



Islamabad POST

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Arshad Nadeem gets Gold medal in the Islamic games in KSA

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Interior Minister says teis with Oman cordial

Detailed News On Page-08



PAF fully geared to match any threat: air chief

Detailed News On Page-02



Briefs

Over 5,500 deployed for T20 Tri-Series

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Police on Wednesday strengthened security and traffic arrangements around the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium for the ongoing T20 Tri-Series, among Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe, a police spokesman said. Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe were scheduled to face each other in T20 fixture. Acting on the instructions of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani, more than 5,500 police officers were deployed in and around the venue, while over 350 traffic personnel managed vehicular flow to prevent congestion, the spokesman added. Senior officers remained in the field to inspect deployments and brief the force. Snipers were positioned on rooftops, and a dedicated control room has been set up to monitor the area through CCTV cameras. Patrol units from local police stations, along with Elite and Dolphin squads, continued to conduct regular rounds in stadium's vicinity.

Ukraine says received 1,000 bodies from Russia

KYIV: Ukraine said Thursday it had received from Russia the remains of 1,000 people that Moscow said were killed Ukrainian soldiers, in the latest repatriation between the two sides. The exchange of prisoners of war and the remains of dead soldiers is one of the few remaining areas of co-operation between Kyiv and Moscow, which invaded Ukraine in February 2022. "Today, repatriation measures took place. 1000 bodies, claimed by the Russian side to belong to Ukrainian servicemen, were returned to Ukraine," Kyiv's Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War said on social media. The agency added that investigators and experts "will soon carry out all necessary examinations and identify the repatriated bodies". Citing unnamed sources, Russian state media said the bodies of 1,000 killed Ukrainian soldiers were handed over in exchange for the remains of 30 Russian soldiers. - APP

Dar urges EU firms to exploit Pak potential

DNA

BRUSSELS: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Thursday highlighting Pakistan's attractive investment prospects across key sectors like agriculture, textiles, housing, and information technology, urged leading European companies to seize these opportunities by making investments in the country. The deputy prime minister, addressing a dinner reception he hosted in honor of Members of the European Parliament at Pakistan House during his visit here, said that Pakistan attached special importance to its multilateral and bilateral relations with the EU and considered it a vital pillar for peace, stability, reconstruction, and development. DPM Dar is visiting Brussels to participate in the Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum and co-chair the seventh Pakistan-EU Strategic Dialogue with his counterpart Kaja Kallas.

NA-18 by-polls

ECP seeks deployment of army

Electoral body says Sohail Afridi issued "threats to officials and specially voters" during his speech at Havelian

MAHNOOR ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is seeking the deployment of the Pakistan Army and the civil armed forces for NA-18 by-elections citing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi's "threats" and use of "provocative language" against public officials. In separate letters addressed to the respective secretaries of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Interior, the ECP drew attention to CM Afridi's recent speech at a public rally at Havelian, alleging that he "clearly threatened" district administration, police officers and ECP officials engaged with the by-polls due on November 23. "Regrettably, he [KP CM] used offensive language which amounts to harassing and unduly influencing them which may prevent them [officials] from effective performance of their duties," the letter reads. The electoral body's concerns are linked with CM Afridi's speech at Chamba, near Havelian, in relation to the upcoming by-election for which the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has fielded Shehraz Khan, wife of former National Assembly opposition leader Omar Ayub. During his speech, the CM issued a stern warning to local political actors in Haripur, claiming that some

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CM Afridi says remarks 'taken out of context'

FAISLA SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Sohail Afridi on Thursday clarified his statement about the NA-18 by-election, which had prompted the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to request the army's deployment. The ECP sought the deployment of army and civil armed forces for the by-polls, over what it called CM Afridi's "threats" and use of "provocative language" against public officials. However, the KP chief minister — speaking to journalists outside the Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi — said that his remarks during a political gathering speech at Chamba on Wednesday had been "taken out of context". "I was not campaigning for anybody. I said yesterday that there should be no rigging," he added.

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Fitna al Hindustan

'Security Forces killed 30 terrorists in separate engagements

Capitalising on intelligence with respect to the presence of another group of khwarij, in the same general area, in another intelligence-based operation, the own troops successfully neutralised eleven more khwarij

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Security Forces killed 30 khwarij belonging to Indian Proxy Fitna Al Khwarij in two separate engagements in Kurram District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. "On 19 November 2025, twenty-three khwarij belonging to Indian Proxy Fitna Al Khwarij were killed in two separate engagements in Kurram District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. On the reported presence of Khwarij, a targeted operation was conducted by the Security Forces. During the conduct of the operation, own troops effectively engaged the khwarij location and after an intense fire exchange, twelve khwarij were sent to hell," said an ISPR news release. Capitalising on intelligence with respect to the presence of another group of khwarij, in the same general area, in another intelligence-based operation, the own

