies, and entry halls. The railings' soft green glow not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of interiors but also infuses

them with a sense of natural vitality. Visitors are often surprised to learn they are interacting with a living system one that responds to their presence by improving the air they breathe. For a country like Pakistan, grappling with urban pollution, climate volatility, and public health crises, such innovations offer more than inspiration they offer a practical blueprint. In cities like Lahore and Karachi, where air quality regularly breaches hazardous levels, algae railings present a low-cost, low-energy solution that also encourages public participation. Imagine staircases in our hospitals, schools, and government buildings doubling as air-purifying systems where every touch contributes to a cleaner environment. These innovations align seamlessly with Pakistan's green building codes, climate adaptation goals, and smart city initiatives. Lo-

cal universities, startups, and policymakers must collaborate to develop similar systems tailored to Pakistan's context utilizing indigenous algae, recycled plastics, and solar energy. Such efforts would not only enhance environmental resilience but also stimulate local economies and research ecosystems. This column is a call to architects, planners, policymakers, and civil society: innovation doesn't always begin with grand infrastructure. Sometimes, it starts with a single railing. Pakistan must embrace a biophilic architectural revolution not just to beautify its cities, but to ensure cleaner air and healthier environments for generations to come. Let our buildings breathe. Let our cities begin to heal. Let our touch become a gesture of renewal. Climate Governance Analyst (MPhil Media Sciences) impactchroniclesmedia@outlook.com

President Trump embarks on far East Tour

US President Donald Trump has embarked on a high-profile tour of the Far East, with stops including Malaysia, Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines, as part of a renewed push to strengthen America's economic and security partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region. The visit marks Trump's first extensive trip to Southeast Asia since leaving office and comes amid a shifting geopolitical environment defined by China's growing influence, regional trade tensions, and evolving security alliances. The tour began in Tokyo, where President Trump met with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to discuss trade, defense cooperation, and maritime security in the East China Sea. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining a "free and open Indo-Pacific," emphasizing the importance of upholding international law in territorial disputes. Trump praised Japan's role as a "key U.S. ally" and expressed appreciation for its contributions to regional stability. From Japan, Trump traveled to Seoul, where he held talks with South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol. The discussions focused on the North Korean nuclear issue, joint defense exercises, and strengthening trilateral cooperation with Japan. Addressing a business forum in Seoul, Trump highlighted the potential for expanded U.S.-Korea trade, stating that "economic partnership and security cooperation go hand in hand." He reiterated his belief that peace on the Korean Peninsula could only be achieved through "strength, deterrence, and diplomacy grounded in mutual respect."

The centerpiece of Trump's trip, however, is his visit to Malaysia, where he met with Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and key members of the Malaysian business community. In Kuala Lumpur, President Trump underscored the importance of enhancing trade and investment ties between the U.S. and ASEAN economies. He also emphasized the role of Malaysia as a strategic partner in maintaining freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. Speaking at a joint press conference, Trump said, "The United States values its friendship with Malaysia and supports its role as a regional leader committed to peace and prosperity. Together, we can ensure that the Indo-Pacific remains open, secure, and free from coercion."

The visit to the Philippines will conclude Trump's regional tour, where discussions are expected to center on maritime security, counterterrorism, and the strengthening of defense cooperation. The U.S. has been keen to reassure allies in Southeast Asia of its continued presence and engagement amid China's expanding military and economic footprint in the region. Analysts see the trip as a move by Trump to reaffirm his global diplomatic credentials and rebuild international relationships that were strained during his presidency. The Far East tour also signals renewed U.S. interest in balancing China's influence by deepening partnerships with regional democracies and emerging economies. While the trip is largely symbolic, it reflects Washington's ongoing recognition of the Indo-Pacific as the world's most dynamic and strategically critical region—where economic growth, energy routes, and geopolitical rivalries intersect.

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Poverty in Pakistan – A Nation left behind

THE latest report by the World Bank has delivered a sobering reality check for Pakistan. According to its findings, poverty in the country has surged by 7 percent, pushing the overall poverty rate to around 26 percent. This revelation should have shaken the conscience of policymakers, yet the silence and complacency surrounding the issue are deafening. What makes the situation worse is the World Bank's observation that no comprehensive household survey has been conducted in Pakistan for the past three years. Without reliable data, even the grim figure of 26 percent may understate the true scale of human suffering across the country. This rise in poverty is especially tragic given that the present government has repeatedly portrayed itself as "poor-friendly." Lofty slogans of social justice, subsidies for the marginalized, and promises of inclusive growth have proven hollow. The bitter truth is that poverty is not only rising—it is becoming entrenched. Millions of families lack access to basic amenities such as clean drinking water, healthcare, education, and affordable housing. For the poor, daily survival itself has become a battle. The contrast between the elite and the ordinary citizen has never been starker. While a small, privileged class enjoys lavish lifestyles—driving imported cars, holding extravagant events, and siphoning resources through corruption—the masses are left with little more than despair. This glaring inequality is not merely an economic issue but a moral crisis, eating away at the very fabric of our society. It breeds resentment, weakens social cohesion, and threatens the stability of the state itself. Corruption lies at the heart of this malaise. When public resources meant for schools, hospitals, and social safety nets are diverted into private pockets, the poor are effectively told that their lives do not matter. The message is clear: if you are wealthy, the system serves you; if you are poor, you have no rights. Such a system cannot sustain itself. No nation can progress when nearly one-third of its population is trapped in poverty, robbed of opportunities, and denied dignity. What is most alarming is the absence of urgency in addressing the crisis. Poverty alleviation requires more than token subsidies or temporary relief packages. It demands structural reforms: an overhaul of governance, a crackdown on corruption, investment in education and healthcare, and policies that generate jobs rather than mere rhetoric. Equally important is the need for credible data collection. Without accurate statistics, policymaking becomes guesswork—and guesswork has already cost this country dearly. Pakistan stands at a crossroads. If the present trajectory continues—where corruption flourishes, inequality widens, and poverty deepens—the future will be one of perpetual economic stagnation and social unrest. But if leaders muster the will to act, prioritizing the welfare of the people over the comforts of the elite, there is still hope. The choice is stark, and the time is running out. Poverty is not just an economic indicator—it is a national emergency. Unless confronted with honesty and determination, it will condemn millions more Pakistanis to lives of hardship and hopelessness, while the dream of a prosperous Pakistan remains out of reach.

Water as a Weapon: The Emerging Afghan- India Nexus Against Pakistan

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



India's record in this domain leaves little room for optimism. Despite the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960—brokered by the World Bank and considered one of the most successful water-sharing agreements in history—India has repeatedly violated both its spirit and letter. Over the decades, India has built hundreds small and large dams on the western rivers allocated to Pakistan, including the Chenab, Jhelum, and Indus

