



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan attaches due importance to ties with SCO: Dar

Detailed News On Page-08

Japan to continue supporting Pak in various fields

Detailed News On Page-07



US to sell F 35 to Saudi Arabia, Donald Trump

Detailed News On Page-08



In various KP areas

23 India-backed terrorists killed

Suicide bomber detonated himself near police station in Bannu with no additional casualties reported, say police

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Security forces have killed at least 23 terrorists, including a ringleader affiliated with Indian proxy Fitna al-Khawarij, in two separate intelligence-based operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Tuesday. The military's media wing in a statement said that the operations took place between November 8 and 9 against the India-backed terrorists. "On reported presence of khawarij, an intelligence-based operation was conducted by the security forces in general area Kulachi, Dera Ismail Khan district," the ISPR said and added that during the conduct of the operation, 10 terrorists, including the ringleader, Alam Mehsud, were killed. It added that five more terrorists were successfully neutralised in another intelligence-based operation conducted in the general area of Datta Khel, North Waziristan district. "Sanitisation operations are being conducted to eliminate any other Indian-sponsored kharij found in the area as relentless Counter Terrorism campaign under vision "Azm e Istehkam" (as approved by federal apex committee on National Action Plan) by security forces and law enforcement agencies of Pakistan will continue at full pace to wipe out menace of foreign-sponsored and supported

US Envoy condemns Islamabad bomb blast

ISLAMABAD: Acting United States Ambassador Natalie Baker met with Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday, condemning the recent Islamabad blast and expressing deep sympathy for the families of those who lost their lives. During the meeting, Baker paid tribute to Pakistan's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism and acknowledged the country's continued commitment to regional security. She also praised Pakistan's counter terrorism efforts, reaffirming Washington's support for ongoing cooperation. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi briefed the US envoy on the incident, stating that the attacker intended to target a court but was unable to enter due to strict security measures. "All individuals linked to the attack have been traced, the facilitators arrested, and a comprehensive investigation is underway," Naqvi said. The minister reiterated that "talks and terrorist attacks cannot go hand in hand," emphasizing Pakistan's resolve against militancy. He added that Pakistan-US relations are rooted in friendship and mutual trust. Inspector General of Islamabad Police and other senior officials were also present during the meeting. - DNA

terrorism from the country," the military's media wing added. Separately, a suicide bomber was killed after detonating himself near a police station in Bannu, with no additional casualties reported, police said on Tuesday. The incident took place at the Do Ghora Bridge just a few steps from the Basia Khel police station, where a motorcyclist detonated himself, according to the Bannu Police. A motorcycle and the body of the attacker were found at the scene. A heavy contingent of law enforce-

ment reached the site immediately and cordoned off the area as an investigation has been launched into the explosion. The explosion follows a suicide blast at Islamabad's Judicial Complex on November 11 that left 12 people martyred and at least 36 wounded, including lawyers and petitioners. The federal government had arrested four members of a Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan/Fitna al-Khawarij (TTP/FAK) cell linked to the suicide attack at the Islamabad District Judicial Complex, G-11.

Bilawal Bhutto says

PPP has a three generation long relationship with AJK

Chairman Bilawal directed the elected AJK Prime Minister Faisal Muntaz Rathore to visit every nook and corner of AJK in his capacity as Prime Minister and hold open kachehris, as Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto once did

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, while addressing an event in Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), said that the PPP's relationship with the Kashmiri people spans three generations, and no one can drive a wedge between them. Chairman Bilawal directed the elected AJK Prime Minister Faisal Muntaz Rathore to visit every nook and corner of AJK in his capacity as Prime Minister and hold open kachehris, as Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto once did. He emphasised that the Prime Minister must go to the people and address their issues. He added that he would request the federal government to extend all necessary support for the people of Kashmir. The Chairman said that PPP AJK President Chaudhry Yasin will lead the party's election campaign ahead of the elections scheduled to take place in six months. He instructed the party's ticket holders to coordinate with

Continued on Page 06

Raja Faisal Rathore takes oath as AJK PM

Rathore becomes 16th AJK PM and fourth of current assembly

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) Raja Faisal Rathore was sworn in as the new prime minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, a day after securing the assembly's vote to replace the ousted Anwarul Haq. Rathore was administered the oath by AJK Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Lateef Akbar during a ceremony in Muzaffarabad, which was attended by Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governors.

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President, PM praise security forces

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday praised the security forces for killing 15 terrorists in two different operations carried out in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The president and prime minister, in their separately issued statements, commended the security forces and their successful strategy during the operations in the Kolachi area of Dera Ismail Khan and Datta Khel of North Waziristan, in which terrorists of India-backed Fitna al-Khawarij, including ringleader Alam Mehsud were killed. They said that the ongoing anti-terrorism operation under "Azm-e-Istehkam" manifested the nation's collective efforts to

Continued on Page 06

Several websites face outage worldwide

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Cloudflare on Tuesday suffered disruptions and triggered downtime on popular websites like X, as confirmed by the official Cloudflare Status page. "Cloudflare is aware of, and investigating an issue which potentially impacts multiple customers: Widespread 500 errors, Cloudflare Dashboard and API also failing" the company said in a new update. "We are working to understand the full impact and mitigate this problem. More updates to follow shortly," it added. Tracking website Down Detector was also hit by the technical problems itself.

Palestinian foreign ministry welcomes UN Gaza vote

DNA

RAMALLAH: The Palestinian foreign ministry on Tuesday hailed the UN Security Council's vote in favour of US President Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan, and called for its swift implementation on the ground. "State of Palestine welcomes the UN resolution on Gaza," the foreign ministry said in a statement on X, stressing "the urgent need to immediately implement this resolution on the ground". The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has hailed Donald Trump's

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: President of Sikhs of America, Mr. Jasdeep Singh calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif; Federal Minister for Law and Justice Mr. Azam Nazir Tarrar and Mr. Sajid Tarrar are also present (Tuesday, 18 November 2025. - DNA)

Gohar slams article

TTAP stages rally against 27th Amend

Opposition alliance announces observing "Black Day" on November 21

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The joint opposition alliance, Tehreek Tahaffuz-e-Ayeen-Pakistan (TTAP), on Tuesday held a protest rally against the 27th Constitutional Amendment, marching from Parliament House to the Supreme Court. TTAP chief Mahmood Khan Achakzai and other leaders, including Allama Raja Nasir Abbas, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, members of parliament, lawyers, and workers, participated in the demonstration before dispersing. The TTAP alliance also announced observing a nationwide "Black Day" to protest what it termed the "ongoing constitutional violations" in the country. Speaking to newsmen, Allama Abbas said that the march symbolised their struggle for the "protection" of the Constitution, adding that all roads to justice have been "closed" in Pakistan. "We walked from parliament to the Supreme Court to highlight how all avenues of justice have been closed for the people of Pakistan," he stated. Allama Abbas said the unanimously agreed-upon Constitution has been turned

into a "contested document". He said that no legislation should contradict the spirit of the Constitution. The TTAP leader went on to say that freedom of expression is being "suppressed" in Pakistan. "People have been silenced, fundamental human rights are being violated, and we will not remain quiet as long as we live," he remarked. Announcing future course of action, Allama Abbas said that they would observe "Black Day" across the country next Friday, with supporters wearing black armbands. He added that a national conference is also being convened as part of the ongoing movement. It is to be noted here that last week, parliament passed the 27th Constitutional Amendment with a two-thirds majority, changing the judicial structure and military command. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Tuesday strongly condemned what he described as a "malicious and fabricated" article circulating in the media against former First Lady Bushra Bibi. He said the piece was part of a deliberate campaign to malign her character and

Continued on Page 06



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Briefs

Pak-Thailand bilateral political consultations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 3rd Round of Pakistan-Thailand Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) was held in Islamabad on 18 November 2025. The Pakistan side was led by the Additional Foreign Secretary (Asia & Pacific) Mr. Imran Ahmed Siddique, while H.E Mrs. Sirilak Ni-yom, Deputy Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs led the Thailand side. The two sides reviewed the entire spectrum of Pakistan-Thailand bilateral relationship and reaffirmed the commitment to further enhancing cooperation, inter alia, in the areas of trade and investment, development, education and people to people exchanges. Both sides resolved to strengthen ties between two countries and upgrade this enduring partnership.

RCCI delegation meet Uzbekistan Ambassador

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A high-level delegation from the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), led by President Usman Shaukat and Group Leader Sohail Altaf, visited the Embassy of Uzbekistan and held talks with Ambassador Alisher Tukhtaev. During the meeting, President Usman Shaukat thanked the Ambassador and his team for their extensive support in organizing RCCI's Business Opportunity Conference and International Achievement Awards, which was held in Tashkent earlier this month. He highlighted that the Embassy's facilitation and warm hospitality were instrumental in the events' success and in strengthening bilateral trade ties between Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

After the 27th Amend. 3 key judicial bodies reconstituted

Following these changes, Supreme Court's Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail has been included in the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) and the Practice and Procedure Committee while Federal Constitutional Court's (FCC) Justice Aamer Farooq has been made a member of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP)

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: As the dust settles after the passage of the 27th Amendment Constitutional Amendment, changes have been made to key constitutional and statutory judicial bodies. Following these changes, Supreme Court's Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail has been included in the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) and the Practice and Procedure Committee while Federal Constitutional Court's (FCC) Justice Aamer Farooq has been made a member of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP). Among the three statutory bodies, the SJC is the top forum for judicial accountability that probes allegations of misconduct against judges, the Practice and Procedure Committee forms benches and fixes cases, and the JCP is responsible for appointing judges to the superior judiciary. Changes in their composition were required to synchronise them with the latest constitutional amendment. A Supreme Court (SC) press release issued on Tuesday said: "Pursuant to the 27th Constitutional Amendment, [these] key constitutional and statutory judicial bodies [...] have been reconstituted in accordance with the re-

vised constitutional framework." Elaborating on the changes in the bodies' composition, the press release said that Justice Mandokhail, being the second-most senior judge of the SC, had been jointly nominated by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi and FCC Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan as a member of the SJC. Now, apart from Justice Mandokhail, the SJC will comprise the CJP, FCC CJ Aminuddin, Justice Munib Akhtar of the SC, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi of the FCC, Lahore High Court (LHC) CJ Aalia Neelum and Islamabad High Court (IHC) CJ Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar. According to the 27th Amendment, the SJC will be headed by the senior most judge between the CJP and FCC chief justice. The inter-se seniority in this case will be determined by the dates of their appointment as the chief justices of the SC and FCC. This means that CJP Yahya will continue to head the body. The SC press release also added that the two judges had nominated Justice Mandokhail as a member of Practice and Procedure Committee. Under the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure), Act 2023, the three-judge committee will now comprise the CJP, Justice Akhtar and

Continued on Page 06

Underprivileged segments protection govt's priority: Afridi

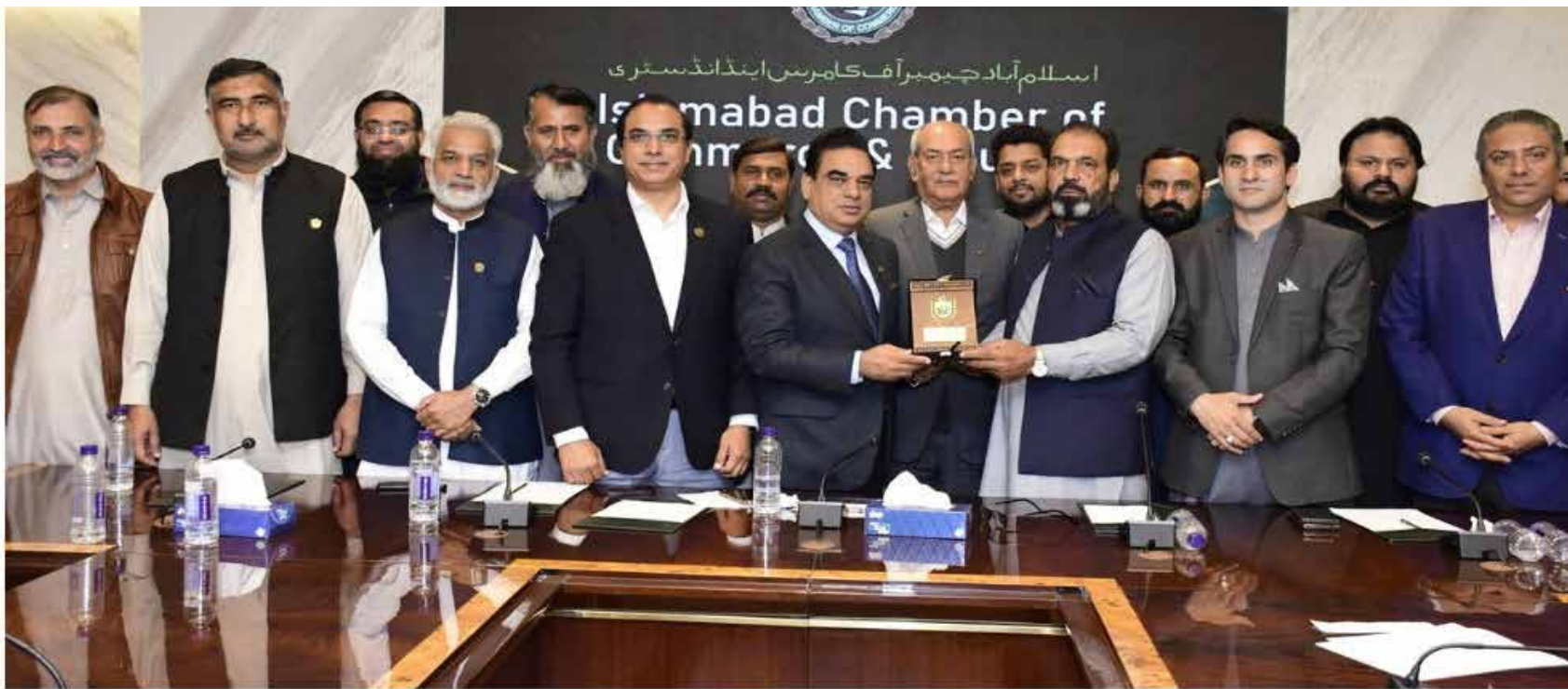
PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sohail Afridi here Tuesday summoned persons with disabilities, sick citizens, and individuals residing in shelter homes to the Chief Minister's Secretariat and listened to their problems. Chief Minister heard their issues, and issued directives to the concerned authorities for their immediate resolution. Special instructions for patients awaiting treatment for eye and heart diseases were issued. He assured citizens of prompt assistance. On this occasion, he also instructed the concerned officials to resolve the issues of persons with disabilities on a priority basis. Furthermore, Sohail Afridi took immediate notice of the issue raised by a citizen from the shelter home and ordered its resolution. The Chief Minister said that they have been given the mandate to serve the public, and serving the people of the province is their top priority. He said they are following the path of welfare-oriented governance. —APP