Continued on Page 06

President, PM laud security forces

APP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday appreciated the security forces for their successful operations against Indian-backed Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists in Kurram district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in which 23 terrorists were killed. In separate statements, both leaders commended the professionalism and capabilities of the officers and soldiers participating in the ongoing anti-terror operations. President Zardari noted that the Pakistan Army and law-enforcement agencies

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BAGH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif unveils the plaque of groundbreaking of Danish School in Harighel-Bagh in Azad Jammu Kashmir, on 20 November 2025. - DNA

Full Court 'rejected proposal of en masse resignation'

Sources say some judges suggested writing a letter to govt over 27th Amendment as institutional response

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Full Court, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi, last week discussed a senior judge's proposal for en masse resignation, with majority of judges disagreeing with it. The meeting later unanimously approved the Supreme Court Amendment Rules 2025. According to the Supreme Court (SC) sources, around 13 judges attended the Full Court Meeting called in order to discuss the resignations by two apex court judges.

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Naqvi condemns blast in DI Khan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has condemned the blast near a police armored vehicle in the Dera Ismail Khan area. He paid tribute to the two police personnel, Saif-ur-Rehman and Ramzan, who embraced martyrdom in the incident. Mohsin Naqvi expressed heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyred officers. He also prayed for the speedy recovery of the four policemen injured in the blast.

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Danish school in AJK

Pak has achieved a dignified stature globally, says PM

Asks the newly elected AJK Prime Minister to set high standards of governance in Azad Jammu and Kashmir for development and prosperity of its people

BUREAU REPORT

BAGH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif laid the foundation stone of Daanish School in Hari Gehl area of district Bagh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir today. Addressing the ceremony, he said this school will be completed by 23rd March next year to provide international standard and free education to deserving students. The Prime Minister said a similar school has already been established in Bimber district on which 35 percent of work has been completed while another one in Neelum valley will be established soon. He said these Daanish schools are equipped with modern IT labs, digital libraries, smart classrooms, dormitories, playgrounds and other such facilities.

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'SIFC has boosted digital sector'

FIAZ CH.

ISLAMABAD: The support extended by the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) has resulted in the considerable promotion of digital sector, technology and increase in investment in the country. This was stated by Minister for Information Technology Shaza Fatima Khawaja while addressing the 27th National Security Workshop. She said Pakistan's digital ecosystem includes forty-three software tech parks,

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MQM-P renews push for new province in Sindh

Demand for a new province is not MQM-P's alone but a "constitutional requirement", citing Article 239 that allows the creation of new provinces and districts

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Ahead of the anticipated constitutional changes under the 28th Amendment, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has revived its decades-old demand for a new province in Sindh, announcing a public mobilisation drive and legal measures to secure constitutional rights for the province's urban population. Addressing a press conference in Karachi along with the party's top leadership on Thursday, MQM-P convener Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui warned that if parliament and the courts fail to deliver justice, the party would "take the struggle to the streets". Discussions regarding the 28th Amendment are underway, with Prime Minister's

Adviser on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah saying that it would be tabled once a consensus is achieved. He added that the proposed amendment would relate to local bodies, the National Finance Commission (NFC) and health matters. Speaking to reporters, Siddiqui — who is also the federal education minister — said the demand for a new province is not MQM-P's alone but a "constitutional requirement", citing Article 239 that allows the creation of new provinces and districts. "A province is an administrative unit — it must grow with population. This is the Constitution's demand, not MQM-P's," he said. "Karachi's 17-year-long occupation must now end," he said, adding that Pakistan suffers from a

Continued on Page 06

UNSC panel terms Afghan-backed TTP serious threat to Pakistan security

Denmark-chaired committee endorses Islamabad's position that TTP conducting cross-border terrorism inside Pakistan

DNA

NEW YORK: The head of the UN Security Council's Daesh and Al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee has backed Pakistan's position that Afghan territory is being used to stage terrorist attacks in the country, warning that the proscribed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) poses a serious threat to the regional security. Denmark's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Sandra Jensen Landi — in the capacity of the committee's chair — presented a report to the UNSC, stating that the terrorist group has conducted numerous high-profile attacks in Pakistan from Afghan soil, some of which incurred mass casualties. She said that the TTP, with its approximately 6,000 fighters, is a serious threat emanating from the region, receiving both logistical and substantial support from the "de facto" authorities. Landi made that statement as the 15-member Council was briefed by the heads of three of its subsidiary bodies — which relate to Daesh/Al-Qaeda, UN coun-

ter-terrorism efforts and measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors — hearing that the threat posed by terrorism continues to evolve, especially in Africa, as malign actors exploit new technologies to pursue dangerous ends. Islamabad and Kabul are witnessing heightened tensions amid the Afghan Taliban regime's reluctance to act against terrorist groups operating from its soil, in the backdrop of rising terror attacks in Pakistan. Commenting on the report, Pakistan's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Usman Jadoon, said the country has rendered invaluable sacrifices in its efforts to eradicate this menace, with over 80,000 casualties and billions of dollars in economic losses. Al-Qaeda, he added, was decimated largely due to Pakistan's efforts. "Our valiant security forces and law enforcement agencies continue to counter the terrorism threat emanating from Afghanistan where entities like ISIL-K, TTP and its affiliates, BLA (Balochistan Liberation Army) and its Majeed Brigade are thriving under the patronage of their hosts and backed