H AZRAT ALI (RA) once said, "If you do good to someone, then avoid their evil." This timeless wisdom seems to echo across centuries, finding its living reflection in Pakistan's relationship with Afghanistan. For decades, Pakistan has extended its hand of generosity to its western neighbour—offering shelter, dignity, and opportunity. Millions of Afghans who crossed the border empty-handed found not only refuge but also prosperity in Pakistan. They were given access to education, healthcare, and employment. Many built thriving businesses, acquired properties, and even gained Pakistani citizenship. Yet, in a cruel twist of fate, those who were nurtured with compassion now appear to be aligning themselves with the enemies of their benefactor. The latest developments emerging from Kabul paint a troubling picture. According to credible reports, the Afghan Taliban regime, in collaboration with India, is planning to construct a series of dams on rivers that feed directly into Pakistan. It is a new and more insidious form of aggression—one that strikes not with guns or tanks, but with control over water, the very lifeblood of the nation. After suffering humiliation on the battlefield, India seems to have shifted its hostility into another domain; water warfare, waged through Afghan soil. According to the report, Taliban government had entered into an understanding with New Delhi for the construction of a major dam on the Kunar River, a key tributary of the Kabul River. The plan, as the report disclosed, is aimed at restricting or even halting the water flow into Pakistan. In return, India has pledged financial assistance worth one billion US dollars and has begun providing technical expertise for the construction of several other dams, including Naghlu, Duronta, Shahtoot, Shah Waros, Gamberi, and Baghdara. Experts warn that such projects could have devastating consequences for Pakistan's water security. The Kabul River contributes approximately 16.5 million acre-feet of water annually to Pakistan, sus-

taining vital crops like wheat, maize, and sugarcane in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's fertile districts of Peshawar, Charsadda, and Nowshera. Any obstruction or manipulation of this water flow would endanger the livelihood of millions and destabilize Pakistan's already fragile agricultural balance. This emerging nexus between India and Afghanistan represents not just a technical challenge but a strategic threat. Water, in this context, becomes an instrument of coercion. Pakistan's officials have therefore taken a clear and unequivocal stance: water security is national security. The state has asserted that no country will be permitted to use rivers flowing into Pakistan as a political or military lever. India's record in this domain leaves little room for optimism. Despite the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960—brokered by the World Bank and considered one of the most successful water-sharing agreements in history—India has repeatedly violated both its spirit and letter. Over the decades, India has built hundreds small and large dams on the western rivers allocated to Pakistan, including the Chenab, Jhelum, and Indus. Major projects such as Baglihar Dam on Chenab, Kishanganga on Jhelum, and Ratle and Pakal Dul on the Indus basin have been constructed unilaterally, disregarding Pakistan's objections and flouting international arbitration rulings. These actions have not only undermined trust but have emboldened India to pursue similar tactics on the western front through Afghanistan. Recognizing the gravity of the threat, Pakistan has begun formulating a comprehensive defensive response. At the heart of this strategy lies the Chitral River Diversion Project, a bold and visionary initiative designed to neutralize any attempt at water aggression. The plan involves diverting the Chitral River into the Swat Basin before it crosses into Afghan territory. This would serve multiple strategic objectives: ensuring the security of Pakistan's water flow, generating up to 2,453 megawatts of clean, renewable energy, bringing thousands of acres of barren land under cultivation, and augmenting the

storage capacities of the Warsak and Mohmand dams. Furthermore, the project will help mitigate flood risks that have repeatedly caused devastation in the northwestern regions of the country. Officials have affirmed that this project falls fully within Pakistan's sovereign rights and is entirely compliant with international water laws. By asserting control over its natural resources, Pakistan is not violating any treaty but rather protecting its rightful share of water from political manipulation and strategic encirclement. What makes this situation particularly distressing is the betrayal embedded within it. Pakistan's generosity toward Afghanistan has no parallel in modern history. It absorbed the world's largest refugee population for more than four decades, often at great economic and social cost. Yet, instead of gratitude, there emerges a collaboration that threatens Pakistan's survival. India's hand in this scheme is unmistakable, for it serves its long-standing policy of encircling Pakistan—militarily from the east and strategically from the west. The people and institutions of Pakistan now stand united in the belief that water aggression—no matter in what form—will not be tolerated. Diplomatically, Pakistan is preparing to engage international forums, including the United Nations and the International Court of Arbitration, to expose and counter this emerging water nexus. Technically, it is investing in projects that enhance water storage, efficiency, and sustainability. Politically, it is strengthening consensus across parties to ensure a unified national front. Water is not just a resource; it is the pulse of Pakistan's existence. To defend it is not a choice but a duty owed to the generations that will inherit this land. As Hazrat Ali's (RA) wisdom reminds us, kindness must never be blind to treachery. Pakistan has done good to Afghanistan, but it must now guard itself against the evil designs that exploit its goodwill. The time has come for vigilance, unity, and decisive action—to ensure that no enemy, near or distant, can turn the rivers of life into weapons of destruction.

From guns to gateways

F. Z. Khan

India's policymakers, if they look beyond narrow politics, would realize that their own economic aspirations are better served through engagement, not enmity. The Indian economy, too, depends on secure trade routes, energy access, and stable borders. Persistent hostility towards Pakistan only drains resources, breeds extremism, and diverts attention from poverty, climate change, and development. History offers a warning. When nations invest in division rather than dialogue, they find themselves prisoners of their own propaganda. South Asia today remains one of the least integrated regions in the world

PAKISTAN stands today at a crucial crossroads; one that defines not only its own future but the destiny of an entire region long scarred by mistrust, manipulation, and missed opportunities. As the world order shifts and economic geography replaces military geography, Pakistan is increasingly projecting itself as a moderate, forward-looking nation seeking peace through diplomacy and strength through development. It is a vision built not on sentiment but on sober realism: a recognition that Pakistan's long-term security and prosperity are inseparable from regional stability. At the heart of this vision lies a simple truth that the age of zero-sum games is over. The 21st century does not reward confrontation; it rewards cooperation. The real strength of a state today lies not in its ability to fight others' wars but in its capacity to serve as a bridge and a connective hub between South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Pakistan's geographic centrality and importance gives it a unique opportunity to play precisely this role, transforming what was once seen as a fault line into a lifeline of trade, energy, and connectivity. Such a vision faces a deliberate and dangerous challenge. Across our western and eastern borders, there are forces hell bent upon keeping this region trapped in the logic of the past. The use of Afghan soil by hostile intelligence networks, specifically Indians to foment terrorism inside Pakistan is not a matter of speculation rather it is a documented reality, which have been repeatedly highlighted at all international forums, and through hard evidence shared with the world. It is no coincidence that whenever Pakistan moves closer to stability or economic progress, a fresh wave of violence is triggered in its border regions or urban centers. For Pakistan, a peaceful, democratic, and representative Afghanistan is not a matter of charity or ideology. It is a matter of survival and mutual security. We know, better than the most, the human and economic cost of instability in our neighborhood. For four decades, Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghan refugees, borne the brunt of cross-border militancy, and sacrificed over 80,000 lives in its war against terror.

Few nations have paid such a price for global peace, yet Pakistan continues to be portrayed through the prism of suspicion rather than recognition. The world must understand, and so must India, that a stable Afghanistan is not an option; it is a necessity. For us the dream of regional integration cannot come true without Kabul's cooperation. But this cooperation can only thrive if all external actors, particularly India, stop viewing Afghanistan as a chessboard to undermine Pakistan. For years, India has sought to exploit Afghan territory to finance, train, and facilitate anti-Pakistan terror groups such as the TTP and BLA. The evidence of Indian involvement, from the arrest of serving RAW officer to intelligence intercepts shared with the UN, is irrefutable. Such policies are not only reckless but self-defeating. A destabilized Pakistan does not translate into a stronger India; it leads instead to a more volatile South Asia, where the contagion of terrorism and extremism knows no borders. It is time for New Delhi to understand that Pakistan's pursuit of peace is not a weakness; it is a strategic choice born of maturity. The new Great Game is not played with guns and proxies but with corridors, currencies, and communication lines. China's BRI and CPEC exemplify how regional connectivity can turn old rivalries into opportunities. These projects are not directed against any country; these are pathways to shared prosperity. What Pakistan seeks is to transform its geography into an engine of cooperation linking Gwadar to Kashgar, Karachi to Kabul, and Lahore to Tashkent. India's policymakers, if they look beyond narrow politics, would realize that their own economic aspirations are better served through engagement, not enmity. The Indian economy, too, depends on secure trade routes, energy access, and stable borders. Persistent hostility towards Pakistan only drains resources, breeds extremism, and diverts attention from poverty, climate change, and development. History offers a warning. When nations invest in division rather than dialogue, they find themselves prisoners of their own propaganda. South Asia today remains one of the least integrated regions in the world. Its collective GDP could multiply