Landikotal residents praise Army medical team

PESHAWAR: A free medical camp was held in Landikotal with support from FC North. Over 1200 patients received free medical check ups. Patients were also given free medicines. The camp organizer stated that multiple specialists treated people. Medical surgical and physiotherapy experts were present. Children specialists and pediatric doctors examined patients. They also distributed free medicines. Local elders and residents thanked the army medical teams. They appreciated the free medical service for poor people. The community requested that such camps be held again in the future. They promised their full cooperation with the armed forces. They assured full support for all future initiatives. —APP

Security beefed up at tri-junction of Punjab, KP, Balochistan

DERA GHAZI KHAN: Security has been significantly strengthened across the border regions adjoining Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Dera Ghazi Khan, Muhammad Usman Khalid. The Border Military Police (BMP), led by Commandant Amir Taimoor Khan, has intensified monitoring and deployed additional personnel to ensure foolproof security in these sensitive zones. Commandant Amir Taimoor Khan conducted an extensive visit to various strategic locations across the Koh-e-Sulaiman range. He inspected key entry and exit points situated at the tri-junction of Punjab, KP, and Balochistan, reviewing security checks, personnel deployment, and overall operational preparedness. —APP



ISLAMABAD: ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mahmood giving shield to Raja Zulfikar, President of Traders Welfare Association G/9 Markaz. Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, Vice President Irfan Chaudhry, General Secretary G-9 Markaz Shahid Abbasi, Former Senior Vice Presidents Khalid Chaudhry, Naveed Malik, Executive Member Zulqarnain Abbasi, ICCI Member Israr-ul-Haq Mashwani and others are present on this occasion.

Pak, Denmark vow to strengthen economic ties

ISLAMABAD: The newly appointed Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan Maja Mortensen on Tuesday paid a courtesy call on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and expressed her enthusiasm for commencing her diplomatic tenure in Pakistan. She noted the depth and vibrancy of the longstanding bilateral relations between Denmark and Pakistan, highlighting that three Danish delegations are visiting Pakistan this week which is an indication of the growing engagement between the two countries. She appreciated the warm welcome she has received since her arrival and discussed the strong commercial interest Danish companies continue to maintain in Pakistan, including engagements in logistics, maritime infrastructure, manufacturing, and energy, said a press release. The Ambassador noted that several firms remain keen to expand operations and emphasized Denmark's readiness to work closely with Pakistani authorities to facilitate consistent and transparent business conditions.

The two sides discussed ongoing initiatives such as the forthcoming meetings under the GCC framework, the interest of Danish entities in Pakistan's port and logistics ecosystem, and the wide-ranging potential for collaboration in green transition, energy efficiency, and technological innovation.

Ambassador Mortensen highlighted Denmark's comprehensive government-to-government cooperation program in the energy sector, supported by the Danish Energy Agency, which focuses on energy modelling, infrastructure planning, grid efficiency, and capacity building. The Finance Minister extended his felicitations to the Ambassador on her new assignment and welcomed her to Pakistan. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening ties with Denmark, particularly in trade, investment, energy cooperation, and sustainable development.

The Minister noted that Pakistan's macroeconomic fundamentals have significantly improved, citing enhanced foreign exchange reserves, declining inflation, a stable currency, and strengthened relationships with major international partners including the United States, China, GCC countries, and the European Union. Senator Aurangzeb also emphasized the government's focus on enabling foreign investors, acknowledging past challenges faced by some companies. He assured that Pakistan has cleared outstanding foreign payment backlogs and is maintaining a positive trajectory in its fiscal and monetary stabilization efforts. He highlighted key reforms underway,

including broadening the tax base, enhancing compliance, reducing leakages in the energy sector, and lowering financing costs as inflation continues to decrease.

The Minister was also briefed on Denmark's major waste water treatment project in Faisalabad, one of the largest in the region, being implemented in partnership with WASA, with Danish financing that includes a significant grant component. The project will feature a six-year engagement model to ensure sustainability and effective knowledge transfer.

Ambassador Mortensen expressed interest in engaging with the Danish Business Club in Pakistan and undertaking visits to Lahore and Karachi in the coming weeks to meet industry leaders and strengthen commercial ties.

The Minister and the Ambassador also exchanged views on climate finance reforms. A team member from the Ministry highlighted Denmark's global leadership in climate financing frameworks and the growing role of Ministries of Finance worldwide in mainstreaming climate resilience within national budgeting processes.

The Minister concurred, noting Pakistan's active participation in related global forums and the integration of sustainable development objectives within the Ministry of Finance. —DNA

Tehsildar Fateh Jang Shafqat's major action against land mafia

FATEH JANG: 31-year-old encroachment of 87 kanals of land of a widow woman was released. The widow and her daughters, residents of Fateh Jang village Sadkal, applied to Tehsildar Fateh Jang Chaudhry Shafqat Mahmood that our 87 kanals of land, which has been occupied by the encroachment mafia for 31 years, should be released. The mafia has occupied our land and now our house has also been occupied and we are being threatened. Taking immediate action, Chaudhry Shafqat Mahmood along with his

team and police reached the spot and recovered the land and handed it over to the affected women. On this occasion, the affected women said that we had earlier submitted applications to various institutions but we were not heard. Then we submitted an application to Tehsildar Chaudhry Shafqat Mahmood, on which he immediately took action and handed over 87 kanals of land to us after recovering the 31-year-old possession. The affected women prayed to Chaudhry Shafqat Mahmood in abundance And he further said that we

are grateful to Chaudhry Shafqat Mahmood for this successful action and always pray for his success. On this occasion, Tehsildar Fateh Jang Chaudhry Shafqat Mahmood said that the occupation of the land of the poor, needy, orphans and widows will not be tolerated under any circumstances. And no concession will be made against the land grabbing mafia. The public has highly appreciated and paid tribute to this successful action of Tehsildar Fateh Jang Chaudhry Shafqat Mahmood. —DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousaf in a meeting with The Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan Dr. Ihab Mohamed Abdelhamid Hassan.

ISSI launches book on Pakistan-Russia ties

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), through its Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP), hosted the launch ceremony for its new edited book, Pakistan-Russia Relations: A Comprehensive Historical and Strategic Analysis. The event gathered senior diplomats, academics, policymakers and contributors from both countries, reflecting the rising importance of Pakistan-Russia engagement in a rapidly shifting geopolitical landscape. Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed was Chief Guest on the occasion, while Russian Ambassador to Pakistan Albert P. Khorev joined as Guest of Honour. DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, in his introductory remarks, highlighted that Pakistan-Russia relations have undergone a significant evolution over the past 75 years transitioning from Cold War divergence to growing convergence across diplomatic, economic and strategic domains. He recalled that despite early geopolitical constraints, the relationship never fully broke down, as demonstrated by Soviet support for Pakistan's industrialisation, energy projects, and mediation efforts such as the Tashkent Declaration. He emphasised that recent years have seen a meaningful recalibration. High-level exchanges sustained diplomatic engagement, and cooperation in fields such as counterterrorism, defence dialogue, energy, agriculture, and parliamentary contacts all mark a new phase of mutual understanding. He underlined that Pakistan recognises Russia's important

role and place within a changing international order and regards the relationship as part of its broader commitment to balanced ties with all major powers. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood paid tribute to the contributing authors and described the book as a precious contribution to the partnership that continues to evolve to the mutual benefit of the two nations. As a discussant, Dr. Rasul Bakhsh Rais, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Quaid-i-Azam University, praised the volume for its depth and clarity, noting that it captures the long arc of Pakistan-Russia relations shaped by global geopolitical shifts. He identified emerging areas of convergence—counterterrorism, combating radicalism, Afghanistan's stability, energy security, and the China-Russia-Pakistan cooperation—while cautioning that sanctions, financial barriers, historical mistrust and instability in Afghanistan still pose significant challenges. He stressed the need for institutionalised engagement and renewed cultural diplomacy. Dr. Vyacheslav Belokrenitsky, Chair of the Near and Middle East Department at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, commended the book's structure and scholarly collaboration, noting that it reflects rising Russian academic interest in Pakistan. He added that Russian institutions are producing extensive research on Pakistan's growing relevance in Russia's foreign policy and expressed confidence that sustained academic cooperation will enhance mutual understanding. Offering further reflections, Ambassador Qazi M. Khalilullah, Executive Director of the Centre for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS) and former Ambassador of Pakistan to Russia, drew on his diplomatic experience in Moscow during both Soviet and modern Russian periods. He observed that contemporary relations rest on mutual respect, goodwill, and expanding cooperation in defence, energy, diplomacy and multilateral forums such as the SCO. —DNA



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

NOVEMBER

Nov 01/Algeria
National Day

Nov 04/Italy
Armed Forces Day

Nov 07/Russian Federation
Socialist Revolution

Nov 09/Cambodia
National Day

Nov 11/Poland
Independence Day

Nov 14/Jordan
Birthday of King Hussein

Nov 15/Belgium
Kings Day

Nov 15/Brazil
Republic Day

Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
National Day

Nov 18/Oman
National Day

Nov 18/Morocco
Independence Day

Nov 21/Bangladesh
Armed Forces Day

Nov 22/Lebanon
Independence Day

Nov 25/Suriname
National Day

Nov 28/Mauritania
National Day

Nov 28/Albania
Flags Day



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Water Tank	
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Pakistan, Germany explore enhanced coop in mining sector

“The next edition of the Pakistan Mineral Investment Forum will be even bigger, showcasing the extensive opportunities we have to offer to global investors”

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Ali Pervaiz Malik, was called on by Ms. Ina Lepel, the German Ambassador to Pakistan, at the Ministry of Energy. Ms. Janine Rohwer, Political and Economic Counsellor was also in presence. The discussions centered on unlocking the vast potential for bilateral cooperation in Pakistan's mining, minerals, and energy sectors. The German Ambassador, Ms. Ina Lepel, commended Pakistan's efforts and highlighted the growing international interest in the country's natural resources. "There is a lot of potential in Pakistan's mining and natural resources sector," stated Ambassador Lepel. "The international interest in Pakistan's mining sector is encouraging, and the Reko Diq project stands as a crucial test case for attracting further international investment." She also pointed towards specific avenues for technical collaboration, suggesting that the "Geological Survey of Pakistan and the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) have significant potential for collaboration." Ambassador Lepel noted Germany's previous support in mapping geohazards in Pakistan. Federal Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik detailed the government's strategic focus on modernizing the sector. "Our vision is clear: we are focused on promoting sustainable and mechanized mining practices. In this regard, the Reko Diq project is the torchbearer, setting a new benchmark for large-scale, responsible mining in Pakistan," the Minister said. He further said that building on the momentum generated by the recent Pakistan



Mineral Summit, stating, "The next edition of the Pakistan Mineral Investment Forum will be even bigger, showcasing the extensive opportunities we have to offer to global investors." The discussions also extended to the energy sector, where Minister Malik outlined Pakistan's commitment to environmental sustainability. "Pakistan is actively working on a comprehensive refinery

upgradation program. This initiative is not only crucial for meeting our domestic fuel quality standards but also aligns perfectly with Germany's strong policy focus on decarbonization and a green transition. Both our countries can collaborate effectively on this front," he added. The Minister also highlighted recent achievements, noting, "To enhance our energy security, Pakistan is focused on in-

genizing our fuel supplies. In a landmark move after almost two decades, we have successfully conducted a bidding round for offshore exploration blocks, signaling a new era of investment in our upstream sector." Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deepening the Pakistan-Germany strategic partnership and agreed to work together paving the way for tangible investments and knowledge sharing.

Mothers, newborns at hidden risks, says medical experts

ISLAMABAD: Caesarean section deliveries are rising sharply across Islamabad's major hospitals, raising concerns among gynecologists, health researchers, and patients. The increase has sparked debate over medical necessity, maternal complications, and allegations that financial motives sometimes influence surgical decisions. Dr. Urooj Yasir Khan, gynecologist at CDA Capital Hospital Islamabad, said the rise in C-sections is not unique to Pakistan. Globally, the ideal rate should be between 10 and 15 percent according to the World Health Organization (WHO), but in many countries it has reached 30 to 40 percent. She explained that multiple factors contribute to this increase like advanced monitoring and early risk detection, women's fear of normal delivery, mandatory repeat C-sections after a previous surgical birth, and in some cases commercial interests.