by our principle adversary and net destabiliser in the region," he said, without naming India. Ambassador Jadoon said that the 1267 Committee's sanctions regime must "reflect ground realities", and that listing and delisting issues must be dealt with "in a fair, transparent and judicious manner and without political considerations". The Pakistani envoy also stressed that, to adopt a zero-tolerance approach, the UN's counter-terrorism architecture "must also possess the necessary tools to designate violent, far-right, extreme right-wing, ultranationalist, xenophobic and Islamophobic groups around the world". Separately, the representative of China, urged members of the committee to support the listing of the Balochistan Liberation Army and its Majeed Brigade, "sending a strong signal of zero-tolerance for terrorism". The tensions between the two neighbouring nations escalated when the Taliban forces and India-backed TTP, also known as Fitna al-Khawarij, resorted to an unprovoked attack on Pakistan on October 12. The Pakistan Armed Forces gave a befitting response to

the aggression, killing over 200 Afghan Taliban and affiliated militants in a self-defence action. The military's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), said that 23 soldiers embraced martyrdom in the clashes with the Taliban forces and the terrorists. Furthermore, the security forces also conducted "precision strikes" in Afghanistan's Kandahar province and the capital Kabul, as well as in the border areas of North and South Waziristan districts, successfully destroying multiple strongholds in response to the aggression. The two sides had agreed on a temporary ceasefire during the Doha talks on October 19 and later held several meetings in Istanbul, with Pakistan aiming to devise a mechanism to stop cross-border terrorism emanating from Afghan soil. The Istanbul talks could not deliver the desired results due to stubbornness from the Afghan side, as Kabul used the Istanbul talks to malign Pakistan rather than address Islamabad's core concern of terrorism emanating from Afghan soil.

Pakistan-Philippines eco, edu coop discussed

LAHORE: Philippine Ambassador Dr. Emmanuel Fernandez said on Thursday that Pakistan and Philippines continue to co-operate in economic, educational, and cultural fields, and currently, the trade balance favours Pakistan. Addressing a session here at Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), the ambassador noted that Pakistan can export many products to the Philippines, including rice and surgical instruments, while there are opportunities to import electrical appliances and vehicle parts from the Philippines. He stated that relationship between the two countries spans over seven decades, and the Philippines was among the first countries that had recognized Pakistan shortly after its independence. In his keynote address, the LCCI President Faheem ur Rehman Saigol said that cooperation under "educational diplomacy" with the Philippine Embassy is extremely important for the future of both countries. He emphasized that in today's world, nations which prioritize education, research, human resource development, and academic collaboration are the ones that progress. The Ambassador said the Philippine education system follows an American model, providing globally recognized education in English at low cost. He added that Pakistan and Philippines can open many new paths for development by focusing on education. He concluded by quoting Nelson Mandela: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.—APP

Human capital determinant of digital transformation

ISLAMABAD: President of Jazz's Consumer Division, Kazim Mujtaba, emphasised that human capital is no longer just a priority but the defining factor in a company's digital transformation. "In today's digital economy, it is no longer one priority among many; it is the determinant of whether a business can transform, scale, and stay competitive. Technology, capital, and strategy can only create value when organizations have the capability, adaptability, and leadership to execute them," he said while speaking at the recent HR Metrics Forum, where Board Directors and C-suite leaders examined the ISO 30414:2025 framework Metrics once viewed as traditional HR indicators — engagement, skills readiness, leadership depth, inclusion, and pay equity — are now emerging as leading signals of enterprise performance and long-term resilience. Kazim Mujtaba, President of Jazz's Consumer Division, articulated this reality through Jazz's own transformation journey. "As the company evolves into a multi-vertical, digital-first ServiceCo, the very nature of work is undergoing a reset," he said. "Roles across the organisation are increasingly technology-driven, demanding teams to adopt and adapt digital tools for speed, productivity, and stronger decision-making." Kazim added that skills are becoming more fluid and cross-functional, with shorter half-lives that necessitate continuous learning.—APP