if trade and transit barriers were reduced, if cultural and academic exchanges were encouraged, and if mistrust were replaced by mutual respect. Pakistan, under successive governments and military leadership, has consistently signaled its willingness to engage – but peace cannot be a one-sided dream. The message to our neighbors, therefore, is clear: the path of fomenting terrorism and proxy wars must end. Using Afghan soil to destabilize Pakistan serves no one. The chaos that spills across borders does not distinguish between ethnicity or ideology. It breeds a generation lost to hate, hunger, and hopelessness. Pakistan's vision is different. It is a vision of "geo-economics" replacing "geo-politics"; of roads replacing trenches; of dialogue replacing diatribe. Our focus is on building internal resilience strengthening governance, empowering youth, promoting trade and expanding digital connectivity. This is how modern nations rise not through confrontation but through cooperation. Yet, for peace to prevail, intentions must be matched with actions. Pakistan will continue to protect its sovereignty with full resolve. The Armed Forces of Pakistan, our intelligence agencies, and security apparatuses have demonstrated time and again that no external force can undermine the will of a united nation. But equally, Pakistan remains committed to working with all its neighbors including India and Afghanistan in order to create a regional order based on mutual respect, shared growth, and collective security. It is time for the Indians, and indeed for all regional actors, to rethink their strategies. The age of secret wars and proxy networks is over. The world is moving towards connectivity, digital trade, and cooperative security. Those who cling to the politics of disruption will only isolate themselves. Pakistan's message, therefore, is not one of hostility but of hope. We extend a hand of peace – firm, confident, and principled. But this hand cannot remain extended forever to those who keep it chained in suspicion. The road ahead can either lead to endless rivalry or to shared renewal. The choice lies not just with Pakistan but with all of South Asia. – The writer is a freelance columnist. He can be reached at fzkhann@yahoo.com

Briefs

Pakistan to close airspace temporarily

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistan rejected the accusation as baseless and offered an international probe of the attack. Instead of probing the attack, India killed several innocent civilians in unprovoked attacks on Pakistan for three days before the Pakistan Armed Forces retaliated in defence with the successful Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos in May this year. Pakistan downed seven IAF fighter jets, including Rafale, and dozens of drones. After at least 87 hours, the war between the two nuclear-armed nations ended on May 10 with a ceasefire agreement brokered by the United States.

Pak, Afghan 'hold' third round of...

FROM PAGE 01
Sources confirmed that the Taliban side has reportedly agreed to most of Pakistan's key demands, showing a degree of flexibility after initially resisting Islamabad's calls for tangible measures. This marks what observers describe as a "significant shift" in the Taliban's stance, following mounting international pressure and mediation by friendly countries. The ongoing talks come in the wake of a series of deadly border clashes, during which Pakistan's armed forces repelled multiple attacks by Taliban fighters and affiliated militants. The retaliatory operations resulted in the deaths of over 200 militants, while 23 Pakistani soldiers embraced martyrdom. Pakistan also launched precision strikes inside Afghanistan's Kandahar and Kabul regions, targeting militant hideouts and command centers. Following the escalation, Pakistan closed all major border crossings with Afghanistan, prioritizing the safety of its citizens over trade or movement of goods.

Black Day: Pakistan reaffirms...

FROM PAGE 01
Echoing similar views, PM Shehbaz emphasised that lasting peace and stability in South Asia would remain elusive without a just and peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue. "Every year, Oct 27 marks the darkest day in the history of Kashmir... Ever since that fateful day, India has continued to deny the Kashmiri people their inalienable right to self-determination, as enshrined in numerous resolutions of the United Nations Security Council." "Every year, Oct 27 marks the darkest day in the history of Kashmir... Ever since that fateful day, India has continued to deny the Kashmiri people their inalienable right to self-determination, as enshrined in numerous resolutions of the United Nations Security Council." The prime minister added: "Since August 5, 2019, India has further intensified its illegal and unilateral actions, aimed at altering the demography and political status of IIOJK.

SBP maintains key policy...

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The policy committee had reduced the interest rate by 1 percentage point to 11% in its meeting on May 5 this year. Analysts had told Reuters that flood-driven food inflation and a low base effect are likely to limit the scope for further monetary easing. All 10 analysts surveyed in a Reuters poll expected the SBP to keep the policy rate unchanged, extending its pause as recent floods ravaged farmland and border closures with Afghanistan drove up prices of staples like tomatoes and apples. "An elevated inflation reading in September, incorporating the impact of the recent floods, is likely to incline the MPC to keep the policy rate at the same level," said Fawad Basir, head of research at KTrade, adding that the next cut was likely in the last quarter of FY26, starting July 2026.

DNA



ISLAMABAD: COSA Golf Tournament held in Islamabad, hosted by Corps of Service Attachés. – DNA

England's spinners and Jones star in World Cup win over New Zealand

"We take lot of confidence heading into the semis," says England captain Nat Sciver-Brunt

VISAKHAPATNAM: Former champions England produced a textbook all-round performance to crush New Zealand by eight wickets in their final Women's World Cup league game in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. The win catapulted England to second place in the table with 11 points, just below defending champions Australia. They will meet South Africa in the semi-finals. With qualification for the last four already assured England used the occasion to fine-tune their arsenal, particularly their spinners, who were on the money from the word go. The spin quartet of Linsey Smith, Charlie Dean, Alice Capsey and Sophie Ecclestone spun a web around the White Ferns, sharing seven wickets to trigger a collapse. New Zealand, cruising at 89-1, lost Amelia Kerr and Georgia Plimmer in successive deliveries and from there it was a procession. The last five wickets tumbled for just 13 runs as the Kiwis were bundled out for 168 in under 39 overs, their lowest total of the tournament. "We wanted to put in a good performance. Really happy with that effort and we take lot of confidence head-



ing into the semis," said England captain Nat Sciver-Brunt. The only cloud in England's otherwise sunny afternoon was Ecclestone's shoulder injury. The world's top-ranked bowler claimed the prized wicket of Brooke Halliday before leaving the field after just four deliveries. England will be

sweating on her fitness as the business end of the competition looms. Her exit gave part timer Sophia Dunkley a rare trundle and with England already boasting an array of finger spinners, her wrist spin added another string to their bow. England were rarely tested during run

chase. Tammy Beaumont and Amy Jones put on 75 for the first wicket and Jones then joined hands with skipper Heather Knight in a 83-run stand as England cantered home with 124 balls to spare. Jones finished unbeaten on 86, her 16th half-century in WODIs, reaching the landmark with a towering six off Suzie Bates and sealing victory with a silken cover drive. It was an emotional afternoon for New Zealand great Sophie Devine, who bowed out of WODIs after a stellar career. Though she failed to make a mark with the bat, she leaves as the nation's third highest run getter (4,279) and second highest wicket taker (111). Both teams formed a guard of honour for the departing legend. The White Ferns finish a disappointing sixth in the table, with just one win to their name, two of their Colombo fixtures having been washed away by rain. "Really wanted to go on a high, but today's performance was disappointing. I am humbled to have played for my country for 19 long years. We came with lot of hopes but we weren't good enough," Devine said.

King of Jordan lauds...

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During the visit, both dignitaries reaffirmed the deep-rooted and historic ties between the Armed Forces of Pakistan and Jordan. Major General Yousef Ahmed Al-Huneiti also acknowledged Pakistan Armed Forces' remarkable contributions towards peace and regional security.

PML-N, PPP join hands in...

FROM PAGE 01
He stressed that the move reflected the coalition's collective resolve to ensure transparent and accountable leadership in the region. PPP leaders, speaking on the occasion, welcomed PML-N's support and termed it a step toward strengthening the democratic alliance at both the regional and federal levels. The development marks a significant shift in AJK's political landscape and could reshape the balance of power in the assembly in the coming days.