Dr. Khan emphasized that reducing unnecessary C-sections requires educating women about normal delivery, providing pain relief options such as epidurals, ensuring labour room staff actively support patients, and encouraging family participation. She highlighted that normal delivery allows faster recovery, less pain, and better outcomes for both mother and baby. Surgical delivery, she added, should be performed only when there is a genuine risk to the mother or child. "The ultimate goal must always be a safe mother and a safe baby," she said. Obstetrician Dr. Ayesha Nazir, from Saeed International Hospital G-11, Islamabad, highlighted additional medical and social contributors specific to Islamabad. Women are increasingly experiencing their first pregnancy at an older age, and rising rates of diabetes and obesity, combined with more frequent use of infertility

treatments, often result in multiple pregnancies such as twins or triplets, which carry higher risks during childbirth. She added that some mothers request a C-section due to fear of labour pain or convenience, but medical teams weigh these requests carefully against the patient's condition. Some patients, however, question doctors' intentions. A woman Hania Yousaf admitted to a hospital in Islamabad alleged that surgical deliveries are sometimes performed for financial gain, saying, "doctors do C-section for money." Another family claimed that due to what they described as doctors' careless or inattentive attitude during labour, a patient's condition worsened, forcing her into a high-risk C-section while leaving her and her family helpless. Though unverified, these accounts reflect growing frustration and fear among expectant mothers.—DNA

AIOU hosts seminar on modern interpretative trends

ISLAMABAD: An international faculty seminar was held on Tuesday at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) on the topic "Foundations of Modern Interpretative Trends in Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an. The seminar was organized by the Department of Qur'an and Tafseer, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Allama Iqbal Open University in collaboration with Jami'at al-Mustafa al-Aaliyah (Pakistan Chapter). The session was presided over by the Dean of the Faculty of Arabic and

Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr. Shag Mohyuddin Hashmi while the program formally began with welcoming remarks by Dr. Muhammad Kazim Saleem, Head of the Research Department, al-Mustafa International University, Pakistan Chapter, said a press release. In his address, Prof. Dr. Mohyuddin Hashmi said, "Tafseer al-Mizan not only provides comprehensive and balanced guidance in the context of modern intellectual and academic debates but its scholarly depth also opens new avenues for research." In the present age to understand emerging trends in Qur'anic interpretation, it is essential to study such exegetical works that establish a strong connection between tradition and modernity, he added. The speakers emphasized that in the context of contemporary intellectual challenges, renewed research on interpretative methodologies was indispensable. The keynote lecture was delivered by Dr. Sana Ullah Hussain, Chairman, Department of Qur'an and Tafseer, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies.—DNA

KORT to build 250-bed hospital in Mirpur

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Kashmir Orphan Relief Trust (KORT), Chaudhry Akhtar, has said that a 250-bed hospital is being constructed in Mirpur at a cost of 12 billion, and the MoU for its construction has already been signed. He stated that this project will be a ray of hope for 80% of the underprivileged and deserving population, and that all medical treatment there will be provided free of cost. He was addressing the MoU signing ceremony held yesterday under KORT, between the Trust and the construction company for the establishment of the hospital. The ceremony was attended by former UK Minister Baroness Warsi, Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari, Lt Gen (R) Dr. Nigar Johar, and several distinguished personalities from various fields. During his speech, Chaudhry Akhtar described this project as a revolutionary step for the people of

Mirpur and surrounding areas. He further said that financial support is required to complete the hospital within three years, for which they will reach out to people across the globe. He also shared that the burn centre in Kotli is near completion. Former UK Minister Baroness Sayeeda Warsi said that Pakistanis living abroad are not "foreigners" but "return-nationals" whose hearts remain connected with Pakistan, and who constantly think about the country's progress, welfare, and strong future. She described this mega project as a new milestone and a vital development in Pakistan's healthcare sector. She added that every achievement seems impossible until it is completed, and praised Chaudhry Akhtar as a courageous and compassionate individual, expressing strong hope for the successful completion of the project. She also said that Dr. Nigar Johar is an icon, and shared that her own daughter serves in the Royal Air Force. UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, in his speech, said that Chaudhry Akhtar and

his organization are a true role model whose efforts can change the destiny of the nation. He added that Baroness Warsi and Dr. Nigar Johar are icons and major identities for Pakistan. Referring to past defence achievements, he said that the Pakistan Army defeated a much stronger enemy with honor, elevating the country's prestige at the international level. He stated that military-run hospitals and educational institutions set the highest standards of discipline and quality, and even civilians prefer them for treatment and education. He expressed disappointment that despite a government allocation of 3,200 billion rupees for health and education, facilities in public institutions remain insufficient. He stressed the need to elevate public education and health facilities to the standards of military institutions, so that all citizens receive equal and high-quality services. He added that the KORT hospital project in Mirpur is a ray of hope at a time when hopelessness is being promoted about Pakistan. He said the

project proves that Pakistan is progressing and moving forward, and that the Pakistani nation is talented, resilient, and optimistic about its bright future.

Addressing the ceremony, Altaf Bhatt, Chaudhry Rizwan, Chaudhry Saeed, and others assured their full support for this humanitarian mission and paid



IIUI awards winners in student reel contest

ISLAMABAD: The International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) awarded its top-performing students at a ceremony held as part of the "IIUI Student Reel Contest 2025 - The Silent Hercules: Builders Behind the Scenes." The event was held at the university's new campus under the chairmanship of President IIUI, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed, while the jury comprised senior journalist and content creator Fiaz Mahmood; Dr. Asma Mansoor, In-Charge Protocol and Public Relations; Dr. Qurat ul Ain Malik and Dr. Rooh ul Amin, Assistant Professors at the Department of Media and Communication Studies; Dr. Inaam ul Haq, Director Administration. The ceremony was also joined by Dr. Saleh Sulaiman A. Alghofaili, Advisor to the President IIUI, said a press release on Tuesday. A total of 14 shortlisted reels were evaluated in the final round, out of which three videos were awarded positions, it added. Entries were evaluated based on creativity, storytelling, technical quality, and thematic relevance, it emphasized. Syeda Zainab Tehseen and her team members including Robina Nadeem and Kiran Awan secured the first prize, followed by Muzamil Hussain, Ali Asghar Hanjra and Muhammad Rehan who stood in second place and Saqib Alam and Muhammad Fawad Khan in third, it noted.—APP

IESCO to hold e-Kacheri

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Tuesday announced the schedule for its Facebook E-Kacheri to be held on November 19, offering consumers a direct platform for real-time registration and resolution of electricity-related complaints. According to an IESCO spokesperson, from 9:30 am to 11:30 am on Wednesday, the heads of all operational circles will be available online to address consumer grievances promptly. The initiative, guided by CEO IESCO Engr. Ch. Khalid Mehmood, aims to ensure timely redressal and improved facilitation for electricity users across the region. For registration and rectification of complaints on spot customers can contact on facebook ID SE IESCO Islamabad E-Kachery Phone No. 051-9260194, For Rawalpindi City Circle, SE IESCO Rawalpindi-City E-Kachery Phone No. 051-9292675, For Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, SE IESCO Rawalpindi-Cantt E-Kachery Phone No. 051-9293048, For Attock Circle, SE IESCO Attock E-Kachery Phone No. 051-4950343, For Chakwal Circle, SE IESCO Chakwal E-Kachery Phone No. 0543-668500, For Jhelum Circle, SE IESCO Jhelum E-Kachery Phone No. 0544-9270377.—APP

Briefs

Police conducts grand search, combing operations in Shalimar, Shahzad Town

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police carried out grand search and combing operations in the jurisdictions of Shalimar and Shahzad Town police stations as part of the ongoing crack-down against criminal elements. An official told APP on Tuesday that the operations were conducted under the supervision of SP Saddar Zone and SP Rural Zone. Lady police personnel and Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) teams also participated in the exercise. Before the operation, all deployed personnel were given a detailed briefing regarding the search plan and safety protocols. During the operation, 146 individuals were checked, while 192 houses were searched. Police teams also verified 97 motorcycles and 44 vehicles. The official added that seven suspicious individuals were shifted to the concerned police stations for further verification and legal procedures. He said the purpose of the operation is to curb crime, strengthen security, and ensure the safety of residents in the area.—APP

ITP plans for Tri-Nations series

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has issued a traffic advisory for the ongoing Tri-Nations Cricket Series at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, where team movements will take place between Islamabad and Rawalpindi stadium. An ITP official told APP on Tuesday that diversions will be placed on Srinagar Highway, Club Road, and 9th Avenue during team movement, especially in peak hours. He said that traffic flow on these routes may slow down temporarily due to security arrangements and advised citizens to plan their travel with an additional 15-20 minutes to avoid delays. The official added that ITP is making every effort to minimise inconvenience to commuters and will continue to provide real-time traffic updates through Islamabad Police's social media platforms and FM 92.4. He urged citizens to cooperate with the traffic staff, follow lane discipline and remain patient during temporary closures. For emergencies, residents may contact Pukar-15, while traffic-related assistance is available on the ITP helpline 1915.—APP

Customs seizes 30kg ICE

ISLAMABAD: Customs Enforcement Panjur has seized 30 kilograms of Ice (crystal methamphetamine) valued at Rs 450 million during an intelligence-based operation conducted along the N-85 near Panjur. The narcotics were recovered from 30 individually wrapped plastic bags concealed within a vehicle, said a news release. Acting on credible intelligence indicating that a silver Toyota Vitz was transporting narcotics from Basima toward the coastal belt, enforcement teams intercepted the vehicle near the bordering area of Panjur and Washuk District. A thorough search of the vehicle led to the recovery of narcotics concealed in different hidden compartments. The seized Ice carries an estimated international market value of Rs 450 million, while the Non-Customs Paid (NCP) Toyota Vitz is valued at Rs 2.5 million. Both the narcotics and the vehicle have been taken into custody, it added. FBR reiterates its firm resolve to combat narcotics smuggling and remains fully dedicated to eliminating this threat to society.—APP

Diplomats and Golfers unite for Poland's Independence Day

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Poland celebrated its Independence Day on the greens at The Club at Eighteen, Islamabad. The event brought together diplomats, dignitaries, and notable members of the business community for an afternoon of sport, cultural connection,

and celebration. Over 30 golfers participated, while more than 150 guests attended, including diplomats from various countries. The tournament highlighted the spirit of friendship, unity, and international engagement, making it one of the most prestigious diplomatic sporting events of the year. Players showcased remarkable skill and sportsmanship across various categories. In

the Strokeplay Gross Category, Pham Hong Quang took first place, followed by Ibrar Khan in second place and Trevor Grainger in third. In the Strokeplay Net Category, Yumiko Akamatsu took first place, Thanakon was runner-up, and Lorraine Van Der Gracht secured third position. On the course, Atadjan Movlamov won the Longest Drive competition, while Imtiaz Zaidi was closest

to the pin. In the Ladies Division, Salza Dure Falak was awarded Best Lady, with Marilina Armellini as the runner-up. The tournament concluded with a prize-giving ceremony, celebrating outstanding performances and the spirit of Poland's Independence Day. It was a memorable day at The Club at Eighteen, highlighting both sport and community.—

HEC trains varsity reps from Sukkur, Vicinity

ISLAMABAD/SUKKUR: The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan organised a capacity-building and follow-up deliberative session at the Aror University of Art, Architecture, Design and Heritage, Sukkur to build capacity of the focal persons of higher education institutions from Sukkur and its adjoining areas on Higher Education Statistics (HES) and Affiliated Colleges Data. Conducted by HEC's Higher Education Data Repository (HEDR) Division, the two-day training aimed to enhance the capacity of focal persons to ensure accuracy, consistency, and timely submission of data for the fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25. The first day of the session was dedicated to the affiliated colleges' data. The HEDR team provided individualised technical assistance, addressed institution-specific challenges, and offered on-the-spot troubleshooting to facilitate data completion. The activity enabled HEIs to identify outstanding areas, gain clarity on data requirements, and expedite the submission process. The second day focused on strengthening the participants' understanding of HES data templates, validation protocols, and submission procedures. The HEDR team conducted practical demonstrations, guiding representatives from both public and private HEIs through data entry workflows, reporting standards, and error correction methodologies. The participants commended the interactive approach and the clarity of the training content. This initiative has substantially enhanced the data management and reporting capacity of HEIs and their affiliated colleges, reaffirming HEDR Division's commitment to strengthening the National Higher Education Statistics Framework and promoting evidence-based decision-making across Pakistan's higher education sector.—DNA

Sherry commends child marriage

ISLAMABAD— Senator Sherry Rehman has lauded the Government of Balochistan, its Provincial Assembly, and Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti for taking a historic step toward ending child marriage by advancing crucial legislation aimed at blocking the practice. She noted that Sindh government had passed Sindh Child Marriage Restraint 2013, followed by the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) in 2025

which she tirelessly worked for, and urged Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to enact the same protections to safeguard the rights and future of young girls across Pakistan. Senator Rehman emphasized that ending child marriage is only the first step in improving the lives of girls and women nationwide. "The next step is expanding women's access to healthcare, educating families on birth spacing, and

strengthening nutrition and education systems as public goods for all children," she stated. "When women are empowered to make adult life choices, they contribute significantly to the economy, raise healthier children, promote literacy, and protect the environment." Citing critical national indicators, Senator Rehman expressed concern over Pakistan's troubling maternal and child health outcomes. "Pakistan has the highest infant mortality rate in South Asia, with 53.54 deaths per 1,000 live births. Over 40% of children under five are stunted due to malnutrition—often the tragic result of young mothers who lack education, agency, and access to proper healthcare." Referencing the UNFPA Annual Report 2024, she added: "Every 50 minutes, a woman in Pakistan dies from complications related to pregnancy or childbirth.—DNA

Textile exports increase 3.99% to \$6.391b

ISLAMABAD: Textile exports witnessed an increase of 3.99 percent during the first four months of the fiscal year (2025-26) as compared to the same months of last year (2024-25). The overall textile exports from the country were recorded at \$6.391 billion during July-October 2025-26 against the exports of \$6.146 billion during July-October 2024-25, the latest data released by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said. The textile commodities that contributed to trade growth included cotton yarn, the exports of which increased by 7.74 percent to \$238.923 million during the months under review, as compared to the exports of \$221.759 million last year, while the export of raw cotton also increased by 100 percent to \$2.605 million compared to zero export last year. The other commodities that witnessed trade growth included yarn other than cotton yarn, the exports of which grew by 7.50 percent to \$12.313 million from \$11.454 million, whereas the export of knitwear rose by 8.23 percent to \$1904.924 million from \$1759.990 million, it added. Similarly, the export of bed wear surged by 6.94 percent to \$1143.887 million from \$1069.690 mil-

lion, tents, canvas, tarpaulin by 32.34 percent to \$53.478 million from \$40.409 million and ready-made garments by 5.11 percent to \$1428.101 million from \$1358.724 million. The export of made-up articles (excluding towels and bedwear) increased by 4.17 percent to \$274.751 million from \$263.759 million, and all other textile materials up by 0.50 percent to \$254.185 million from \$252.915 million. The textile commodities that witnessed negative trade growth included cotton cloth, the export of which declined by 12.75 percent from \$679.427 million to \$592.797 million, while the export of towels decreased by 0.29 percent from \$356.457 million to \$355.438 million. Similarly, the export of art, silk and synthetic textile also dipped by 0.98 percent from \$131.613 million last year to \$130.325 million during the months under review. Meanwhile, on a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the textile exports from the country witnessed a nominal decrease of 0.57 percent during October 2025 as compared to the corresponding month of last year. The textile exports in October 2025 were recorded \$1,616.575 million against the exports of \$1,625.875 million in October 2024.—DNA