PAF deepens global airpower alliance

DUBAI: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, held a series of high-level engagements with Air Chiefs from friendly countries and senior military leadership of the United Arab Emirates on the sidelines of the Dubai Airshow 2025. The discussions focused on enhancing military-to-military cooperation, expanding training and operational collaboration with special emphasis on exploring future avenues in airpower development, aerospace technologies and professional exchange initiatives. During the visit, Chief of the Air Staff also held comprehensive discussions with Lieutenant General Pilot Ibrahim Nasser Al-Alawi, Undersecretary of Defence UAE, and Major General Rashid Mohammed Al-Shamsi, Commander UAE Air Force & Air Defence. The meetings reviewed the evolving geo-strategic environment and reaffirmed the commitment of both sides to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation. The discussions centred on strengthening cooperation in advanced training, fostering collaboration in emerging aerospace technologies and enhancing the mechanisms for effective operational coordination. The UAE military leadership lauded Pakistan Air Force's modernization initiatives and grow-

ing indigenous capabilities with a shared resolve to further strengthen military engagement through joint exercises, professional exchanges and forward-looking partnerships. Pakistan Air Force contingent has arrived in the United Arab Emirates to participate in the Dubai Airshow 2025. The contingent features advanced JF-17 Thunder Block-III and the renowned Super Mushshak trainer aircraft, reflecting Pakistan's growing expertise in indigenous military aviation. During the event, the JF-17 Thunder Block-



Three years on, PM's announcement on ad rate increase still unimplemented

The Prime Minister in his last tenure had publicly announced his decision of increase in the Government advertisement rates and also repeated the same in his present tenure but despite delay of 3 years, the decision is yet to be implemented: APNS

DNA

will be cleared by the end of De- tion and DGPR for streamlining Executive Committee also ap- Committee. The members also Munir Jilani, (Paigham), Mr.

KARACHI: The APNS expressed its dismay on consistent indifference of the Federal Government to notify and implement the decision of the Prime Minister, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to increase Government advertisement rates of newspapers. The Prime Minister in his last tenure had publicly announced his decision of increase in the Government advertisement rates and also repeated the same in his present tenure but despite delay of 3 years, the decision is yet to be implemented. This delay has caused severe financial crunch to the newspaper industry, stated a press release. The Executive Committee of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society at its meeting held at Lahore under the Chairmanship of its President, Senator Sarmad Ali considered the problems faced by the print media and urged upon the Press Information Department to clear outstanding dues pertaining to advertisements of the Federal Government released during the period from April 2020 to June 2025 at the earliest. Punjab Secretary Information, Mr. Tahir Raza Hamdani, DGPR Mr. Fa- reed Ahmed and DG, PID Lahore Mr. Shafiqat Abbas attended the meeting on special invitation. The members apprised the officials on the payment issues faced by publications based in Punjab. It was pointed out that approximately PKR 220 million is currently due with DGPR towards print dues. Further the members expressed their concern on an outstanding amount of 730 million that has been received at DGPR and is yet to be disbursed to newspapers for the fiscal years 2024-25. The members requested that these dues be disbursed to newspapers at the earliest. The Secretary assured that the outstanding amount



ember this year and efforts for recovery of dues from Provincial Government departments have also been accelerated. He hoped that a large amount will be cleared by the next month. He stated that the amount currently under litigation is in the process of reconciliation, and updates will be provided once the process is completed. The members appreciated the Chief Minister Ms. Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Information Minister, Ms. Azma Bukhari and Secretary Information for addressing the most disturbing issue of restrictions on the release of IPL tenders to newspapers. The members also appreciated Secretary Informa-

tion and DGPR for streamlining Executive Committee also ap- Committee. The members also Munir Jilani, (Paigham), Mr. proved the re-structuring and change of name of following advertising agencies: M/s. Awan Brand Communications, Karachi, M/s. Marketing & Advertising (Pvt.) Ltd., Karachi and M/s. G.S Associate, Karachi to M/s. G.S Advertising Associates (Pvt.) Ltd., Lahore, M/s. Group M Pakistan (Pvt.) Ltd., Karachi to M/s. WPP Media PK (Pvt.) Ltd., Karachi, M/s. Adreach Advertising, Islamabad to M/s. Adreach Advertising (Pvt.) Ltd., Islamabad and M/s. Hakuna Matata, Lahore to M/s. Hakuna Media (Pvt.) Ltd., Lahore. The Punjab Information Minister hosted a dinner for members of the Executive

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met the Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at a dinner and discussed matters of national interest. The meeting was attended by the following: Senator Sarmad Ali, President, Mr. Shahab Zuberi, Vice President, Mr. Mohsin Bilal, Joint Secretary, Mr. Naveed Kashif, Finance Secretary, Mr. Mohsin Seyal, (Aftab), Mr. Bilal Farooqui, (Aghaz), Mr. Humayun Tariq, (Business Report), Mr. Naveed Chaudhry, (City 42), Mr. Najamuddin Sheikh, (Deyanat), Mr. Bilal Mahmood, (Family), Mr. Imtinan Shahid, (Khabrain), Syed Mumtaz Ahmed Shah, (Mashriq Quetta), Mr. S.M.

Mujib-ur-Rahman Shami, (Pakistan Lahore), Mr. Faisal Zahid Malik, (Pakistan Observer), Mr. Muhammad Awais Khushnood, (Sahafat), Mr. Humayun Gulzar, (Sayadat), and Mr. Ifan Athar, (Tijarat). Following attended the meeting on Zoom: Mr. Muhammad Athar Kazi, Secretary General, Mr. Waseem Ahmed (Awam,Quetta), Mr. An-sar Mahmood Bhatti (M/Cen-terline), Syed Akbar Tahir (Jasarat). Following attended the meeting as special observer: Mr. Tanvir Shah, (City 42), Mr. Muhammad Sarmad Gulzar (Sayadat), Mr. Imran Athar (Jurat), Mr. Muhammad Farooq (Yalghar) and Mr. Noor Ullah Malik, (Jang).