Bilawal, Fazl meeting...

FROM PAGE 01
the support of 27 members, followed by the PML-N with nine, PTI with five, and two regional parties with one member each. The group of PTI renegades led by Haq has been reduced to ten members. The meeting comes a day after a senior JUIF leader said his party would launch a 'long march' on Islamabad and a series of nationwide gatherings against flawed government policies leading to unabated inflation and unemployment, as well as injustices, in the country. Speaking to journalists at the local press club on Sunday, JUIF Secretary General MNA Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri said that the government was completely disconnected from public issues and "the economy has been mortgaged to the IMF".

FPCCI chief slams decision

FROM PAGE 01
the interest rate could have led to a significant decrease in the government's debt burden by approximately PKR. 3,500 billion – providing much-needed fiscal relief. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh highlighted that inflation has come down to 5.6% in the month of September 2025 as per the government's own statistics. "Pakistan's interest rate is significantly higher than those in other countries in the region," Sheikh noted, pointing out that the elevated rate stifles economic activity and discourages investment. He stressed that for businesses to thrive and remain competitive, the policy rate must be brought down to a single-digit figure.

Spurs pay tribute to Popovich before Wemby sparks NBA win

WASHINGTON: On a Sunday when the San Antonio Spurs paid tribute to long-time coach Gregg Popovich, Victor Wembanyama made sure the unbeaten NBA club celebrated a victory as well. The 7-foot-4 (2.224m) French center scored 31 points, grabbed 14 rebounds, blocked six shots, passed off four assists and made three steals to spark the Spurs over Brooklyn 118-107. "I missed the energy so much," Wembanyama told the crowd at the Spurs' home opener. "I knew you guys were going to show up so we had to show up for you all." Wembanyama has a combined 100 points and 18 blocked shots over the first three games of the regular season, a feat no other NBA player has ever managed. "He's doing a great job," Spurs head coach Mitch Johnson said of the Frenchman. San Antonio improved to 3-0 to start the campaign while the Nets, despite 40 points from Cam Thomas, fell to 0-3. "Nothing like winning," said Wembanyama. "It feels great. It feels like where we should be. It definitely gives a boost for motivation." Told of reports he enjoys being a "bully," Wembanyama replied, "I'm not sure this is a label you can put on me but (playing with physicality) is one of the things I think about." Terence Mann's jumper lifted Brooklyn within 108-107 with 2:47 remaining but the Spurs answered with a 10-0 closing run, "Wemby" hitting two free throws and a dunk in the concluding spur. Without ceremony or fanfare, the Spurs displayed a new banner among the list of retired player numbers hanging from their arena ceiling that said: "Pop 1,390" and below a Spurs logo the words "Hall of Fame." "That's probably the way Pop would have wanted it," Wembanyama said. "For sure it should be up there." The banner recognized Popovich's NBA record total of 1,390 career coaching triumphs and his 2023 enshrinement into the Basketball Hall of Fame. There were five stars across the top of the banner, one for each of the five NBA titles the Spurs won under Popovich's guidance. Popovich, 76, suffered a stroke last November and stepped down as coach of the Spurs five games into the 2024-25 campaign with Johnson promoted to replace him on an interim then permanent basis. – Agencies

Pakistan eye strong start in T20I series against SA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will take on South Africa in a three-match T20I series, with the first T20I set to take place at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Tuesday, October 28. The second and third T20Is will be played at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on October 31 and November 1, respectively, said a press release. In all three T20Is, the toss will take place at 7.30 pm, with the first ball to be bowled at 8 pm local time. The T20Is will be followed by three ODIs, which will be staged at the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad on November 4, 6, and 8. Before the T20I series, both sides featured in the two-match Test series – part of the ICC World Test Championship 2025-27, which ended 1-1. The hosts won the first Test by 93 runs at the Gaddafi Stadium, while the tourists fought back to win the second Test at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium by eight wickets. – APP

Norris claims 'beautiful' Mexico win, Replaces Piastri as championship leader

McLaren's British driver Lando Norris lifts the trophy on the podium after winning the Mexico City Formula One Grand Prix at the Hermanos Rodriguez racetrack in Mexico

MEXICO CITY: Lando Norris regained the lead in the drivers' world championship for the first time in six months on Sunday when he steered his McLaren to a commanding victory in a breathless Mexico Grand Prix. Driving with great authority, the 25-year-old Briton came home 30.324 seconds ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, with four-time champion Max Verstappen third for Red Bull. For Norris, it was a first win in Mexico, his sixth this season and the 10th of his career – achieved with a near-perfect race from pole position to lift him back to the top of the drivers' title race by one point for the first time since the Saudi Arabian race in April. With four races remaining, Norris has 357 points, ahead of Piastri on 356 and Verstappen, who is third on 321. "A beautiful win to celebrate here in this stadium in Mexico," said Norris. "It's one weekend at a time for me. I am happy and I am focused on myself. I am just keeping my head down and I keep to myself... I just stay relaxed and it helps. It helped me get a good start and it's the best thing." Leclerc, who gained his seventh podium of the season, said: "I am very happy with the weekend. We didn't know what to expect here so to get on the podium is a nice surprise." For Verstappen, it ended his sparkling streak of winning three of the past four races. "It was very hectic at the start and I almost crashed out. To be fighting for P2 with all that happened – a strong race for me," he reflected. Haas teenage rookie Oliver Bearman was a career best fourth ahead of Norris' McLaren team-mate and previously runaway series leader Oscar Piastri, and Mercedes' young rookie Kimi Antonelli. The Italian's teammate George Russell was seventh ahead of seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton in the second Ferrari, Esteban Ocon in the second Haas and Sauber's Gabriel Bortoleto. The packed stands on a hot day at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez witnessed high-speed chaos at the start as the leaders powered down and into the first corner. Norris made a good start from his 14th career pole and was one of four cars abreast as they turned in, but he held on to his lead as Leclerc, Hamilton and Verstappen drew alongside him. Leclerc battled Hamilton and ran off while Verstappen, in uncompromising mood, also ran off after attacking. He returned third but gave it back to Hamilton. Russell lost a place to the Dutchman and was adamant he was forced off while Hamilton complained at the aggression in T1. "What are they doing about it?" he asked. The stewards took a dim view of his part in the start, meting out a 10-second penalty. – Agencies

RISJA Holds Capacity Building Workshop for Sports Journalists

Former ICC and PCB Director Media Sami ul Hassan Barni commended RISJA for organizing the seminar and emphasized the importance of strengthening journalists' professional capacity to meet modern media challenges

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Rawalpindi Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA) organized a "Capacity Building Workshop" aimed at enhancing the professional skills and knowledge of sports journalists. The event saw strong participation from sports reporters and RISJA members. Former ICC and PCB Director Media Sami ul Hassan Barni commended RISJA for organizing the seminar and emphasized the importance of strengthening journalists' professional capacity to meet modern media challenges. Senior sports journalist Shahid Hashmi stressed the



significance of honesty, credibility, and ethical reporting, urging young journalists to uphold integrity in their work. Meanwhile, Abdul Mohi Shah and Shakeel Awan spoke about the challenges faced by newcomers in the sports media industry, highlighting the need for adaptability and continuous learning. The speakers praised RISJA's efforts to promote professional growth and unity among sports journalists. Presiding over the session, RISJA President Abubakar Bin Tallat thanked the guests and participants for their active involvement and reaffirmed the association's commitment to organizing more such initiatives with the continued support of his team.

Briefs

Gold price falls by Rs 3,300 per tola

ISLAMABAD: Gold prices in Pakistan declined on Monday, as the per tola rate of 24-karat gold dropped by Rs 3,300, closing at Rs 430,362 compared to Rs 433,662 on the previous trading day. Likewise, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold decreased by Rs 2,829, settling at Rs 368,966 against the previous rate of Rs 371,795, while 10 grams of 22-karat gold were traded at Rs 338,231 after a reduction of Rs 2,593, according to the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. International gold prices also witnessed a bearish trend, falling by \$33 to reach \$4,080 per ounce compared to \$4,113 per ounce a day earlier.