SUPARC, IST inaugurate Space Science, Tech moot

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan marked a significant milestone on Tuesday in its space journey with the inauguration of the International Conference on Applications of Space Science and Technology (ICAST-2025), the region's largest space science and technology conference. The event opened at the Institute of Space Technology (IST), jointly organized by the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) and IST. The conference is being held with the collaboration of the Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology (ISNET), the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), the Islamic World Educa-

tional Organization (ICESCO), the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), and the National Centre of GIS and Space Applications (NCGSA). The conference brings together astronauts, scientists, policymakers, academic leaders, industry experts, and representatives of major international organizations, highlighting Pakistan's growing leadership in the promotion of space science, technology, and innovation at both regional and global levels. SUPARCO Chairman Muhammad Yousaf Khan formally inaugurated the conference. Expressing pride in hosting the region's flagship space event, he highlighted SUPARCO's efforts to strengthen international coopera-

tion and to advance space technologies for sustainable development. IST Vice Chancellor Dr. Syed Najib Ahmad reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to promoting space education, research, and capacity building, describing ICAST-2025 as an important link between global expertise and scientific advancement. The Acting Chairperson of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), the Secretary General of APSCO, and the Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) also addressed the gathering. They praised Pakistan's contributions to promoting equitable access to space science and supporting emerging space nations. The chief

guest, Mongolian astronaut Gurrachaa Jugder Demid, formally opened the conference with a compelling keynote address. Recalling the experience of viewing Earth from space, he stated that science transcends borders and international collaboration is essential for human progress. He emphasized the pivotal role of space technologies in sustainable development, climate monitoring, disaster preparedness, agriculture, resource management, and communications. He said that platforms such as ICAST-2025 ensure that the benefits of space development reach all nations equitably. Appreciating Pakistan's vision, he commended the efforts of SUPARCO and IST.—DNA

CDNS accomplish Rs 22b in Islamic investment till Nov, 15th

ISLAMABAD: The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved the yearly mark of Rs 22 billion in investment in Islamic finance from July 1st to November 15th, in the Current Fiscal Year, 2025-26. The CDNS has already set annual target of Rs 25 billion for the Current FY, 2025-26 for promoting Islamic finance in the country, a senior official of CDNS told APP here Tuesday. He said the CDNS has achieved the annual collection target of Rs 24 billion in investment in Islamic finance during the Previous, FY, 2024-25. The CDNS has revived the annual collection target of investment in Islamic finance for the Current FY, 2025-26, which will lead to growth in the country's Islamic economy. "The National Savings had issued the Islamic bonds for the promotion of the Islamic finance system, which will help the development of the Islamic economy in the country," he said. Replying to a question, he said the CDNS had achieved the target of Rs 75 billion during the last fiscal year (2023-24) from the Islamic bonds, and that was why it aimed to introduce new dimensions in the Islamic finance sector. Islamic finance now has a significant role in the global financial sector." A large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added. The official said that work was being done on institutional reforms in the CDNS. "Islamic finance now has a significant role in the global financial sector. A large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added. The official said that work was being done on institutional reforms in the CDNS. Given the current market trend in the country, an ambitious target had been set to improve the savings culture further, he added. Replying to another question, he said the CDNS has accomplished a target of Rs 400 billion in savings inflows of the annual target for the current fiscal year, from July 1 to September 15th, 2025. The CDNS has set a savings inflows target of Rs 1.3 trillion for the current Fiscal Year, 2025-26.—APP

NDMA sends 100 tons more relief to Gaza

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority in partnership with Al-Khidmat Foundation on Tuesday sent its 25th aid consignment to Gaza a 100-ton shipment that raises total relief assistance to 2,427 tons reaffirming the country's sustained humanitarian support The relief consignment, dispatched on the directives of the prime minister, has been sent from Allama Iqbal International Airport, Lahore, to Gaza via Egypt. The chartered flight carried essential non-food relief items, including tents, tarpaulin sheets, and jerry cans, to assist those in need. A send-off ceremony attended by Federal Minister for Public Affairs Rana Mubashir Iqbal, along with officials from NDMA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), and Alkhidmat Foundation—APP

Metro train completes more than 270m ridership in 5 years

ISLAMABAD: Orange Line Metro Train (OLMT), first electric railway transportation project under China Pakistan Economic Corridor, has completed milestone of more than 270 million ridership during five years since its operation in 2020 till November 2025. Putting healthy impacts on local transportation facility, traffic easiness and environment protection in the provincial metropolis, China-operated metro train has also executed 512180 trips with safe operation of 1800 days, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. The OLMT is providing urban travelling experience to more than 2,50,000 commuters daily keeping punctuality and trip efficiency at rate of 99 percent successfully. Metro train is marked with easy and speedy travelling experience for Lahore, brimming with population of around 12.6 million. Usually using various mode of motorized commutation ranging from motorbike, car, rickshaw, online taxi and bus, it takes more than 80 minutes to 90 minutes if the journey starts from Dera Gujran, the starting point of metro train, to Ali Town, the ending point of metro train that is spreading over 27.1 km. And in case commuter encounter traffic gridlock, journey time prolonged and turned out to be a nightmare. Since the day, metro train is open for public use, commute time is merely 45 minutes. Time cut in long and tedious journey has liberated people from commutation stress and traffic jams. —APP

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Karachi Room No 14 B15, 3rd Floor, Kallaghan Rd. Main Tariq Road, 17D-1 Block-2, P.E.C.H.S. Karachi. Tel: (+92 21) 3450383, 34510478 Fax: (+92 21) 34511147 E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com	Lahore P-4, Gulberg Centre, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92 42) 3578891, 35781065 Fax: (+92 42) 35711420 E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com	Peshawar Office No. C-15, 2nd Floor, Zaher Plaza, Lafai Aoad, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92 91) 2522779 Fax: (+92 91) 2522808 E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com	Kabul House #4, Street #4, Cheragh Aseer Road, Shahr-e-Naw, Kabul - Afghanistan Tel: (+92 902) 778 61 70935 KSM, 61 779463 SM E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com
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A diversifying Europe must not tear itself apart

BARIA ALAMUDDIN

INITIAL reports from Amsterdam last week described horrific scenes of Israeli football supporters being beaten up in violent clashes that the authorities condemned as antisemitic. A more nuanced version of events gradually emerged: extremist fans of Maccabi Tel Aviv had been creating chaos before and during the match against Ajax, with anti-Arab chants and the championing of Israeli attacks on Gaza. Houses bearing Palestinian flags had been attacked. Among a relentless succession of racist chants, supporters sang: “There are no schools in Gaza, because there are no children left.” All hell broke loose after the match, with violent clashes between Maccabi fans and local people, many of whom are of North African origin. Gangs of youths attacked Israeli football fans. The Maccabi ultras have a shameful history of racist violence and agitation, with strong connections to Israel’s extreme right. Fans are notorious for shouting racist slogans at players of various ethnicities, including members of their own team – such as the Jewish Ethiopian player Baruch Dego, who routinely had to put up with monkey noises from the crowd. During the 2020-2021 anti-Netanyahu protests, Maccabi fans attacked protesters with sticks and broken bottles. This all raises the question of why European states let them enter in the first place and why preemptive measures were not taken to prevent violence. Indeed, the controversial decision has been taken to proceed with the Israeli national team’s match in Paris this week, despite everything that occurred in Amsterdam. We should condemn violence of all kinds. But this is just one example of thousands of such tumultuous incidents since the eruption of violence in the Middle East in October 2023, which has given rise to mass demonstrations around the world by supporters of both sides, a sharp rise in antisemitic and Islamophobic attacks, and a tsunami of online hate speech, misinformation and incitement. Much of the exacerbation in civil tensions has been deliberately engineered by various entities with specific antisocial agendas. Much of this exacerbation in worldwide civil tensions, such as the rioting that erupted across Britain in the summer after three children were stabbed to death at a dance class, has been deliberately engineered by various entities with specific antisocial agendas. Fake online claims that the perpetrator of the Southport stabbing was a Muslim immigrant led to far-right and neo-Nazi groups organizing several nights of violent Islamophobic rioting. Hostels housing immigrants and people from ethnic minorities were attacked. The rioting subsided only after huge nationwide antiracism rallies, along with a robust government response. Such events occur in the context of years of whipping up of anti-immigrant sentiments by right-wing politicians and the populist media, normalizing increasingly draconian political measures to curb immigration, often with the shocking outcome that thousands of those fleeing war and persecution are aban-

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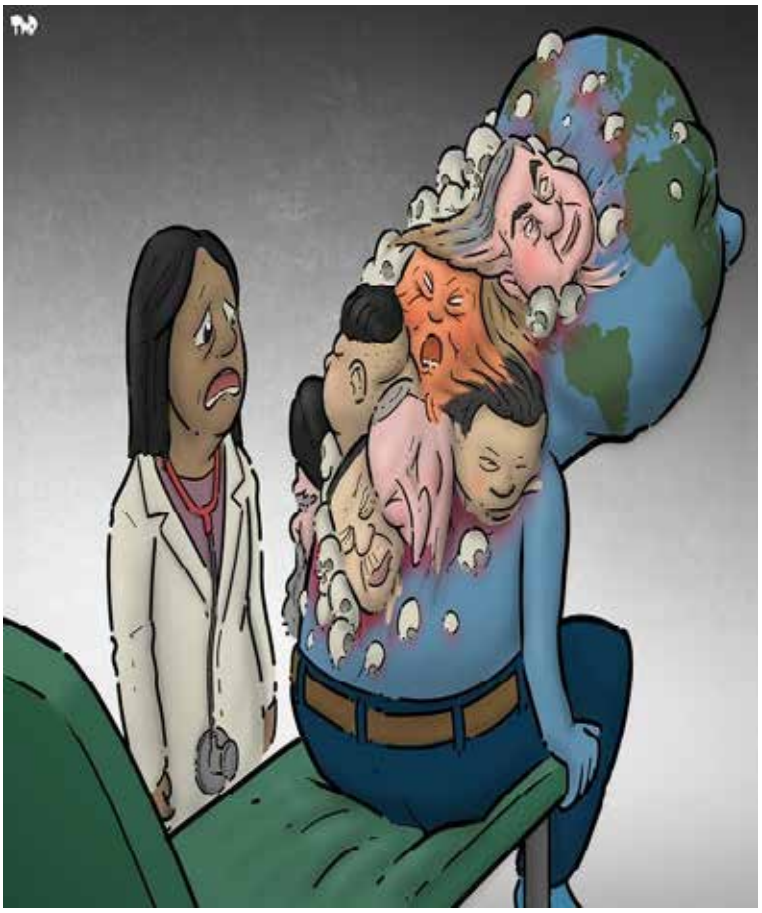
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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



doned to drown at sea. Europe plays host to huge populations of multiethnic origins, including North Africa and the Middle East. While such xenophobia is frequently focused on recent migrants and refugees, the extreme right has also sought to foment hatred of all those of non-European origin. The Gaza conflict has contributed to this polarization, with the far right seeking to demonize Arabs and Muslims as “terrorism supporters,” while huge numbers of white Europeans have become increasingly outspoken in support of the Palestinian cause. In France, more than 10 percent of the population are immigrants born outside the country, with a significantly wider proportion of citizens having parentage of various ethnic origins. Many other European states enjoy comparable levels of diversity. The reality is that immigration into Europe will continue increasing, because the economies of aging Western nations with plunging birth rates are in dire need of foreign workers and the number of people displaced by conflict and instability worldwide has soared. Over the coming century, we will probably reach the point at which a majority of European citizens claim, at least in part, descent from immigrants. Entire economic sectors these days are dominated by people of a broad spectrum of ethnicities. Thus, the racist panic of those on the extreme right arises from a recognition that their hateful cause is already lost. When I moved into my current home many years ago, the previous owner remarked that in this “really nice neighborhood” I would not come across anybody else from other countries. Nowadays, a significant number of my neighbors are of South Asian origin. But we must not ignore the genuine social challenges of large-scale immigration. Refugees are often traumatized by the horrific experiences from which they fled. The children of immigrants often feel a sense of dislocation, of not properly fitting into either culture. Too many immigrant districts have become ghettoized, as impaired access to quality education, services and career opportunities create a vicious circle of deprivation. It is also vital that immigrants themselves strive to integrate with their new culture, conscientiously learning the language and not behaving in ways that will alienate and antagonize. With the preeminence of the European extreme right over the past decade, there have been consolidated efforts to weaponize cultural differences. Too often, the populist media, instead of enlightening and informing, has founded its business model on playing on people’s prejudices and preconceptions – hyping fake and exaggerated stories to whip up animosity toward all those who are different. Cultural diversity is already wholly inherent to contemporary Europe, and managed immigration is a prerequisite for its continued economic vigor. The world’s greatest cities, such as London, New York and Paris, are the most diverse. Newly arriving cultural influences immensely enrich Europe: music, art, literature, food and other cultural practices have immeasurably broadened the quality of life of communities that were previously rather more parochial, conservative and homogenous. Governments must take the lead in encouraging societies to celebrate and champion this diversity, which enriches us all. The real threat to Europe from within is not from North Africans, Turks or Afghans, but from the narrow-minded xenophobes and hatemongering media organs that aspire to tear their own societies apart. is an award-winning journalist and broadcaster in the Middle East and the UK. She is editor of the Media Services Syndicate and has interviewed numerous heads of state.