Kundi for efforts to guide youth to positive future

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday said that steering the young generation in a positive direction was a shared responsibility, adding that those who play a constructive role today would be remembered favourably in history. He said that his own journey was made possible by Allah's blessings, his parents' prayers and the confidence of his party leadership, and he aimed to leave behind a positive legacy. He expressed these views while speaking to a delegation of the Federal Youth Parliament, led by its General Secretary Saqib Ali. Senior politician Nighat Orakzai of the Pakistan Peoples Party was also present. Governor Kundi said women's empowerment and youth engagement remain among his top priorities, saying that for the first time

the Governor House has been made an actively functioning institution. Recalling his tenure as the central Information Secretary of the party, he said he maintained extensive coordination nationwide with Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari ties that still remain strong. He emphasized that wherever he goes, he strives to project the positive image of Peshawar and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, adding that the province must eliminate the lingering perception of unrest, terrorism, and kidnapping. "We are bringing people from all walks of life to visit Peshawar. The CE Conference and the Inter-Sect Harmony Conferences are part of this effort," he added. The Governor said he has also visited the Khyber Peace Jirga and the Provincial Assembly with the same message that the gap between the federation and

the province must be bridged, and issues can only be resolved through constructive dialogue. "No province can fight terrorism alone. We need federal support and the full cooperation of Pakistan's armed forces. Without the security forces, peace in the province would not be possible," he remarked. He said the provincial government has been clearly advised to negotiate with the federal government based on logic and constitutional rights, assuring that he represents Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as its advocate in the federation. Highlighting challenges facing women in the province, he said that many girls lag behind in employment after completing their education. A new policy is being developed to ensure that every qualified girl receives opportunities according to her abilities.—DNA

Master plan presented for promoting tourism in Swat

PESHAWAR: A comprehensive master plan has been presented in a national workshop for promotion of tourism in Swat district. The master plan was presented by officials of Upper Swat Development Authority in a workshop held at Kalam, a well-known tourist destination in Swat. The workshop was presided over by the Director General of the Upper Swat Development Authority, Shoaib Abbas Chairman of Tehsil Bahrain Shahid Ali, local elders, journalists, representatives of various government departments,

officials of the Urban Policy Unit of the Planning & Development Department, National Engineering Services Pakistan, and other relevant officers among the attendees. During the workshop, a detailed briefing was given on the comprehensive Tourism Master Plan prepared for major tourist locations in Upper Swat, including Madain, Bahrain, Mankiyal, Kalam, and Mahodand. The briefing highlighted the current state of tourism, future needs, and developmental priorities. Addressing the workshop, Director Gener-

al Shoaib Abbas said that the master plan is being developed in collaboration with the Upper Swat Development Authority and NESPAK. Its main objectives are to prevent illegal constructions, improve sewage and waste management systems, reduce environmental pollution, and strengthen infrastructure. He said that as a result of this master plan, tourists will be provided with world-class facilities, while new opportunities for employment and development will emerge for the local population.—APP

78th CDA-DWP meeting. okays various uplift projects

ISLAMABAD: The 78th meeting of the Development Working Party (CDA-DWP) was held on Thursday under the chairmanship of Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa. The meeting was attended by senior officers from the Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Division, Ministry of Interior, Finance Division, members of the CDA Board along with representatives from relevant formations and project consultants. According to details, important projects for the Capital City Islamabad were approved in the 78th meeting of the CDA-DWP. The PC-I for the construction of the New Islamabad Convention, Expo and Exhibition Centre (NICEEC), costing 19.371 billion rupees, was approved in the meeting. The forum was informed that this will be a multifunctional centre where national and international conventions, exhibitions, and cultural events can be held. This centre will strengthen Islamabad's position as a hub for commerce, innovation, and cultural exchange, and the SCO summit scheduled for 2027 will also be hosted at this convention centre. The project's completion timeframe has been set at 18 months. The project for the construction of 6 steel pedestrian bridges at various locations in Islamabad was approved at a cost of 574.682 million rupees. The construction of these bridges will reduce accidents, improve traffic congestion and provide better facilities for school children, elderly and persons with disabilities. The project's completion timeframe is 18 months. Projects aimed at promoting sports activities in the city were also discussed in the meeting. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that these projects are highly significant for the development of the Federal Capital Islamabad and the improvement of civic facilities for its residents. He directed that effective measures be taken to complete these projects within the stipulated timelines and that no compromise be made on quality. Chairman CDA further said that all resources will be utilized to make the Federal Capital Islamabad one of the best Capital's in the world, ensuring the provision of the best possible facilities to its citizens.—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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Rawal Town.....	5773343
Water Tank	
Islamabad.....	0321-5744480