Silver prices remained in negative territory as well. The per tola silver price fell by Rs 27 to close at Rs 5,097, whereas the rate for 10 grams silver was recorded at Rs 4,369 after a decline of Rs 24. Globally, international silver was priced at \$48.35 per ounce, reflecting a slight decrease of \$0.27.

The domestic precious metals rates were based on the interbank exchange rates, with purity calculated at 999/24K, the association added.—APP

PSX sheds 1,140 points to close at 162,163.81

ISLAMABAD :The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bearish trend on Monday, losing 1,140.32 points, a negative change of 0.70 percent, closing at 162,163.81 points against 163,304.13 points on the previous trading day.

A total of 479 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 157 recorded gains, 277 sustained losses, while 45 remained unchanged.

The overall trading volume in the ready market stood at 1,006.69 million shares compared to 1,041.17 million shares on the prior day, whereas the traded value dropped to Rs34.82 billion from Rs35.01 billion. Market capitalization declined to Rs18.70 trillion from Rs18.81 trillion.

WorldCall Telecom led the volume chart with 164.29 million shares, followed by K-Electric Ltd. with 123.42 million shares and the Bank of Punjab with 61.77 million shares.

Among the top gainers, PIA Holding Company LimitedB gained Rs330.53 per share to close at Rs24,543.94, while Ismail Industries Limited rose by Rs90.52 to settle at Rs2,090.54.

On the other hand, Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a decrease of Rs291.76, closing at Rs29,400.00, whereas Nestle Pakistan Limited declined by Rs62.46 to close at Rs8,051.11.—APP

Migrants in Libya face abuse, kidnappings

RABAT: Libya has emerged as the North African country where migrants face the greatest challenges, including kidnappings and abuse at the hands of smugglers and militias, International Organization for Migration chief Amy Pope told AFP.

Most of the migrants who have died in the Mediterranean have departed from Libya, the IOM director general said, making the route itself especially risky. But even those who have yet to set off are vulnerable. “We regularly hear reports from migrants about being kidnapped, being held for ransom, suffering abuse and assault” in Libya, Pope said during an interview in Rabat “I myself have heard many stories of migrants who’ve been detained by non-government actors and held for ransom or suffered abuse,” she added. With the European Union’s mounting efforts to curb migration, many people are left stranded in Libya while dreaming of a better life. Libyan authorities said in July there were up to four million irregular migrants in the country. Smugglers and human traffickers have taken advantage of the instability in Libya following years of unrest after a NATO-backed uprising toppled longtime leader Muammar Qaddafi in 2011.—APP

FM lauds KTrade’s role in boosting investment culture

KTrade has emerged as a bridge between Pakistan’s capital markets and the general public, motivating thousands of new investors to participate in various business sectors

DNA

ISLAMABAD: During his recent television interview, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb

highlighted Pakistan’s improving economic indicators and emphasized the growing confidence of investors in the national economy.

He particularly appreciated the contribution of KTrade, the country’s leading digital investment platform, for playing a pivotal role in expanding Pakistan’s investor base and promoting financial inclusion.

KTrade has emerged as a bridge between Pakistan’s capital markets and the general public, motivating thousands of new investors to participate in various business sectors.

It may be mentioned here that such platforms have not only simplified access to investment opportunities but have also strengthened public confidence in the country’s economic fu-



Economic recovery holds firm as IMF review bolsters confidence

ISLAMABAD :The economic recovery of the country remained on track in the first quarter of FY2026, driven by improved macroeconomic stability, fiscal discipline, and stronger reform momentum under the government’s economic programme, Finance Ministry said on Monday According to the Monthly Economic Update & Outlook released by the Finance ministry, the recent Staff-Level Agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reaffirmed strong policy performance and “steadfast reforms commitment,” helping restore market confidence. It said sovereign default risk had “declined sharply” over the past 15 months, while Pakistan earned an “Excellent” sustainability alignment score from Sustainable Fitch on its financing framework. According to the report, the industrial performance showed resilience, supported by manufacturing recovery. Large-Scale Manufacturing (LSM) registered 4.4 percent growth during Jul–Aug FY2026, driven by higher output in cement, automobiles, electrical equipment and other key sectors. Cement dispatches increased 16.2 percent in Q1-FY2026, while automobile production posted substantial gains across cars, trucks, buses, and utility vehicles. The report acknowledged challenges arising from recent floods, estimating Rs. 430 billion in losses to major crops including rice, cotton, sugarcane and vegetables. However, recovery efforts were said to be underway, supported by 19.5 percent growth in agricultural credit disbursement and higher imports of machinery and fertilizer usage during the Kharif season. Inflation remained contained compared to last year, although headline inflation edged up to 5.6 percent in September 2025 due to temporary food supply disruptions. During Jul–Sep FY2026, inflation averaged 4.2 percent, significantly lower than 9.2 percent in the same period of FY2025. On the fiscal side, the government recorded a federal surplus of Rs. 1,509.2 billion during Jul–Aug FY2026, reversing a deficit from last year, as revenues increased sharply and expenditures remained contained. Non-tax revenues rose more than sevenfold, while FBR tax collection grew 12.5 percent in the first quarter. Exports and remittances strengthened the external sector. Goods exports increased 6.5 percent to \$7.9 billion and workers’ remittances rose 8.4 percent to \$9.5 billion during Jul–Sep FY2026. A current account surplus of \$110 million was recorded in September 2025 after earlier deficits. IT exports grew 20.4 percent, while foreign exchange reserves stood at \$19.9 billion as of October 17. Financial markets demonstrated robust performance, with the KSE-100 Index reaching record highs and market capitalization expanding significantly over the period under review. The report maintained an optimistic but cautious outlook, noting that economic recovery is expected to continue, supported by structural reforms, privatization progress, and CPEC Phase 2.0 projects aimed at enhancing industrial capacity and private-sector participation. Exports and remittances are expected to remain supportive of the external account, even as import demand gradually recovers with domestic growth. Inflation is projected to remain within the government’s target range, despite temporary price pressures resulting from flood-related supply constraints. The economy is further supported by positive global demand conditions and improving prospects in Pakistan’s major export markets. The report also pointed to sustained improvements in financial-sector indicators, emphasizing that the fiscal consolidation path remains intact, backed by revenue expansion and controlled public outlays.—APP

US envoy expected in Lebanon as tensions with Israel spike

LEBANON fears the bombing shows Israel intends to ramp up its air campaign, despite a November 2024 ceasefire that was intended to end a year-long war between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon

BEIRUT: US envoy Morgan Ortagus is expected in Beirut on Monday for talks with Lebanese officials on disarming militant group Hezbollah, sources familiar with her visit said, amid fears in Lebanon that Israel could launch a renewed air war on the group Those worries have been driven by days of intensifying Israeli strikes on Lebanon’s south and east that have killed more than a dozen people, most of them Hezbollah members, according to Lebanese security sources. Lebanon fears the bombing shows Israel intends to ramp up its air campaign, despite a November 2024 ceasefire that was intended to end a year-long war between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon. Ortagus, the White House’s deputy Middle East envoy, is expected to attend a meeting on Wednesday reviewing the Lebanese army’s efforts to clear Hezbollah arms caches in the country’s south, in line with the 2024 truce. Another US envoy, Tom Barrack, warned last week that Hezbollah may face a new confrontation with Israel if Lebanese authorities fail to act quickly to disarm the group in full, which Hezbollah has rejected doing so far. On Sunday, an Israeli strike killed a man that Israel said was a weapons dealer on behalf of Hezbollah. Lebanese security sources said the man, named Ali Al-Musawi, was the most senior member of the group to be killed since the ceasefire. Also on Sunday, United Nations peacekeepers said they had “neutralized” an Israeli drone that was flying over their patrol in south Lebanon in “an aggressive manner.” A source briefed on the incident told Reuters peacekeepers shot the drone instead of downing it with jamming devices because it was deemed to be posing a threat, and that an Israeli tank then fired a warning shot near peacekeepers. Israeli military spokesman Avichay Adraee said the drone was carrying out “routine intelligence gathering” and was not posing a threat. He said Israeli troops then threw a hand grenade at the area but did not fire directly at UN troops. The Israeli military says its continued strikes in Lebanon are targeting Hezbollah’s attempts to re-establish military infrastructure in the south, which the group denies doing.—DNA

Immigration, asylum, take center stage in Dutch election

AMSTERDAM: Orange smoke flares burning and draped in the Dutch red, white, and blue flag, masked men rampage through the streets chanting “Wij zijn Nederland” — “We are the Netherlands.”