Trump’s Relentless War on Cartels

Qamar Bashir



The cartels feeding this plague are no longer small-time gangs but industrial-scale employers: one study in Science estimates around 175,000 people working for Mexican organised-crime groups, making them the country’s fifth-largest “employer” and anchoring a wider ecosystem of smugglers, enforcers, and front men that stretches deep into the US supply chain. It is this machinery that Trump brands the “ISIS of the Western Hemisphere”, and it underpins his argument that the supply side must not merely be intercepted at the border, but hunted and dismantled at its source

FROM the moment Donald Trump took office he cast his anti-drug-cartel campaign as a war—not a mere policing effort. He proclaimed that the malignant networks shipping fentanyl, cocaine, methamphetamine and other illicit substances into the United States were not simply criminal syndicates, but enemy forces undermining our homeland. In one address he declared: “We are waging war on the cartels.” And indeed his campaign has moved beyond rhetoric: this year a special Homeland Security Task Force, fully operational in all 50 states, has been credited with 3,000 arrests of cartel leaders, operatives and gang members in “a matter of weeks” – a historic figure, according to his announcement. Among the seizures: more than 2 million pounds of fentanyl pills and over 1,000 illegal firearms removed from U.S. streets. In the domestic theatre the stakes could not be higher. Each addict, each life destroyed by a fentanyl pill or cartel-driven gang violence, represents not only a personal tragedy but a quiet collapse of productivity, hope, and trust. In 2023 about 105,000 Americans died from drug overdoses, almost 73,000 of them from fentanyl alone – roughly 200 deaths every single day; even after a record 27% drop in 2024, provisional data still show around 80,000 overdose deaths a year in the United States. Behind those bodies stand an estimated 48.5 million Americans living with a substance-use disorder – about one in six people aged 12 and over – meaning that tens of millions of families now have addiction at the dinner table and in their paychecks. Economists in the Trump White House calculate that illicit opioids, primarily fentanyl, drained about \$2.7 trillion from America in 2023 alone – roughly 9.7% of GDP – including \$107 billion a year in lost labour-force productivity, as workers are killed, disabled, or pulled out of the workforce by addiction and incarceration. The cartels feeding this plague are no longer small-time gangs but industrial-scale employers: one study in Science estimates around 175,000 people working for Mexican organised-crime groups, making them the country’s fifth-largest “employer” and anchoring a wider ecosystem of smugglers, enforcers, and front men that stretches deep into the US supply chain. It is this machinery that Trump brands the “ISIS of the Western Hemisphere”, and it underpins his argument that the supply side must not merely be intercepted at the border, but hunted and dismantled at its source. The war did not end at the U.S. coastline. Rather, Trump’s

strategy pushed into the sea lanes, airspace and political arenas of Latin America. In August 2025 he ordered a naval deployment, including an aircraft carrier strike group into the Caribbean Sea, as part of what military analysts now call Operation Southern Spear. The goal: choke off maritime cocaine, heroin and fentanyl conduits reaching America’s shores through Venezuela and Colombia. According to one recent analysis, by mid-October the U.S. had carried out at least twenty strikes on vessels off the coast of Venezuela and Colombia, killing some 80 suspected traffickers. Relations with both Caracas and Bogotá have now entered dangerous territory. The U.S. has accused Venezuela’s Nicolás Maduro regime of using the so-called “Cartel de los Soles” to traffic cocaine in exchange for military loyalty, and in August Washington doubled its reward for information leading to Maduro’s arrest to US \$50 million. Colombian President Gustavo Petro has publicly condemned U.S. strikes that killed civilians—alleging one victim was a fisherman—not a cartel member. This has triggered a full-scale diplomatic rift, with Trump calling Petro an “illegal drug leader” and suspending U.S. aid. Why such urgency? Because the human cost is catastrophic and mounting. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in its 2025 National Drug Threat Assessment identifies the Cártel de Sinaloa as one of the world’s most significant suppliers of fentanyl precursors destined for the U.S., and warns that criminal groups are now operating sophisticated cargo-networks, submarines, drones and semi-submersibles. Trump argues that each illicit shipment not intercepted means countless American lives lost, families ruined, communities hollowed out. At the same time, the domestic crime war is deeply personal. Many of the gang-and-cartel foot-soldiers he says have been dismantled were once street-level traffickers, exploiting underage girls and vulnerable young people in rings of trafficking, sexual exploitation and drugs. Here lies the central dilemma. Trump’s strategy is unrelentingly kinetic: he believes only overwhelming force will disrupt the financial-terror axis of the cartels. The military build-up, the naval strikes, the “armed conflict” classification of cartel networks are therefore logical extensions of the ‘war’ paradigm. But critics warn of blowback: when you accuse a neighbouring country of criminal complicity, send warships into its waters, and strike vessels without transparent judicial process, you risk inflaming regional conflict, undermining U.S. alliances and triggering unintended

casualties. Indeed, Colombian officials are calling the operations violations of sovereignty. And for diplomacy, the logic is unavoidable: drug supply chains involve multiple states, loosely regulated maritime corridors, and corrupt financiers. If the U.S. insists on unilateral strikes, it may generate short-term tactical wins but provoke long-term strategic losses—turning partner states into adversaries, pushing traffickers into ever more remote or violent terrains, and perpetuating the cycle. The best path, therefore, combines force with coordinated diplomacy. The U.S. should continue targeting cartel leadership, cutting off supply, interdicting weapons and chemicals. But it must also bring in Colombia, Venezuela (even if indirectly), Mexico and other transit states as full partners—sharing intelligence, legal frameworks, financial tracking and extradition treaties. A joint task-force could focus on dismantling entire networks: transport vessels, drone corridors, safe houses and financial flows. Through such a coalition, traffickers would face fewer safe havens and higher risks wherever they operate. In sum: America faces a critical test. President Trump’s war on the cartels is bold and sweeping—3,000 arrests, millions of pounds of drugs removed, naval strike groups deployed, and dramatic accusations leveled at regimes once considered partners. Yet the ambition also carries grave danger: state-on-state confrontation, civilian casualties, regional alienation. The cartel networks are not just criminal—they are quasi-terrorist, in the Trump lexicon—operating global supply chains, corrupting officials, exploiting vulnerable human beings, and undermining national sovereignty. To defeat them, the U.S. must neither rely solely on missiles nor merely on treaties—but on the rare combination of force, law, coalition, and morality. A sustained, trans-national fight against drugs, gangs and human-trafficking demands that Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and the United States stand shoulder to shoulder. Only then can the promise made by Donald Trump—that no gang member, cartel leader or trafficker will continue poisoning American communities—be fulfilled in a way that does not undermine the laws, alliances and principles America stands for. The urgency is real. The moment is now.

– Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)
Former Press Minister,
Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former Press Attaché to Malaysia
Former MD, SRBC
Macomb, Michigan, USA

Policing Beyond Enforcement in Punjab

Dr Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti

Modern criminological thought offers clear direction. Problem-oriented policing (POP) urges officers to look beyond routine responses and identify recurring crime patterns in specific areas. By focusing on root causes; social disorder, environmental neglect, repeat offending or the presence of proclaimed offenders, police can design targeted, preventive solutions rather than relying on short-term enforcement. Deterrence theory also shows that it is the certainty and swiftness of accountability, rather than severity of punishment, that best prevents crime

CRIME in Punjab reflects deeper social, structural and institutional forces. Behind every offence lies a story of inequality, neglect and systemic failure. Pakistan’s policing model has historically remained reactive, focusing primarily on responding after crimes occur. Although enforcement, investigation and arrests are essential, they are insufficient to address the underlying causes of criminal behaviour. A shift toward prevention, community partnership and problem-solving is now imperative. While crime in legal terms rests on elements such as act, harm, causation and intent, its sociological meaning is far broader. It encompasses violent offences, property crime, white-collar criminality and offences linked to drugs, alcohol and sexual conduct. Understanding these multiple dimensions is central to designing effective policing strategies. Modern criminological thought offers clear direction. Problem-oriented policing (POP) urges officers to look beyond routine responses and identify recurring crime patterns in specific areas. By focusing on root causes; social disorder, environmental neglect, repeat offending or the presence of proclaimed offenders, police can design targeted, preventive solutions rather than relying on short-term enforcement. Deterrence theory also shows that it is the certainty and swiftness of accountability, rather than severity of punishment, that best prevents crime. Community policing further transforms citizens into active partners in ensuring safety. Likewise, situational crime prevention and routine activity theory highlight how simple environmental improvements, such as better lighting, surveillance or reclaiming neglected spaces, can significantly reduce opportunities for crime. Punjab has already begun applying evidence-based approaches. Data-driven policing has emerged as a key development, enabling officers to analyse maps and identify hotspots such as markets, transport hubs and vulnerable neighbourhoods. Recent results from Region Faisalabad illustrate this shift, showing a 31 percent reduction in heinous crimes in 2025 compared to 2024 under the leadership of RPO Zeeshan Asghar. Murder declined by 24 percent, dacoity by 71 percent, robbery by 38 percent, motorcycle theft by 27 percent and motorcycle snatching by 38 percent. These improvements

stem from proactive initiatives including mapping crime pockets, arresting proclaimed offenders, dismantling organised gangs and focusing on repeat offenders. Technological transformation has also reshaped the policing landscape. The Punjab Safe City Authority (PSCA), Smart Safe Cities and Special Initiative Police Stations (SIPS) have modernised policing through digitalisation, surveillance and improved coordination. Yet technology alone cannot bring reform; skilled officers must drive innovation. Regional police schools require restructuring to include forensic methods, investigation techniques, cyber-crime, behavioural management and leadership. A more merit-based system is also essential. The examination process for Deputy Superintendents of Police should be conducted under the High Potential Development Scheme, similar to the process used for recruiting inspectors. Establishing regional operational command and control rooms integrated with Safe City systems can further improve coordination and real-time response across districts. Globally, artificial intelligence has transformed policing by enabling predictive analytics, criminal pattern recognition, facial recognition and vehicle tracking. Punjab must adopt these advancements while ensuring ethical safeguards and data protection to maintain public trust. Behind the technology stands the human face of law enforcement. Nearly 1,500 Punjab Police officers have laid down their lives in the line of duty, a stark reminder that policing is not merely a profession but a public calling grounded in courage and service. Under IGP Dr Usman Anwar, initiatives such as Special Initiative Police Stations, Police Khidmat Markaz, Tahafuz Centres, Meesaq Centres, Pink and Blue Mobile Vans and Virtual Women Police Stations have strengthened access to justice and citizen trust. Visible deterrence remains a core component of effective policing. Offenders are discouraged less by harsh punishment and more by the likelihood of being caught. Regular patrols, swift responses and transparent investigations send a clear signal that crime carries consequences. Public awareness campaigns that highlight successful operations and community partnerships can further reinforce this perception. When citizens view police presence as reassurance rather than intimidation, deterrence becomes both ef-

fective and relational. Rational choice theory also informs modern policing by explaining that offenders weigh risks against rewards before committing crime. Community vigilance, intelligence-driven operations and asset seizures significantly reduce the expected gains for criminals, making offending a less attractive option. Trust, however, is the foundation of sustainable policing. Effective community policing requires regular meetings with residents, joint problem-solving initiatives and partnerships with schools, youth groups and local businesses. When citizens feel heard and valued, they are more willing to share information, cooperate with investigations and take ownership of their neighbourhoods. Challenges persist. Many police stations struggle with staff shortages, outdated infrastructure and limited analytical capacity. In some areas, historical mistrust between police and the public continues to hinder collaboration. By prioritising high-impact areas, investing in technology and recognising officers who embrace problem-solving and community-based approaches, Punjab Police can steadily transform its institutional culture. Punjab’s diverse mix of rural, industrial and urban environments demands flexibility and innovation. A multi-layered strategy that combines deterrence, prevention and community engagement will not only make policing more effective but also rebuild public confidence. Ultimately, reducing crime is not simply a matter of lowering statistics; it is about restoring justice, dignity and trust between citizens and the state. To support this vision, police stations which are the core operational units of law enforcement, must be granted limited financial autonomy to cover essential expenses such as investigations, transportation and emergency actions. Empowering stations with independent financial management can improve efficiency and reduce petty corruption. A policing strategy that integrates prevention, deterrence, technology and community cooperation can pave the way toward a safer, more citizen-centred Punjab.

– Dr Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti holds a PhD in Political Science and writes regularly on terrorism, counter terrorism, countering violent extremism, and policing affairs. He can be reached at rizwanbh79@gmail.com.

Briefs

After the 27th Amend. 3 key judicial bodies reconstituted

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Justice Mandokhail, who has become the second-most senior judge following the resignation of Syed Mansoor Ali Shah. According to the SC press release, Justice Farooq, the second most senior judge of the FCC, was jointly nominated by the chief justices of the SC and FCC as a member of the JCP. Following this, the JCP will now comprise the CJP, FCC chief justice, Justice Akhtar, FCC's Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Aamer Farooq, Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan, Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarrar, Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) representative Ahsan Bhoon, two members from the National Assembly, two members from the Senate and a woman or non-Muslim nominated by the National Assembly speaker. "The reconstituted bodies will continue to play a central role in matters of accountability, judicial appointments, and procedural governance under the amended constitutional scheme," the press release read. The changes in the bodies' composition come amid a restructuring of the judiciary following the enactment of the 27th Amendment. The contentious amendment, which resulted in the establishment of the FCC, was passed by Parliament amid the opposition's outcry. It has also been criticised by some legal experts as a means to dethroning the SS as the country's highest judicial forum, ceding that position to the FCC. Former and sitting judges, as well as lawyers, have also voiced opposition to the proposed amendment, particularly citing its implications for the Supreme Court. Hours after the Amendment was enacted on November 13, two judges of the SC had resigned, citing their reservations against it. These two judges were Athar Minallah and Mansoor Ali Shah, who was the senior puisne judge of the SC at the time. The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) has also expressed concern over several main points of the Amendment, namely the formation of the FCC, the appointment of judges and chief justices to the SC and the FCC, the composition of the JCP, the transfer of high court judges and the immunities granted to the president and the military leadership. "Before the amendment, the Supreme Court of Pakistan exercised the functions that have now been given to the FCC," the (ICJ) statement issued on Nov 13 read. "Following the amendment, the Supreme Court will now effectively be an appellate court only in matters that do not involve the interpretation of the Constitution of Pakistan."