Condolence reference pays tribute to late Irfan Siddiqui

DNA

ISLAMABAD :At the condolence reference held in memory of renowned columnist, intellectual, writer, and Senator Irfan Siddiqui (late), organized by the Pakistan Cultural Forum, CDA Labour Union, and Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), federal ministers, parliamentarians, business leaders, and distinguished individuals from various walks of life paid rich tribute to the late Irfan Siddiqui. Speakers said that he promoted a culture of tolerance in politics, convinced others through reason, and always listened to opposing viewpoints with patience. In today's era, they emphasized, we must learn from his life to foster progress and reduce political tensions. At the condolence reference held at PNCA, Zafar Bakhtawari presented a resolution proposing that a road in Islamabad be named after Irfan Siddiqui, which was unanimously approved. Addressing the ceremony, Federal Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar said that Senator Irfan Siddiqui was a shining symbol of Pakistan's intellectual tradition. He possessed the ability to take the opposition along in politics. It is political moderation, he said, that leads nations forward. If we fail to learn this lesson, we



will continue repeating the mistakes of the past. He added that Irfan Siddiqui always used reason rather than stubbornness to make his point. The Minister further said that Parliament is supreme and must remain supreme; the right to amend the Constitution lies solely with Parliament and cannot be challenged anywhere. He said the establishment of a Constitutional Court is not a new idea; it is part of the Charter of Democracy signed by Nawaz

Sharif and the late Benazir Bhutto. Imran Khan also agreed to it. All provinces have equal representation in the Constitutional Court, and Islamabad has also been given representation. He said that the dream of a Constitutional Court has now been fulfilled according to the Constitution, and it should be allowed to function so that the country can move forward. He thanked Zafar Bakhtawari for organizing this memorable event in Irfan Siddiqui's honor. Former Senator

Pervaiz Rashid said in his address that Irfan Siddiqui was an outstanding writer, columnist, teacher, and politician—a multifaceted personality gifted with eloquence and clarity of thought. He will always remain alive in our hearts. He said Irfan Siddiqui had a romantic temperament, his poetry is worth reading, and the letters he wrote are in no way inferior to the letters of Ghalib. He added that Siddiqui could write a full column while conversing with friends.

Romania, Pak IT forum links 100 companies to new digital opportunities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: More than 100 technology firms from Romania and Pakistan came together at the Romania-Pakistan IT Forum 2025, marking a major push to expand digital cooperation between the two countries. The online meeting opened the door to new business links, wider market access, and a stronger flow of ideas in software development, digital services and innovation. The Embassy of Romania in Islamabad, in collaboration with P@SHA and Romania's ANIS, hosted the Romania-Pakistan IT Forum 2025 on 20 November. The virtual event brought together companies, industry leaders and government officials who outlined how both countries can work together to strengthen their digital sectors. The forum began with remarks from senior officials leading the technology and digital economy agendas in their respective governments. Romania's Minister of Economy, Digitalisation, Entrepreneurship and Tourism, Radu-Dinel Miruza, underscored the value of building stable areas of cooperation. He said both sides already share common interests and have strengths that complement

each other. Reflecting on his own experience as a former software engineer, he noted that working with Pakistani IT professionals gave him confidence in the potential of future collaboration. Pakistan's Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Khalid Hussain Magso, said Romania is an emerging but promising destination for Pakistan's IT exports. He stressed the need to increase business-to-business contact, hold targeted networking events, and ensure Pakistan's participation in Romania's major technology exhibitions. He also encouraged Romanian firms to attend Pakistan's ITCN Asia and the DFDI Forum, describing them as leading platforms for exploring long-term partnerships. Along with government ministers, the forum also heard from Romania's Ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. Dan Stoenescu, and Pakistan's ambassador-designate to Romania, Ilyas Nizami. Both diplomats highlighted how exchanges in the technology sector can support economic ties and bring professionals from both countries closer. From Romania, Andrei Miftode, Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Economy, Digitalisation, Entrepreneurship and Tourism, also took

part. He is responsible for overseeing the departments handling digital policies, electronic communications strategies and coordination of PN-RR-related activities. His participation added a technical overview of Romania's digital programmes. P@SHA Chairman Sajjad Syed and ANIS President Edward Creescu outlined the strengths of their respective markets. Their presentations showed how both industries can complement each other in fields such as software engineering, enterprise solutions, cybersecurity and IT-enabled services. They also noted the rising demand for cross-border partnerships as companies look for new markets and skilled talent. Some of the most notable contributions came from well-established technology firms. From Romania, companies such as UIPath, Bitdefender and SIMAVI shared their experiences and expansion plans. From Pakistan, leading players including Mercurial Minds, Afoze Technologies, Systems Limited and Metaviz Ltd discussed how they are exploring opportunities to work with Romanian partners. Their presentations reflected the growing role of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, fintech and digital services in shaping the next phase of cooperation.