Even Amsterdam, known for its tolerance, got a taste on October 12 of a violent demonstration against immigration that has hit many Dutch cities ahead of elections on Wednesday. As in many European countries, immigration is the hot political issue in the Netherlands, and has dominated campaigning in the run-up to the October 29 election. Polls suggest the far-right Freedom Party (PVV) led by firebrand Geert Wilders could again top the vote with his anti-Islam, anti-immigration message.

“Immigration is going to be a big factor in how I’m going to vote,” said nurse Bianca de Vos.

“I find it very important to help people, but it doesn’t have to happen here, because here it’s too full,” the 51-year-old told AFP.

Like many voters, De Vos links immigration to the other hot-button topic in Dutch politics: a housing crisis that means many young people struggle to find accommodation.

“My son and youngest daughter can’t get houses because it’s too full,” said De Vos, amid anger over a perception that asylum-seekers get priority for low-cost housing.—APP

Qazi services unforgettable, says, Bakhtawari

CHAKWAL: Secretary General of the UBG, Zafar Bakhtawari, has said that Qazi Muhammad Akbar, the group leader of the Chakwal Chamber of Commerce, was a great and compassionate personality who played a vital role in giving Chakwal a distinguished identity at the national level. He remained active in serving the business community and the public until his last breath. He expressed these views while addressing a condolence reference held in Chakwal in memory of Qazi Muhammad Akbar, organized by Khurram Abbasi, also known as Khurram Tony. Zafar Bakhtawari said that Qazi Muhammad Akbar rendered remarkable services in promoting the Chakwal Chamber of Commerce across the country and also brought pride to Chakwal as the Vice President of FPCCI. He established strong relations with the chambers of Islamabad and other parts of the country and built a strong team in Chakwal that continues to uphold the positive identity of the chamber today. He said the services of Qazi Muhammad Akbar are unforgettable — from the establishment of the Chakwal Chamber to his meeting with the Prime Minister for the Neelam Dullah Interchange and efforts for setting up an industrial zone. Bakhtawari added that Qazi Akbar had also advised his sons that “Chakwal is our identity, and we must always take care of this chamber and its people.” He further said that Khurram Abbasi, also known as Khurram Tony, is a man of great heart who has paid tribute to the late Qazi Akbar by organizing this condolence reference. “May Allah bless Khurram Abbasi with prosperity and grant Qazi Muhammad Akbar the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdaus,” he prayed. Speaking on the occasion, Khurram Abbasi (Khurram Tony) said that people like Qazi Muhammad Akbar — sincere, kindhearted, and well-mannered — are born rarely. He possessed deep sympathy for traders, common citizens, and the needy. This condolence reference, he said, is an effort to pay tribute to his lifelong services. Chakwal Chamber of Commerce Group Leader Khawaja Arif Yousaf said that both Qazi Muhammad Akbar and Zafar Bakhtawari played a foundational role in the establishment of the Chakwal Chamber. “In the early days of challenges, it was their guidance that helped us find the right direction,” he said. He added that Qazi Akbar always took practical steps to solve traders’ problems — from distributing ration during the COVID pandemic to efforts for the Neelam Dullah Interchange and the establishment of an industrial zone. “We have decided to dedicate a block in the new building of the Chakwal Chamber in the name of Qazi Muhammad Akbar so that his services may always be remembered,” he announced. Addressing the gathering, Qazi Akbar’s son, Qazi Muhammad Usman, expressed gratitude to Khurram Abbasi (Khurram Tony), Zafar Bakhtawari, and all the guests who remembered his father’s services. “It is an honor for me that my father’s sincere companions still stand with us in his remembrance. My father earned respect, and we are determined to continue his mission,” he said. He requested Zafar Bakhtawari to continue his patronage of the Chakwal Chamber as he did during his father’s lifetime. “The chamber needs sincere and selfless people like him, and we will keep following my father’s footsteps,” he added. Former President of the Chakwal Chamber, Haji Nazir Sultan, said that the late Qazi Akbar will always be remembered for connecting Chakwal’s business community with the chamber. The condolence reference was also attended by President of Chakwal Chamber Aamir Najeeb Bhutta, Shehzad Saadat, Khurram Kamran, Haji Murtaza, Malik Hafeez Anjum, Sufi Mushtaq, and others. In the end, special prayers were offered for the elevation of the departed soul and for the continuation of his mission.—DNA

Istanbul ranked among Europe’s top city breaks

KARACHI: Set across Asia and Europe along the Bosphorus Strait, Istanbul continues to charm travellers with its historic landmarks, vibrant culture, and dynamic culinary scene. The city welcomed 13.5 million visitors in the first nine months of 2025 and was recently ranked among Europe’s top five city breaks by consumer champion Which?, while Condé Nast Traveller readers also named it one of the best family-friendly destinations. As autumn arrives, Istanbul’s timeless appeal makes it an ideal getaway for those seeking both cultural discovery and modern comfort. With its rich heritage shaped by empires over millennia, Istanbul seamlessly blends history with contem-

porary life. The UNESCO-listed Historical Peninsula, home to the Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Basilica Cistern, and Topkapı Palace, remains a living testament to the city’s past. Nearby, the Grand Bazaar and Spice Bazaar immerse visitors in a world of colours and aromas, echoing Istanbul’s centuries-old trading spirit. Beyond its historic core, the Bosphorus Strait offers a spectacular experience unique to the world’s only city spanning two continents. A ferry ride reveals panoramic views of palaces, mosques, and elegant waterfront mansions, while neighbourhoods like Karaköy, Galataport, and Stiklal Street pulse with art, music, and café culture. Venues such as Istanbul Modern, Ar-

ter, and the Atatürk Cultural Center further highlight the city’s creative vibrancy.

This season, Istanbul’s cultural calendar is packed with major exhibitions and festivals. Highlights include The Art of James Cameron at the Istanbul Cinema Museum, The Haunted Eye by Steve McCurry, the Istanbul Biennial, and the 29th Istanbul Theatre Festival, and Ars Electronica at Zorlu PSM. Visitors can also indulge in the city’s famed cuisine, from traditional breakfasts and bustling street food to MICHELIN-starred dining. With its unique blend of past and present, Istanbul continues to bridge continents and capture hearts.