Raja Faisal Rathore takes oath as AJK PM

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96-Year-Old Woman Sells House. Buyers Go Inside And Can't Believe Their Eyes Tips and Tricks More-over, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, senior party leader Faryal Talpur and other civil-military officials were also present at the oath-taking ceremony. After being sworn in, the newly elected AJK PM thanked the PPP's top leadership, including President Asif Ali Zardari and Talpur, for entrusting him with the premier responsibility. "I pay tribute to the Pakistan Army, who are defending us by sacrificing their lives," Rathore said in his speech. He further said that the PPP has taken the responsibility of restoring the relationship with the people. 'AJK's unmatched political awareness' Speaking on the occasion, PPP Chairman Bilawal congratulated the people of AJK, declaring that politics in the region had finally been restored. Bilawal praised the "unmatched political awareness" of Kashmiris. He said newly sworn-in AJK PM Rathore had witnessed the people's protests firsthand and now carried their trust.

US unveils fast-track visas for World Cup ticket holders

US President Donald Trump makes an announcement, while US Vice President JD Vance looks on, as FIFA president Gianni Infantino and US Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem stand behind the FIFA World Cup Trophy

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump on Monday unveiled special fast-track visas for people with tickets to the 2026 World Cup – but his administration warned it was no guarantee of entry to the United States. The United States has promised a seamless experience for next year's tournament despite concerns that Trump's border crackdown could hurt fans. "For those who intend to join us for the World Cup, I strongly encourage you to apply right away," Trump said as he announced the scheme in the Oval Office with Gianni Infantino, the boss of global soccer body FIFA. Infantino – who has repeatedly appeared at Trump's side since the Republican's return to the White House in January – said the so-called "FIFA Pass" was a "very important announcement." "If you have a ticket for the World Cup, you can have a prioritized appointment to get your visa," Infantino said. "We'll have between five and 10 million people coming to America from from all over the world to enjoy the World Cup, and with this FIFA pass, we can make sure that those who buy a ticket, that are legitimate football fans or soccer fans, they can come and attend the World Cup in the best conditions." US Secretary of State Marco Rubio however, issued a warning to those hoping to come for the tournament. "Your ticket is not a visa," Rubio said at the announcement. "It doesn't guarantee admission to the US. It guarantees you an expedited appointment, but you're still going to go through the same vetting." Rubio said ticket holders would get an interview within six to eight weeks under the plan, but urged people to act now. "Don't wait till the last minute," he said. Trump has made the World Cup a centerpiece event of both his second presidency and the 250th



anniversary of US independence next year. But the giant sporting extravaganza has not escaped the political turmoil caused by Trump's hardline stance on a host of issues. Trump has raised the possibility of moving games from certain host cities amid a crackdown on

what he says is crime and migration in some Democratic-run cities. The draw for the World Cup is due to take place in Washington on December 5. FIFA will present a new peace prize on the same day, with widespread speculation that it could go to Trump. – Agencies

Oleksandr Usyk vacates WBO Heavyweight title ahead of mandatory Wardley fight

Wardley is now likely to become the new WBO heavyweight champion

PARIS: Oleksandr Usyk has vacated his WBO heavyweight title after informing the World Boxing Organisation (WBO) that he would not face Britain's Fabio Wardley in a mandatory defence. The WBO confirmed that the 38-year-old Ukrainian boxer made the decision after careful consideration. International media reports indicate that Wardley, 30, is now likely to become the new WBO heavyweight champion. Usyk remains the reigning heavyweight champion of the WBA, WBC, and IBF. In December 2024, he defeated Britain's Daniel Dubois to reclaim the IBF title and become the undisputed

champion once again. Earlier, in May 2024, Usyk defeated Tyson Fury to secure a four-belt title, though he later relinquished the IBF belt due to mandatory fight obligations.

WBO President Gustavo Olivieri praised Usyk, calling him "a champion of champions" and lauding the honour with which he held the WBO Super Champion title.

"The WBO extends its profound respect, admiration, and gratitude to Oleksandr Usyk, an undefeated, two-division WBO undisputed world champion," Olivieri said.

"His career stands as one of the most extraordinary and historic in modern boxing."

Usyk originally won the WBO heavyweight title in 2021 by defeating Anthony Joshua and successfully defended it four times. The WBO had earlier ordered him to face interim champion Joseph Parker this year, but no agreement was reached.

The WBO emphasised that Usyk's departure represents a respectful pause rather than a farewell. "The doors of the WBO will always remain open to Oleksandr Usyk and his team," Olivieri added. – APP

Mbappe, PSG in counterclaims worth hundreds of millions

KYLIAN MBAPPE on Monday claimed 263 million euros (\$305m) from Paris Saint-Germain in an escalating dispute over the status of his contract. PARIS: France captain Kylian Mbappe on Monday claimed 263 million euros (\$305m) from Paris Saint-Germain in an escalating dispute over the status of his contract and how his former club treated him. PSG countersued Mbappe, who moved to Real Madrid last year, for 240m euros in Paris' labour court, basing that figure on a botched 300m-euro transfer to Saudi club Al Hilal which the player refused. Mbappe, 26, initially filed a complaint in June over the way he was treated by PSG at the start of the 2023-24 season. He believes he was sidelined by the Qatari-owned club and made to train with players the club were trying to offload after refusing to agree a new contract. It is a practice which has also affected other footballers and prompted the French players' union to lodge a complaint last year. Mbappe was not invited to take part in PSG's 2023 pre-season tour of Asia and missed the first game of that season but was later restored to the team after holding talks with the club. After seven seasons with PSG, he joined Real Madrid on a free transfer last summer where he earns a reported annual salary of 30m euros. He scored 256 goals in 308 games for PSG but the club won the Champions League for the first time last season following the striker's departure. – APP

Pakistan's Abdul Samad has been ruled out of the T20I Tri-series

DNA

RAWALPINDI: On Monday evening, during a fielding session at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, a ball struck Samad's left hand, resulting in a split-wound injury to the little finger. He underwent a medical procedure at the hospital and is expected to require approximately four weeks for full recovery before returning to play. As his replacement, Hassan Nawaz has been added to the squad for the Tri-series. Hassan will join the squad on 19 November.

Baku hosts diplomatic briefing on WUF13

BAKU: A hybrid-format briefing session was held for representatives of the diplomatic corps accredited in Azerbaijan in preparation for the 13th session of the United Nations (UN) World Urban Forum (WUF13), which Baku will host in 2026. The forum, themed "Housing the world: Safe and resilient cities and communities," is scheduled for May 17–22, 2026. Key remarks during the briefing were delivered by Anar Guliyev, Chairman of the State Committee for Urban Planning and Architecture and National Coordinator of WUF13; Adil Mamadov, Executive Director of the WUF13 Azerbaijan Operations Company; and Edlam Yemeru, Director of the External Relations, Strategy, Knowledge and Innovation Division at UN-Habitat. – Agencies

Alcaraz withdraws from Davis Cup Finals because of hamstring injury

"I've always said that playing for Spain is the greatest thing there is, and I was really looking forward to helping us fight for the Davis Cup"

MADRID: Top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz withdrew from playing for Spain in the Davis Cup Finals in Italy because of a hamstring injury on Tuesday. Alcaraz said the decision was recommended by doctors. "I'm so sorry to announce that I won't be able to play for Spain in the Davis Cup in Bologna," he said on X. "I have an edema in my right hamstring and the medical recommendation is not to compete." Alcaraz said he was returning home "heartbroken."

"I've always said that playing for Spain is the greatest thing there is, and I was really looking forward to helping us fight for the Davis Cup." Alcaraz was set to lead Spain in Bologna against the No. 4-seeded Czech Republic in the quarterfinals on Thursday to try and win the Davis Cup for the first time. Last year, Alcaraz and Spain were eliminated in the opening round of the Final 8 at home in Malaga, spoiling the final match of Rafael Nadal's storied career.

The 22-year-old Alcaraz had said he wants "to win the Davis Cup one day ... because for me, it's a really important, important tournament." Spain already had a tough task, going up against a Czech team including top-20 players in Jiri Lehecka and Jakub Mensik. They eliminated the United States in the qualifying round in September. – Agencies

Asia Cup Rising Stars: Bangladesh crush Afghanistan by eight wickets

Victory helps Bangladesh consolidate top spot in Group A, Afghanistan remain third

DOHA: Ripon Mondol and Rakibul Hasan's three-wicket hauls propelled Bangladesh to a thumping eight-wicket victory over Afghanistan in the eighth match of the ACC Asia Cup Rising Stars Championship 2025 here at the West End Park International Cricket Stadium on Monday. Bangladesh captain Akbar Ali's decision to field first bore fruit as his team's bowling attack dismantled Afghanistan's batting unit, booking it for a meagre 78 runs in 18.4 overs. Afghanistan captain Darwish Rasooli remained the top-scorer for his team with a cautious 27 off 28 deliveries, while Ijaz Ahmad Ahmadzai and Qais Ahmad, 12 each, were the others to amass double figures against a ruthless Bangladesh bowling attack. Mondol and Hasan jointly led Bangladesh's bowling charge, with both taking three

wickets, giving away just 10 and seven runs in their respective four overs. Their brilliance was backed by SM Meherob, who made two scalps while conceding 14 in his four overs. Chasing a modest 79-run target, Bangladesh comfortably knocked the winning runs for the loss of just two wickets and 39 balls to spare.

The Tigers, however, had a contrasting start to the pursuit as they lost both their openers, Habibur Rahman Sohan and Jishan Aslam, who scored 10 each, inside seven overs with just 24 runs on the board. Following the early stutter, Zawad Abrar and Mahidul Islam Ankon batted sensibly and knitted a match-winning partnership of 55 runs for the second innings to steer Bangladesh to glory. Ankon remained the top-scorer with an unbeaten 27 off 30 deliveries, while Abrar made 24 not out from 22 balls. AM Ghaznar was the solitary wicket-taker for Afghanistan, making two scalps for just eight runs in his four overs. – Agencies

TTAP stages rally against 27th Amend

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exert political pressure on PTI leadership. Gohar stressed that dragging women into political battles was unacceptable and against social norms. He urged media outlets to ensure responsible journalism and called on authorities to take notice of the smear campaign. The PTI chairman reaffirmed that the party would pursue legal action against those involved.

Palestinian foreign ministry welcomes...

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Gaza peace plan, saying it would bring "peace and prosperity" after it was endorsed by the UN Security Council. "We believe that [US] President Trump's plan will lead to peace and prosperity because it insists upon full demilitarisation, disarmament [...] of Gaza," Netanyahu's office said. "True to President Trump's vision, this will lead to further integration of Israel and its neighbours as well as expansion of Abraham Accords," it added.

President, PM praise security forces

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establish lasting peace in the country and that the security forces were also achieving great successes in this regard. "The complete elimination of the foreign-backed terrorists will continue with national consensus. No political maneuver or attempt to divert attention or disrupt the national consensus against extremism and terrorism at any level will be tolerated," President Zardari remarked. He saluted the resolve and bravery of the security forces and law-enforcement agencies, saying that by the grace of Allah, Pakistan would soon be cleansed of the evil of every terrorist. Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the entire nation stood with Pakistan's armed forces in the war against terrorism.

PPP has a three generation long...

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Faisal Rathore and the AJK government for this purpose. "We will not run the AJK government from behind closed doors; we will work with the people to resolve their problems," he said. Chairman Bilawal stated that the crushing defeat inflicted on India in May was historic. "As the former Foreign Minister, I can assert that Pakistan's international standing is gaining respect. Meanwhile, Modi is hiding from the world, whether at the United Nations or ASEAN forums. He has been defeated like a coward, and he knows he will be reminded of the 7-0 defeat," he said. He added that every child understands India's agenda regarding Kashmir, which is to create infighting and damage the brotherly bond between Pakistan and Kashmir. "This conspiracy of the Modi government will not succeed. Nothing can taint the relationship between the people of Azad Kashmir and Pakistan." He recalled that people would stand in lines to meet Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, a fact also documented by Hillary Clinton in her book. "There is only one instance where Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto herself stood waiting, and that was for the people of Kashmir. At a meeting of the OIC, the foundation of which was laid by Quaide-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto waited outside the Saudi King's door with a file in hand. When the King asked why she was waiting, she replied that she was there for her brothers in Kashmir." Chairman PPP said that it is his desire for the people of Kashmir to attain membership in the OIC. He recalled that as Foreign Minister, while chairing a meeting of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, he had the opportunity to beckon then President of Kashmir to speak about his people.

Germany and Netherlands reach the World Cup after big wins in final qualifiers

Germany and the Netherlands joined England, France, Portugal, Croatia and Norway as the European teams to have qualified for the 2026 World Cup

AMSTERDAM: A 6-0 thrashing of Slovakia on Monday completed Germany's recovery from a shocking start to group play as the four-time champion maintained its proud record of always qualifying for the World Cup. The Germans will be competing on soccer's biggest stage for the 21st time in 23 editions. They didn't enter the inaugural 1930 World Cup and were not allowed to enter the 1950 edition. The Netherlands – a long-standing rival of Germany – also won its group to reach next year's tournament being held in the United States, Canada and Mexico. A 4-0 win over Lithuania saw the Dutch qualify with an unbeaten record, finishing ahead of Poland. Slovakia and Poland will be in the playoffs, the draw for which takes place on Thursday. Germany and the Netherlands joined England, France, Portugal, Croatia and Norway as the European teams to have qualified for the 2026 World Cup. The remaining five automatic spots will be booked on Tuesday when group play is wrapped up. It was Slovakia which handed Germany a surprising 2-0 loss in the first round of matches in Group A. That

was only the Germans' third ever defeat in World Cup qualifying but they have responded with five straight wins, culminating in the heavy beating of Slovakia in Leipzig where the pressure was firmly on Julian Nagelsmann's team. Four of the goals came in the first half; Leroy Sane scored twice after strikes by

Nick Woltemade and Serge Gnabry. The second-half goals were by two Leipzig players – substitute Ridle Baku and Assan Ouédraogo, a 19-year-old midfielder making his debut. Germany entered the game needing only a draw and finished three points ahead of Slovakia. No team has reached the World Cup final



more times than Germany. It was the winner in 1954, 1974, 1990 and 2014 – the first three as West Germany – and the runner-up in 1966, 1982, 1986 and 2014. Germany has been eliminated in the group stage in the last two World Cups, however, to damage its status as a global heavyweight. The Netherlands will get another chance to win that elusive first World Cup trophy, four years after exiting the 2022 tournament in a dramatic penalty shootout loss to Lionel Messi's Argentina in the quarterfinals.