Ambassador of Portugal to visit Sindh

ISLAMABAD - The Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan, Frederico Silva, is set to undertake an official visit to Sindh and Karachi from 21 to 26 November 2025, featuring a series of high-level meetings, cultural, and economic engagements, and field visits designed to strengthen Portugal-Pakistan bilateral cooperation. In Karachi, the Ambassador will meet with key political, religious, cultural, and social leaders, including the Chief Minister of Sindh, Archbishop of Karachi, members of the Karachi Goan community, and various cultural and community leaders. His program also includes visits to the Quaid-e-Azam Mausoleum, historic cultural sites, World Culture Festival 2025 at Karachi Arts Council, and the Adab Literary Festival, and meeting with the business community. The program also includes a series of visits organized by Aga Khan Development Network in Karachi and District Thatta to engage with communities and appreciate the development initiatives led by AKDN agencies. He will visit education and health institutions, infrastructure projects, and interact with students, faculty, and leadership at AKES, Aga Khan University, and AKU-IED.—DNA

ICAST-2025 concludes

ISLAMABAD: The International Conference on Applications of Space Science and Technology (ICAST-2025) concluded on Thursday at the Institute of Space Technology (IST), marking a historic milestone in Pakistan's scientific advancement and its commitment to international cooperation for peaceful uses of outer space. The closing ceremony was graced by Professor Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, who attended as the chief guest, underscoring the national importance and high-level government representation of the event. Hosted jointly by the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) and the Institute of Space Technology (IST), the three-day global conference was supported by the Inter-Islamic Network on Space Science and Technology (ISNET), the Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), and the National Center of GIS and Space Applications (NCGSA). Scientists, researchers, students, policymakers, astronauts, and representatives of international organizations from more than 25 countries attended. With over 2,000 participants, 70+ international delegates, and 80+ scientific and thematic sessions, ICAST-2025 stood out as Pakistan's largest.—APP

Pak finalising national cybersecurity policy: Shaza

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Thursday said that the government of Pakistan is finalising a national cybersecurity policy, which will establish an independent Cybersecurity Authority. In an interview with the VB.KG editorial team, she said, "It will protect government systems, data, and citizens in the digital age. Shaza Fatima Khawaja is currently in Kyrgyzstan to attend the CAREC 24th Ministerial Conference in Bishkek. She discussed the country's most successful digital initiatives, the creation of a unified system of electronic services, cybersecurity, and prospects for cooperation with Kyrgyzstan. In early January, the minister said, "We passed the Pakistan Digital Nation Act, which became a comprehensive roadmap for digital transformation in three key areas: the economy, public administration, and society. This was followed by the approval of a national artificial intelligence policy." She said that the most significant step was the launch of digital ID cards—a serious challenge for a country with a population of 240 million. At the same time, the government of Pakistan is moving toward comprehensive digital transformation, including in the economy and the social sector. Shaza Fatima said, "We're also creating our own super app, similar to Kyrgyzstan's 'Tunduk.' It will allow citizens to access government services remotely, completely contactless. If we talk about specific successes, there are two of them. The first is the RAAST digital payment system." She further elaborated that it is implemented through a single QR code, works across all banks and digital wallets, and accelerates the country's transition to fully digital transactions. For example, during Ramadan, 800,000 women opened digital wallets thanks to subsidies paid through RAAST. The second, she said, is the e-office electronic government system. "Today, 98% of federal government work has been transferred to electronic format. The prime minister and ministers can see the movement of all files and documents in real time, increasing the transparency and efficiency of the government apparatus." Responding to a question about how Pakistan managed to ensure public access to digital government services, she said the Pakistan Digital Nation Act became a key instrument, creating the Pakistan Digital Agency and the National Digital Commission, chaired by the prime minister. —DNA

Chinese Brands push Pak's mobile output to 22.8m units

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's mobile phone industry has undergone a dramatic structural shift, as locally assembled and manufactured devices surged to 22.78 million units in the first nine months of 2025 while commercial imports fell sharply to just 1.5 million units, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday quoting the latest data from the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority. The figures highlight the sustained impact of the Mobile Device Manufacturing Policy and the increasingly leading role of Chinese companies in the country's mobile production landscape. The change from previous years is striking. In 2016 Pakistan imported more than 21 million handsets commercially, while local manufacturing stood at only 0.29 million units. Imports remained high through 2020 when they peaked at 24.51 million units, but a combination of local assembly incentives, tariff adjustments,

and growing Chinese industrial participation gradually reversed the trend. By 2022 commercial imports had dropped to 1.53 million units while domestic production rose to nearly 22 million. The shift accelerated in 2024 as local manufacturing climbed to 31.38 million units and imports declined to 1.71 million, marking a near-complete turnaround from the pre-policy environment. The 2025 results for January to September show this transformation holding steady. Imports remain minimal at 1.5 million units and local assembly continues to expand at scale. The progress is attributed mainly to the manufacturing ecosystems established by leading Chinese smartphone companies that have invested heavily in Pakistan's assembly infrastructure, supply chains, and workforce development. PTA's top ten manufacturing chart for 2025 underscores the depth of Chinese involvement. Infinix leads production with 2.77 million units, followed