Hundreds of Syrians in Libya take up offer of free tickets home

TRIPOLI: Hundreds of Syrian refugees living in Libya poured into a travel agency in Tripoli to take advantage of an offer of free tickets to Damascus, AFP journalists saw. By midday, more than 700 Syrians, many of them residing in Libya for years after fleeing their country’s civil war, had come to collect tickets and travel passes from the agency commissioned by the new authorities in Damascus. In all, thousands have taken up the offer since the Syrian Arab Republic’s Foreign Ministry first announced it. Walid Hamud, a 32-year-old refugee who arrived five years ago, acknowledged that “the situation still is not very stable” back home, but nonetheless wanted to return, while keeping open the possibility of coming back to Libya for work “legally with a residence permit”. Fellow refugee Rami Hassun fled Idlib province in 2020 because his life was in danger, he said. “Today, Syria is finding peace and is in a better situation than before. We are returning to our country, thank God,” he said. Once there, “we will strive to work and rebuild everything, given the scale of the destruction”, said Mahmoud Nasr Al-Din, who has been in Libya for three years.—APP

Koike heads to Arab region to boost ties with Tokyo

TOKYO: Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko will join the Future Investment Initiative in Riyadh on Tuesday as she embarks on a tour taking her to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Egypt. The trip aims to highlight the Japanese capital’s dynamic appeal, while also offering the governor the chance to explore a region she believes is flourishing with new investment opportunities. She will attend the FII’s ninth edition to present Tokyo’s initiatives to establish itself as a leading hub for innovation and finance in Asia. Koike also hopes to develop meaningful connections and foster a sense of shared prosperity and mutual gain for both Tokyo and the Arab nations. She arrived in the UAE’s Abu Dhabi on Sunday and attended the 2025 Asia-Pacific Cities Summit and Mayors’ Forum, which runs from Oct. 27-29 and is hosted by Expo City Dubai at the Dubai Exhibition Centre. Koike was a key speaker on Monday at the forum, which is held under the patronage of Crown Prince of Dubai and UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum.—APP

Two climbers die on Nepal’s mountain

KATMANDU: A mountaineer from France and another from South Korea died during expeditions to Nepal’s Mount Ama Dablam, a picturesque but difficult peak to climb, a tourism director said Monday. French climber Hugo Lucio Colonia Lazaro, 65, fell sick while descending the 6,812-meter (22,349-foot) peak last week. “He was flown to Katmandu on a helicopter on Wednesday and passed away the next day,” Tourism Department Director Himel Gautam said. South Korean climber Hong Khy Park, 66, died between Camp 1 and Camp 2 while ascending Mount Ama Dablam on Saturday, according to the department, which did not specify the cause of death. “Our department has been consulting with concerned agencies to take back their dead bodies to their respective countries,” said Gautam. Ama Dablam, which lies in Nepal’s Khumbu region, is considered a technically challenging mountain with steep faces. Nearly 400 climbers were on the mountain this autumn season, which usually runs from late August to November Home to eight of the world’s 10 highest peaks, including Mount Everest, Nepal welcomes hundreds of climbers every year. Autumn expeditions on the Himalayas are less popular because of the shorter, colder days, snowy terrain and a narrow summit window compared to the busy spring.—APP

Briefs

Turkey court orders arrest of Istanbul's jailed mayor Ekrem

Ekrem Imamoglu denies all charges against him as "slander, lie and conspiracy"

DNA

ISTANBUL: A Turkish court has issued another formal arrest order for Istanbul's jailed mayor Ekrem Imamoglu on suspicion of "political espionage", state-owned Anadolu news agency said on Monday, stepping up a long-running opposition crackdown. Imamoglu, a key rival of President Tayyip Erdogan, who has been in jail since March pending trial on separate corruption charges, received a fresh jail sentence in July for insulting and threatening the chief Istanbul prosecutor. Imamoglu denies all charges against him. He denied the latest charge in court on Sunday and in a statement from prison on Friday. "Such a slander, lie and conspiracy wouldn't even cross the devil's mind!" he said on X. "We are facing a shameful indecency that can't be described with words." Anadolu said an Istanbul court issued the arrest order overnight for Imamoglu and two others, including Merdan Yanardag, editor-in-chief of television news channel Tele1.

Indian minister shifts responsibility to Australian women players

BJP leader says star athletes often underestimate fan frenzy following incident during ICC Women's World Cup

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Madhya Pradesh cabinet minister Kaishav Vijayvargiya of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has framed last week's alleged molestation of two Australian women cricketers in Indore as a "lesson" in player precautions, urging athletes to alert security or local authorities before leaving team venues. Vijayvargiya said star athletes often underestimate public frenzy and should factor that into their movements. "Sometimes, players don't realise their popularity... they should be careful. This incident has happened; it's a lesson for everyone," he said, adding that teams ought to inform security or administration "before leaving." He reiterated to local media that while there was a security lapse, players also share responsibility to coordinate movements. Two members of Australia's women's cricket team were allegedly harassed and inappropriately touched by a motorcyclist while walking to a cafe in the central Indian city of Indore on Thursday morning, prompting a swift police operation and an arrest within hours, officials and local media said.

Kundi seeks PM help on wheat movement issue

DNA

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday sought the intervention of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif against "unconstitutional restrictions" on the inter-provincial movement of wheat to the province. The development comes as the Punjab government has faced criticism by the KP and Sindh governments for choking wheat flow to the two provinces. However, a day earlier, Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari insisted that there was no ban on the inter-provincial movement of wheat, terming the "ongoing propaganda in this regard baseless and contrary to facts".

Pakistan, Bangladesh vow to expand military-to-military engagements

CJCSC Gen Mirza meets Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus during official visit to country

DNA

DHAKA: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Sahir Shamshad Mirza has met Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, with both sides underscoring the significance of strengthening bilateral defence and security cooperation, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Monday. "During the separately-held meetings, both sides held detailed discussion on the evolving global and regional environment and security situation," the military's media wing said. It added that Gen Mirza reaffirmed Pakistan's appreciation for its longstanding fraternal ties with Bangladesh and highlighted the shared resolve to further deepen these relations on the basis of sovereign equality and mutual respect. "Both sides expressed optimism about improving defence and security collaboration and reaffirmed their commitment to expanding military-to-military engagements and related initiatives," the ISPR added. Furthermore, the CJCSC also visited School of Infantry and Tactics, Sylhet and interacted with faculty and students where the civil-military leadership of Bangladesh appreciated the high professional standards of Pakistan's armed forces and their achievements



and sacrifices in fight against terrorism. During his time in Bangladesh, Gen Mirza also met the country's Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Mohammad Nazmul Hassan, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan and Principal Staff Officer (PSO), Armed Forces Division of Bangladesh Lieutenant General SM Kamrul Hassan. The visit comes against the backdrop of improving relations between the two countries ever since ouster for Bangladesh's former prime minister Sheikh Hasina via a student-led movement in August 2024. Up to 1,400 people were killed between July and August 2024, according to the United Nations. Relations between India and Bangladesh's new government have been frosty since then, allowing Islamabad and Dhaka to slowly rebuild ties. Last year, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met Bangladesh's Yunus on the sidelines of the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly in September. Meanwhile, Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar also met the Bangladesh's chief adviser in August 2025 during an official visit aiming to strengthen regional and bilateral cooperation between the two countries. In February this year, Islamabad and Dhaka also started direct government-to-government trade, after decades of troubled relations, with imports of 50,000 tonnes of rice.