A draw with Lithuania on Monday also would have been enough for the Dutch, who started the game three points clear of Poland, but they wound up pouring in the goals in Amsterdam – starting with Tijjani Reijnders in the 16th. Cody Gakpo made it 2-0 from the penalty spot in the 58th and there were more goals from Xavi Simons and Donyell Malen, who scored off a powerful effort at the end of his solo run that began inside his own half. The Netherlands has been runner-up at the World Cup three times – in 1974, 1978 and 2010. – Agencies

Briefs

Japan warns citizens in China over safety amid Taiwan row

TOKYO: Japan has warned its citizens in China to be careful of their surroundings and to avoid big crowds amid a diplomatic row over Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's comments on Taiwan. The escalating spat has already seen Beijing advise Chinese citizens to avoid traveling to Japan and hit Tokyo stocks. The screenings of at least two Japanese movies will also be postponed in China, state media reported. "Pay attention to your surroundings and avoid as much as possible squares where large crowds gather, or places that are likely to be identified as being used by many Japanese people," the Japanese embassy in China said in a statement on its website dated Monday. Minoru Kihara, Japan's top government spokesman, said Tuesday that such advice was issued "based on a comprehensive assessment of the political situation, including the security situation in the relevant country or region, as well as the social conditions." The diplomatic feud between China and Japan was ignited by Takaichi's suggestion that Tokyo could intervene militarily in any attack on Taiwan. China, which claims Taiwan as part of its territory and has not ruled out using force to take the democratic island, reacted furiously to Takaichi's comments.—APP

ICCI to host traders convention for swift resolution problems

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) Tuesday announced that the chamber will soon convene a traders convention aimed at formulating concrete, actionable proposals for submission to the concerned authorities to ensure swift resolution of the business community's longstanding issues. Addressing a delegation of the Traders Welfare Association (TWA) G-9, President ICCI, Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that the business community is the real engine of economic growth, yet its concerns are persistently ignored by relevant authorities whose primary focus revolves around imposing additional taxes for their own expenditures rather than facilitating trade. He reaffirmed that ICCI's top priority is to address traders' problems at the grassroots level, whether related to infrastructure, municipal services, regulations, or market facilitation. He added that ICCI is committed to strengthening every commercial center of the Capital by fostering an enabling business environment, improving service delivery, and promoting ease of doing business. He urged ICCI leadership to ensure that the Chairman CDA visits the Chamber to directly hear traders' grievances.—APP

Rupee gains 04 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 04 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 280.67 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 280.71. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 281.55 and Rs 281.80, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs0.47 to close at Rs 325.49, up from the previous day's close of Rs 325.96, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 1.81, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed a decrease of Rs 0.50 and closed at Rs 369.33 compared to the previous day's Rs 369.83. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 01 paisa each to close at Rs 76.41 and Rs 74.84, respectively.—APP

OGRA enforcement team seals three LPG plants over overcharging



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) Enforcement Team has launched a decisive operation in the Rawalpindi-Islamabad region, sealing three LPG

plants found guilty of overcharging consumers in violation of the authority's prescribed pricing. The action was taken against LPG units operating in Fateh Jang Road, Tarnol, and surrounding localities after inspectors confirmed that the outlets were selling liquefied petroleum gas at rates higher than

the officially notified prices. Legal proceedings have been initiated against the owners of the sealed plants.

According to OGRA, the enforcement team has made it clear that no LPG operator will be allowed to sell gas beyond the regulated price. The authority has directed

its enforcement wings to intensify inspections across multiple cities to ensure compliance and take strict action against those involved in profiteering. OGRA reiterated its commitment to protecting consumers from exploitation and ensuring fair market practices in the LPG sector.

Speakers warn AI not superpower at Dubai Future Summit

DUBAI: AI is not a superpower, said Mikey Muhanna, founder and executive director of the media and education program Afikra, at the Dubai Future Summit on Tuesday. Muhanna said AI is taking away critical skills that humans used to rely on for productivity and innovation. "AI is not allowing us to get stuff wrong, activate our brain and curiosity. We are celebrating the fact that all of this fundamental work that we used to do but now we gave up on," he said. "We are letting AI do the small 'stupid' stuff, so when it comes to the big stuff, we don't have the skills to actually deliver because we stopped training these muscles," explained Muhanna. Afikra is a global cultural initiative dedicated to exploring, documenting, and celebrating Arab history, knowledge, and creativity. In a session named 'Beyond the Algorithm: What Future for Arabic and Cultural Narratives in AI?', Muhanna, along with Emirati inventor Fatima Alkaabi and NaTakallam educator Yara Hassan, discussed ways in which AI can destroy heritage and identity. NaTakallam is a social enterprise that connects displaced people with learners around the world through language and cultural exchange sessions, described by educator Yara Hassan. "When using AI to translate, often memories, identity, and history are erased, especially when using Arabic idioms which can be lost," said Hassan. The educator explained that Arabic can't fit into English-based AI systems and that human touch is still very important to maintain integrity. "AI should be learning from Arabic, not the other way around. We have to make the system representative of this culture," she said. Muhanna described data on existing AI software as "garbage" and said the more "trash" we feed it, the more dangerous it can get. "There is a lot of garbage about the Arab world and information that is subjectively wrong—intentionally based on racist ideas and some things that are subconscious. AI is trained on these data points," he explained. Muhanna said Afikra is working on deconstructing the idea of Arab narratives and celebrating the complexity of Arab heritage. "AI's function is to give you the info very quickly. It only gives you one answer that is binary and structured. It can be very dangerous as it erases the possibility of multilayered identity, especially in the Arab world," he explained. Alkaabi said she recently launched a new AI platform called AI Emirati, which aims to produce culturally rooted AI products. "AI can be used as a tool to bridge the gap between generations and preserve history and culture and celebrate it," she explained. Alkaabi said that often AI platforms don't understand the complexity of Arab heritage and culture, and by creating her own software, she hopes to generate a platform that can capture the true essence of Emirati culture through AI-generated products. The session took place in the Museum of the Future as part of the Dubai Future Summit and was moderated by Deputy Editor-in-Chief at Arab News, Noor Nugal. —DNA

Syria opens first public trial over deadly coastal violence

ALEPPO: The first trial was opened on Tuesday of some of the hundreds of suspects linked to deadly clashes in Syria's coastal provinces earlier this year that quickly spiraled into sectarian attacks. State media reported that 14 people were brought to Aleppo's Palace of Justice following a monthslong, government-led investigation into the violence in March involving government forces and supporters of ousted Syrian President Bashar Assad. The investigating committee re-

ferred 563 suspects to the judiciary. Seven of the defendants in the court were Assad loyalists, while the other seven were members of the new government's security forces. A judge was heard during the televised proceedings asking they were military or civilian. The trial follows pressure from local civil society and the international community for the country's new rulers to commit to judicial reform after decades under the autocratic rule of the Assad dynasty. Despite initial reports from state media that charges could quickly be brought against the defendants, the judge closed the session and rescheduled the next hearing for December. The charges could include sedition, inciting civil war, attacking security forces, murder, looting and leading armed gangs, state media reported. Given the scale of the violence and number of suspects, it's unclear how long the proceedings will take. The clashes in March erupted after armed groups aligned with Assad ambushed the new government's security forces. A counter-offensive then spiraled into sectarian revenge attacks and massacres of hundreds of civilians from the Alawite religious minority to which Assad belongs and who largely live along the coast.—Agencies

Iraq's PM Sudani joins majority bloc in parliament

But as Iraq has recently regained some stability after decades of war, key parties hope to reach a full package deal — premier, speaker and president — before the new parliament convenes in January

BAGHDAD: Iraq's incumbent Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani said Tuesday he had joined the country's main Shiite alliance, the majority bloc that will nominate the next premier. The move by Sudani, who is seeking a second term as prime minister, gives the Coordination Framework alliance of Shiite factions an outright majority of 175 seats in the 329-seat chamber. During a conference in the northern city of Duhok, Sudani said his alliance "the Reconstruction and Development coalition is part of the Coordination Framework, which has decided to form the largest bloc." He added that seeking a second term "is not about personal ambition, but about fulfilling his responsibility to see through the mission." During his first term Sudani had pursued policies vowing reconstruction and stability in Iraq. He added that talks will begin among key parties about naming the new premier, speaker and president.

By convention in Iraq, a Shiite Muslim holds the post of prime minister, a Sunni is parliament speaker, and the largely ceremonial presidency goes to a Kurd. On Monday, the Coordination Framework alliance announced that it had formed the majority bloc, which would ultimately nominate the next prime minister. Brought to power three years ago by the Framework, Sudani's own list secured 46 seats in the chamber. Joining the Coordination Framework does not guarantee Sudani a second term. Long-term powerbrokers within the Coordination Framework worry that he has amassed too much power during his first term, making some reluctant to allow him to keep his seat. Within the Coordination Framework, whose members have varying ties to Iran, some individual groups also scored well, with some winning more seats than in the previous parliament. Post-election talks between Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish parties in Iraq usually last for months, with constitutional deadlines frequently missed. But as Iraq has recently regained some stability after decades of war, key parties hope to reach a full package deal — premier, speaker and president — before the new parliament convenes in January.—DNA

Macron urges action on Marseille drugs after 'turning point' murder

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron Tuesday urged more measures against drug crime after the brother of a prominent anti-narcotics activist was murdered last week in the southern city of Marseille, a minister said. France's second-largest city is struggling to battle drug crime, with more than a dozen people killed since the start of the year in turf wars and other disputes linked to cocaine and cannabis dealing. Macron convened an emergency meeting with cabinet ministers after an unidentified gunman killed the 20-year-old younger brother of activist and Greens party member Amine Kessaci, 22, in Marseille on Thursday last week. Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said after the meeting at the Elysee that Thursday's murder had been a "turning point" and Macron had called on participants to "up" the battle against drug dealing. "Unfortunately, it's an act of intimidation that is very directly linked to trafficking," he said of the killing of Mehdi Kessaci, who had no criminal record and wanted to be a police officer. Nunez said he and Justice Minister Gerald Darmanin would be heading to Marseille on Thursday, ahead of Macron visiting the southern city in December.—APP

Bangladesh remains calm day after death sentence for Hasina

DHAKA: Bangladesh's capital and major cities were calm Tuesday despite a call for a nationwide shutdown by the former ruling party of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina after she was sentenced to death over her crackdown on a student uprising last year. The International Crimes Tribunal handed down death sentences in absentia to Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan on Monday for their involvement in deadly force used against protesters last year. Hasina's former ruling Awami League party rejected the court proceedings Monday, calling it "a kangaroo court" and called for a nationwide shutdown the next day. Hasina's opponents clashed with police and soldiers until late Monday and attempted to use excavators to demolish the home of her father, Bangladesh independence leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Local media reported the home of former President Abdul Hamid, a veteran Awami League leader, was vandalized in the northeastern Kishoreganj district. But on Tuesday, there was no closure of services or shops and schools, although some people expressed tension and confusion over what lies ahead for the South Asian nation, a parliamentary democracy of 170 million people.—APP

Zelensky trip to Turkiye aims to 're-engage' US in peace efforts

KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelensky will head to Turkey on Wednesday seeking to revive the United States' involvement in diplomatic efforts to end the Russian invasion, a Ukrainian official told AFP. Zelensky said he wanted to reinvigorate frozen peace talks, which have faltered after several rounds of Russia-Ukraine talks in Istanbul this year failed to yield a breakthrough. Moscow has not agreed to a ceasefire and instead kept advancing on the front and bombarding Ukrainian cities. Zelensky will meet his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Ankara on Wednesday, where his "main goal is for the Americans to re-engage" in peace efforts, a senior Ukrainian official told AFP. Kyiv is hoping Washington will be able to push Russia to the negotiating table, including by imposing sanctions, the official said. Steve Witkoff, the US envoy, is expected to join talks with Zelensky in Turkey, another Ukrainian official, involved in the meeting's preparation, told AFP.

Japan pledges \$3.5m for over 24m polio vaccine doses in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has announced a new US\$ 3.5 million grant to procure essential oral polio vaccines as part of its continued support to Pakistan's polio eradication efforts. The Pakistan Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) will use these funds to procure more than 24 million doses of vaccines to support polio campaigns in 2026. Pakistan remains one of only two countries globally yet to stop the transmission of poliovirus. So far in 2025, Pakistan has reported a total of 30 cases. In an urgent effort to eradicate the incurable disease, the Government of Pakistan, with support from partners, has developed the National Emergency Action Plan 2025-26 under the Roadmap to Zero, aimed at stopping polio transmission across the country. Each national immunization

drive targets over 45 million children under five, supported by more than 400,000 frontline health workers who play a vital role in reaching communities and delivering vaccines. "This partnership represents more than financial assistance; it reflects solidarity and shared purpose," said Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq, the Prime Minister's Focal Person on Polio Eradication. "Every dose of

vaccine and every outreach effort supported through Japan's contribution brings us closer to a polio-free Pakistan. We are deeply grateful for Japan's continued confidence in our programme and our frontline workers." Akamatsu Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, reaffirmed Japan's long-term commitment to Pakistan's health priorities. "Japan has always believed that

protecting children from preventable diseases is one of the most important investments in a nation's future," he said. "Through this support, we renew our commitment to stand with Pakistan, UNICEF and all partners who continue to work tirelessly toward our shared goal of eradicating polio." The newly signed grant will provide critical funding to the PEI for the procurement and delivery of polio vaccines, reinforcing ongoing progress to interrupt the spread of poliovirus and sustain the gains achieved in recent years. "We appreciate the Government of Pakistan's strong commitment to ensuring that every child receives the essential polio vaccine," said Mr. Naoaki Miyata, Chief Representative, JICA Pakistan Office. "Vaccines remain one of the most effective ways to protect children and communities, and we are confident that this support will be used effectively through the dedication of frontline workers

and the engagement of parents and communities. We look forward to continued progress toward achieving a polio-free Pakistan." The new funding also underscores the importance of strong partnerships in achieving shared global health goals. "Japan's support continues to be instrumental in Pakistan's progress toward ending polio," said Ms. Pernille Ironside, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan. "This contribution will help ensure that every child, no matter where they live, receives the polio vaccine. We deeply value Japan's partnership with UNICEF, the Government of Pakistan, and communities across the country to protect children, strengthen health systems, and build a future free of polio." The Government of Japan has been a long-standing partner of Pakistan's polio eradication efforts. Since 1996, Japan has contributed over US\$ 245 million in grants and loans through UNICEF to protect millions of children across Pakistan.



Briefs

Mohsin Naqvi praises security forces

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday lauded Pakistan's security forces for their successful counterterrorism operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, commending their professionalism in eliminating threats posed by "Kharijite militants." Minister Naqvi praised the forces for neutralizing 15 India-sponsored terrorists, calling it a testament to their exceptional capability and unwavering commitment to national security. "I pay tribute to our brave security forces for bringing 15 Indian-backed terrorists to their grim end," he said. He stated that the forces had once again foiled the "nefarious designs" of militants supported by India. "Our courageous security personnel have yet again crushed the evil ambitions of India-sponsored terrorists," Naqvi added. Highlighting public confidence in the ongoing operations, he said the nation deeply values the sacrifices and efforts of the security forces working to restore lasting peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Naqvi reaffirmed that counterterror operations will continue until the complete eradication of terrorism from the region. — APP

US biggest recipient of Chinese loans: study

NEWS DESK

HONG KONG: The United States is the biggest recipient of China's lending activities globally, according to a study which tracked Beijing's credit activities and found it is increasingly lending to higher-income countries over developing countries. The report, published on Tuesday by AidData, a research lab at US university William & Mary, said China's lending and grant giving totalled \$2.2 trillion across 200 countries in every region of the world from 2000 to 2023. China has long been seen as a creditor to developing countries through its Belt and Road initiative, but is shifting toward lending to advanced economies — backing strategic infrastructure and high-tech supply chains in areas such as semiconductors, artificial intelligence and clean energy. Beijing's portfolio size is two-to-four times larger than previous estimates suggest, AidData said, adding that China remains the world's largest official creditor. More than three-quarters of China's overseas lending operations now support projects and activities in upper-middle-income countries and high-income countries.

ECC approves key grants for Security, defence Projects

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet met today at the Finance Division under the chairmanship of Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, to consider a range of summaries pertaining to national security, defence, food security, and petroleum sector reforms. The ECC approved a Technical Supplementary Grant (TSG) of Rs 100.3 million on the request of the Ministry of Interior & Narcotics Control for the maintenance and repair of defence equipment utilized by the Federal Civil Armed Forces, said a release issued by the Ministry of Finance here on Tuesday. On another summary submitted by the Ministry of Interior & Narcotics Control, the Committee approved an additional Rs 841.56 million as TSG to support border control operations, internal security, and maintenance of law and order by the Federal Civil Armed Forces. — APP

SCO 'well-placed' to promote regional co-op: FM Ishaq Dar

He said that the Tianjin summit was a clear signal, "a signal that our organisation is evolving with the resolve to harness the full spectrum of our collective potential by focusing on economic integration



DNA

MOSCOW: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, on Tuesday, while addressing a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) conference in Moscow, said the summit was "well-placed" to promote regional cooperation in dealing with emergencies and to extend cooperation in the humanitarian field. The SCO is holding its Council of Heads of Government summit in Moscow from November 17 to 18. Taking place under Russia's rotating presidency, the high-level meeting follows the landmark Tianjin Summit three months earlier and comes at a pivotal moment for Eurasian economic connectivity in a shifting global order. "Excellencies, the agenda before us, span-

ning trade, economy, culture and humanitarian cooperation, is the basis of a mature, future-oriented SCO," FM Dar said during his speech. "Pakistan views them as interconnected threads in a single, stronger fabric of regional partnership." He said that the Tianjin summit was a clear signal, "a signal that our organisation is evolving with the resolve to harness the full spectrum of our collective potential by focusing on economic integration through expanded trade collaboration, improved infrastructure connectivity, investment partnerships, advancement of cross-border trade corridors, and the promotion of digital economic development". The SCO, Dar highlighted, has established a foundation for sustainable economic progress throughout the SCO space. "Pakistan has developed a technology-driven, proactive disaster management sys-

tem," the FM pointed out, adding that the country is "keen" to organise simulation exercises with SCO partners to bolster disaster preparedness across the region. "Excellencies, our discussions at Tianjin underscored the need to modernise our outreach. The value of our observer and partner states is immense," Dar said. He added, "Let us move from a model of passive observation to one of real engagement. Let us invite them to participate not as guests on the periphery but as stakeholders in specific project-based initiatives that align with their expertise and our collective goals. This way, Dar emphasised, "we can create a flexible, multi-tiered model of cooperation that would benefit all". "An important feature of the modernisation of the SCO is the introduction of English as a working language," FM Dar pointed

out. "Let us move forward from political declarations and establish a translation unit. The SCO can attract more partners and achieve wider goal influence with this only one step." "Excellencies, to translate the momentum of Tianjin into tangible progress, we suggest greater focus on practical, cross-cutting initiatives," Dar said. Pakistan, according to Dar's address, has two proposals: operationalise financial tools for the promotion of trade and economy and build human capital. "While our efforts continue to make available diversified financial tools such as the SCO Development Bank and development and investment funds for our economies and businesses, we must aggressively utilise the tools already at our disposal, like the SCO Interbank Consortium, to finance connectivity and technical collaboration projects," he said. With respect to building human capital, Dar said the ultimate resource of the SCO is "our people". "The empowerment of our youth is of foremost importance," he stressed. "We must invest in them directly. Pakistan, therefore, advocates for a significant expansion of the SCO university network into a consortium for applied knowledge," he said, adding that this would facilitate not just student exchanges but also joint research programmes in critical fields such as information technology, artificial intelligence, water resource management, agriculture, and telemedicine while addressing common challenges with shared intellect. "Excellencies, Pakistan is committed to being a proactive and creative partner in the journey," Dar highlighted. "Let us build an SCO that is a launchpad for shared success, where every connection made, commercial, cultural, or intellectual, strengthens the whole. Let us ensure that the legacy of our work is a region more innovative, more interconnected, and more integrated."

Four high court judges' request for pension details

Judges make verbal queries from accounts dept seeking detailed info regarding post-retirement entitlements

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: Following the controversial 27th Constitutional Amendment, empowering the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) to transfer high court judges across provinces without their consent, fresh indications have emerged that as many as four high court judges may be contemplating resignation. Well-placed sources told that these four judges have recently approached their respective high court's accounts department to seek detailed information regarding their post-retirement entitlements. Their queries, all made verbally, relate to pensionary benefits, the exact dates on which such benefits become due in two of the cases, the status of their accumulated leave balances, and the depreciated value of the official vehicles currently in their use if they opt to purchase them now. According to sources, these inquiries have triggered strong speculation within judicial circles that the four judges — already understood to be on the government's list for transfer after the passage of the 27th Amendment — are actively weighing the option of stepping down instead of being reassigned to new provinces or regions.

Trump says US will sell F-35 stealth jets to Saudi Arabia

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said Monday the United States would sell F-35 stealth fighters to Saudi Arabia, a day before Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman visits the White House for talks. "We will be doing that. We will be selling F-35s," Trump told reporters when asked if Washington would agree to sell Riyadh the jets at Tuesday's meeting. "They've been a great ally," he added. Riyadh has long been seeking to buy F-35 fighter jets, currently only owned by Israel in the Middle East. Israeli officials have voiced concern about a sale of the planes to Saudi Arabia, despite a push for the kingdom to normalize relations. In another area of past contention, a source familiar with negotiations said that Trump and the prince would sign a deal on a framework for civilian nuclear cooperation. Saudi Arabia, one of the world's top oil producers, says it wants to diversify from fossil fuels and is looking for the advanced US technology available from a so-called "123 agreement." But such agreements are subject to tight rules against proliferation, and Congress would be expected to scrutinize any full accord. Saudi Arabia says it is not seeking nuclear weapons and it recently entered an enhanced defense partnership with Pakistan, a nuclear power. The United States has so far only allowed the sales of F-35s to its closest allies, including a number of European NATO allies and Israel. Washington kicked Turkey out of the F-35 program in 2019 because Ankara's purchase of a Russian air defense system sparked fears that Moscow could acquire the plane's technology through the back door. The Saudi prince and de facto ruler is making his first US visit since the 2018 murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents prompted worldwide outrage and briefly upended ties. Prince Mohammed, who hosted Trump earlier this year, will press for security guarantees while Trump will urge him to normalize ties with Israel. — Agencies

Pak stresses authority in enclave remain with Palestinians

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Security Council adopted a resolution Monday endorsing US President Donald Trump's peace plan for Gaza and an international force as well as a governing "Board of Peace" following two years of Israeli war, with Pakistan underscoring that the authority in the enclave must remain with Palestinians through a committee. The 15-member Council voted 13-0, with 2 permanent members — China and Russia — abstaining. The text welcomes the Comprehensive Plan announced by President Trump on 29 September. The first phase of the 20-point plan led to the ceasefire between Hamas and Israel days later. After its adoption, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad commended President Trump's plan as its primary objective was to stop the bloodshed, save the lives of innocent Palestinians, including women and children, maintain the ceasefire, ensure large-scale humanitarian relief, and secure the full withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from Gaza. At the same time, the Pakistani envoy pointed out that the "Board of Peace" (BoP) was envisaged as a "transitional oversight mechanism" whose mandate expires in 2027 unless renewed. "Importantly," he added, "the executive and administrative authority in Gaza must remain with the Palestinians through a Palestinian Committee". "Pakistan's consistent policy, and every action pursuant to it, is for a just and lasting resolution of the Palestinian Question based on international legitimacy — Palestinian self-determination and the establishment of a sovereign, independent and contiguous State of Palestine based on pre-1967 borders with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital," Ambassador Asim Ahmad said. "That must be the ultimate objective, and the culmination, of any peace process or initiative on the Middle East". Monday's resolution also welcomes the establishment of a Board of Peace (BoP) "as a transitional administration" in Gaza that will coordinate reconstruction efforts. — DNA

Fin. Minister Aurangzeb highlights Pak economic reform momentum



SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a detailed meeting today at the Finance Division with a high-level delegation representing Dialog, a global leadership platform founded by Peter Thiel and Auren Hoffman. The delegation was led by Ambassador Ali Jehangir Siddiqui and included prominent global figures such as Simon Stevens (Member, UK House of Lords), Veit Valentin Dengler (Member of Parliament, Austria and Founder Draw.Solutions), Yasmin Green (CEO, Jigsaw Google), Fatima Kardar (VP, Xbox-Microsoft), Shadi Martini (CEO, MultiFaith Alliance), Evan Marwell (CEO, EducationSuperHighway), and Himanshu Gulati (Member of Parliament, Norway) amongst others, said a release issued here on Tuesday. Welcoming the delegation, the Finance Minister expressed appreciation for Dialog's continued engagement with Pakistan since the inaugural Dialog Pakistan-Winter 2024, which has helped broaden international understanding of Pakistan's economic

landscape and investment potential. Ambassador Siddiqui introduced the delegation, following which the Finance Minister delivered a comprehensive briefing. The Minister outlined Pakistan's macroeconomic consolidation over the past 18 months, noting recent upgrades by Fitch, S&P and Moody's affiliates, as well as the successful Second Review of Pakistan's IMF Extended Fund Facility and the Climate Resilience Program. He highlighted improving geopolitical alignment, strengthened relationships with the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia, and the launch of CPEC Phase 2.0 focused on business-to-business investment, export-oriented industrial zones, and joint ventures. The Finance Minister stressed the government's focus on structural reforms, including taxation, energy sector restructuring, privatization of state-owned enterprises, governance reforms, and federal expenditure rationalization. He underscored efforts to broaden and deepen the tax base, integrate technology and AI-based monitoring, enhance compliance, and bring under-taxed sectors such as real estate, agriculture, and wholesale/retail into the net.

US lawmakers set for explosive vote on Epstein files

WASHINGTON: US lawmakers are expected to advance a bill on Tuesday requiring the release of government records on sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, in defiance of President Donald Trump's attempts to keep a lid on one of the country's most notorious case files. After weeks of resistance, behind-the-scenes pressure and frenzied lobbying against making the material public, Trump threw in the towel on Sunday as it became clear that as many as 100 Republicans in Congress were poised to defy him. The House of Representatives looks all but certain to advance the Epstein Files Transparency Act, compelling publication of unclassified documents detailing the investigation into the disgraced financier's operations and 2019 death in custody, ruled a suicide. Lawmakers say the public deserves answers in a case with over 1,000 alleged victims, while pro-Trump activists insist the files will expose Democrats and other powerful figures long shielded from scrutiny.

Trump can try to block the files, but killing the bill in the Senate or vetoing it after a lopsided House vote would be awkward to defend, with the midterm elections looming and the public overwhelmingly in favor of transparency. The saga has exposed rare fissures in support for the Republican leader, who campaigned on releasing the files but changed course after taking office, accusing Democrats of pushing a "hoax" and attacking politicians who called for their release. Trump said on social media late Sunday that House Republicans should vote to release the files "because we have nothing to hide." "I'm all for it," he told reporters in the Oval Office on Monday when asked about signing the bill into law if it passes the Senate. His U-turn marks a rare occasion when a revolt from Trump's allies has forced his hand. All House Democrats and four Republicans signed a "discharge petition" — an extraordinary procedure forcing the vote — despite Republican leaders' attempts to block it. — Agencies

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