DPM Dar reaffirms Pakistan's unwavering Support to just struggle of Kashmiri people

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering political, moral and diplomatic support to the just struggle of Kashmiri people saying Pakistan will continue to raise its voice at every international forum until the realization of Kashmiris' legitimate right to self-determination. "On this Day, Pakistan calls upon the international community to play their due role in bringing an end to the suffering of the people in IIOJK. Their plight deserves not only attention but also meaningful action," the deputy PM said in his message in connection with Kashmir Black Day. He recalled the dark events of 27 October 1947, when Indian troops landed in Srinagar to enforce India's illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir. In the last seventy-eight years, the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) have suffered a systematic and relentless campaign of tyranny, oppression and subjugation at the hands of Indian occupation forces. "The UN Security Council, in a series of landmark resolutions, had unequivocally affirmed that the final disposition of Jammu and Kashmir would be determined through a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations," he said adding that India has blatantly defied these binding resolutions, choosing instead to tighten its grip on the occupied territory through sheer force and repression. Pakistan, on its part, has always remained committed to the sanctity and centrality of UN Security Council resolutions on Jammu & Kashmir. We have consistently recognized as well as emphasized the critical role of the international community in securing a just and lasting

solution to this long festering dispute in our region. The human tragedy in IIOJK, he said has even worsened in the last six years following India's illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019. "The revocation of the special status of IIOJK, followed by the imposition of draconian laws, demographic changes triggered by the issuance of a barrage of domiciles to non-residents, and the imprisonment of the legitimate Kashmiri leadership have become the defining features of the Indian occupation. These measures are yet again a manifestation of India's utter disregard of the UN Charter, the UN Security Council resolutions and the 4th Geneva Convention." Ishaq Dar said in the aftermath of the Pahalgam Attack, the Indian authorities launched another sweeping crackdown in IIOJK, subjecting thousands of Kashmiris to arbitrary detention and interrogation, while also carrying out demolition of homes of innocent residents in the occupied territory. "These developments added to a long record of India's human rights violations and atrocities in IIOJK that have been well documented by the UN bodies and international human rights organizations." The DPM/FM pointed out that yet, even in the face of such overwhelming adversity, the people of IIOJK have shown remarkable resilience, courage, dignity and perseverance. Their struggle remains unflinching, constantly reminding us of their unyielding quest to attain the right to self-determination. "The recent hostilities between Pakistan and India have once again demonstrated how the Indian intransigence on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute and its defiance of international law pose a grave threat to peace and stability in South Asia. - APP

CJCSC General Sahir visits Maldives; global, regional security environment discussed

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Sahir Shamshad Mirza undertook an official visit to Maldives and discussed with the country's leadership the evolving global and regional security environment and issues of mutual interest, including bilateral defence and security cooperation. During the visit, CJCSC called on President of Maldives Dr. Mohamed Muizzu, Defence Minister Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon and Chief of Defence Force of Maldives Major General Ibrahim Hilmy, according to a press release of Pakistan's High Commission in Maldives received Monday. Pakistan's High Commissioner to Maldives Vice Admiral (R) Faisal Rasul Lodhi, accompanied the CJCSC and his delegation throughout the official engagements. During the discussions, the leadership on both sides acknowledged and reaffirmed the historic brotherly relationship between the two countries. It was underscored that the bilateral relations were based on a strong foundation of shared faith, mutual respect for each other's sovereign values, and an unwavering mutual trust. Both sides also considered avenues to further enhance military-to-military engagements between the two countries and reaffirmed the shared commitment to further strengthening the partnership. The civil-military leadership of the Maldives lauded the professionalism of Pakistan's armed forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. Earlier, upon arrival at MNDF Headquarters, the smartly turned-out contingent presented a guard of honour to CJCSC. Meanwhile, the CJCSC, along with his delegation, also met Pakistan's High Commissioner Vice Admiral (r) Faisal Rasul Lodhi at Pakistan's High Commission in Hulhumale. - APP

NCCIA set for major surgery

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) is all set for a major surgery amid reports of an alleged cybercrime mafia operating within the institution. Informed sources said that changes are being made at the top level in the NCCIA and senior police officer Syed Khurram Ali is being brought in as a replacement. However, in a far more serious step, harsh disciplinary actions will be taken against several officers belonging to the agency after allegations surfaced about the alleged cybercrime mafia operating

within the institution. Sources said that many such officials may be terminated from their jobs, besides facing comprehensive investigations into their alleged involvement in corruption, misuse of authority, and financial misconduct. The probe will focus on irregularities in recruitment, fraudulent upgradation of posts, and promotions obtained through falsified records. Additionally, all previously suppressed inquiries and criminal cases against these officers are being reopened for fresh investigation. Authorities have also ordered a money-laundering investigation, alongside scrutiny of the officers' foreign trips, overseas fund transfers and digital financial activities. The inquiry will extend to their cryptocurrency holdings, including bitcoins and other digital assets allegedly moved to personal or fake accounts.

Export-led growth vital for economy: Bilal Azhar



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani said on Monday that export-led growth was essential to stabilise the economy, as he presented a screenshot of the country's improving financial situation achieved through the efforts of the government. During a media talk in Islamabad, Kayani expounded on the improvement in Pakistan's economy over the last 1.5 years, highlighting that the target of primary balance had been

achieved. He said the country saw a 26 per cent increase in tax collection during the last fiscal year despite modest gross domestic product (GDP) growth and a low inflation rate. "We also increased the Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR's) tax-to-GDP ratio and decreased the inflation from 33pc to 4.5pc," Kayani mentioned. The ratio, he specified, saw a 1.4pc increase, going from 8.8pc to around 10.2 to 10.3pc. "We posted the first current account surplus in 14 years, which is also the largest current account surplus in 22 years," he said, adding that foreign exchange reserves were one of the most important parts of the economy. "When the current account is in surplus, our foreign exchange reserves are stabilised," Kayani explained, pointing out that the policy rate had been halved, going from 22pc to 11pc, as a result of controlling inflation. The minister said the target of the primary balance had been achieved despite no mini budget last year. Acknowledging the privatisation of First Women Bank Ltd (FWBL) earlier this month, Kayani said progress in the privatisation of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) was expected soon. On October 18, FWBL was acquired by Abu Dhabi-based International Holding Company, which Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif hailed as a milestone in Pakistan-UAE economic ties, saying the deal would pave the way for more joint ventures and partnerships across diverse sectors.

Pakistan, EU delegation agree to strengthen GSP+ partnership

Minister raised key trade issues, including the withdrawal of duty concessions on ethanol exports and the geographical indication (GI) dispute over Basmati rice, urging the EU for a fair and equitable resolution to protect Pakistan's rural economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the European Parliament have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening partnership under the GSP+ framework, with a focus on trade, investment, human rights, and sustainable development. A high-level delegation from the European Parliament's Committee on Development visited the Ministry of Commerce in Islamabad on Monday, where Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan held a detailed meeting with the delegation. During the meeting, both sides discussed avenues to enhance cooperation in trade, investment, and human rights, emphasizing the importance of transparency and sustainable growth in Pakistan-EU relations. Minister Jam Kamal Khan underscored that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with the European Union, highlighting the country's ongoing reforms and progress in key areas including labor rights, climate action, and social protection. He informed the delegation about Pakistan's achievements, noting that the country's election to

the UN Human Rights Council for 2026-2028 reflects international confidence in Pakistan's commitment to human rights. He also mentioned that the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) has attained 'A-status' accreditation, a recognition of Pakistan's progress in institutional reforms. The Minister highlighted significant legislative developments, including the Islamabad Child Marriage Restraint Act 2025, as well as new laws for journalists' protection and promotion of interfaith harmony. Discussing the economic landscape, Jam Kamal Khan noted that the policy interest rate has been reduced from 22% to 11%, signaling stability and recovery in Pakistan's economy. He emphasized that the country's future lies in industrial expansion and skilled human resources, adding that 60% of Pakistan's population is under 30, making vocational and technical training a top government priority. Inviting European investors, the Minister encouraged enhanced investments in agriculture, food processing, industry, and e-commerce sectors. He also raised key trade issues, including the withdrawal of duty concessions on ethanol exports and the geographical indication (GI) dispute over Basmati rice, urging the EU for a fair and equitable resolution to protect Pakistan's rural economy. The Minister further sought EU cooperation on the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and other environmental regulations to ensure a balanced transition toward green trade practices. Members of the European Parliament praised Pakistan's transparency, reforms, and commitment to human capital development, acknowledging the government's efforts in advancing good governance and sustainable progress. Both sides also exchanged views on global peace, education, and economic collaboration.

WATER TASTES BEST IN GLASS!!

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