by VGO TEL at 2.57 million and itel with 2.06 million devices. Vivo recorded 1.74 million units, TECNO reached 1.45 million, and Xiaomi's Redmi brand produced 1.28 million handsets. Realme manufactured and assembled 0.81 million mobile sets. Brans such as QMobile, which depend heavily on Chinese original device manufacturers, also remain in the top tier, further strengthening China's overall footprint in Pakistan's mobile manufacturing sector. Economist Subham Ahmad Ansari notes that the dominance of Chinese tech firms reflects both Pakistan's demand for competitively priced smartphones and China's long-term industrial integration with Pakistan under broader economic cooperation frameworks. With almost half of all handsets produced in 2025 classified as smartphones, 11.92 million units out of the total 22.78 million, the role of Chinese manufacturers is becoming even more central to Pakistan's digital transformation.

Dengue cases drop to 5 in 24 hours

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration said only five new dengue cases recorded in the last 24 hours, while the administration reported 25,973 inspections and 1,038 fogging operations, reflecting firm monitoring across rural and urban areas. The administration reported that anti-dengue teams carried out spray operations inside 23 houses in a single day. These activities targeted areas identified during routine field checks. Alongside indoor spraying, officials confirmed that 1,038 fogging points were covered in sensitive locations across the city as part of the ongoing prevention drive. A total of 25,973 sites were inspected under the surveillance campaign. These inspections included residential areas, public places, open plots, and commercial spaces. Officials said that detailed checks help detect breeding sources early and reduce the risk of spread. In the last 24 hours, 5 new dengue cases were reported in Islamabad. Out of

these, 3 patients belong to rural areas, while 2 cases were reported from urban sectors. The district administration noted that the number of new infections has remained low for several days, reflecting the impact of timely interventions. Hospitals across the city are currently treating 11 dengue patients. Doctors have declared all of them stable, according to the administration's update. Health facilities continue to follow treatment protocols and maintain close observation of all admitted patients. During inspections, larvae were found at 46 open points, prompting immediate action from anti-dengue teams. Officials said emergency measures were completed at all these sites to prevent further spread. No negative points were reported during larva surveillance, suggesting that most areas are complying with preventive guidelines. The administration also highlighted that commercial hotspots remain at zero dengue reporting, signalling controlled risk in areas with high footfall. These locations

include markets, business centres and transport hubs, which are monitored daily due to heavier public movement. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad said the decline in cases is linked to continuous monitoring, quick response and cooperation from the public. He added that zero reporting from commercial hotspots reflects the performance of district teams working on the ground. The DC further said strict penalties have been imposed on violators of standard operating procedures. Individuals responsible for negligence were detained on the spot during inspections led by the administration. He stated that protecting citizens remains the top priority and the campaign will continue until dengue is fully eliminated. The district administration expressed optimism that if the current situation continues, Islamabad may soon be declared a dengue-free city. Officials reaffirmed that daily surveillance, community awareness and rapid field action will remain key parts of the strategy in the coming weeks.—DNA

Investiture ceremony held at IMCG I-8/4

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG) I-8/4 held its prestigious Investiture Ceremony 2025 with great zeal and dignity, marking a significant milestone in promoting student leadership, responsibility and academic excellence. The ceremony was graced by Farah Naz Akbar, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, as the Chief Guest, said a press release on Thursday. The event commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Shahwana, followed by a heartfelt Naat presented by Fatima Noor, which set an inspiring and graceful tone for the proceedings.

A formal welcome address preceded the remarks of Principal Shagufta, who highlighted the institution's academic progress, extracurricular achievements, and its continued commitment to delivering quality education throughout the academic year. A key highlight of the ceremony was the oath-taking of the newly elected office bearers, who pledged to uphold discipline, dedication and integrity in the execution of their duties. The programme also featured a presentation of Kalam-e-Iqbal, reinforcing the values of self-belief, determination and service. The outgoing president delivered an expressive farewell speech, followed by the candle exchange ceremony, symbolising the smooth and dignified transition of responsibilities to the new student council. Farah Naz Akbar commended the confidence, discipline and enthusiasm displayed by the students. She emphasised the transformative role of education, the importance of character-building, and the need to instil national and moral values in young learners. As a token of appreciation, a shield was presented to the Chief Guest.—APP

ICT admin expands M-Tag system to 10 points

ISLAMABAD: A total of 3,278 vehicles received M-Tags in the past 24 hours as Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) pushed ahead with its citywide tagging drive. With 10 M-Tag points now active across the federal capital, the district administration said every vehicle must secure an M-Tag without delay. According to the latest update, the campaign is progressing steadily with thousands of vehicles being tagged daily. In this regard, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon visited several M-Tag points to review operations and assess how teams are managing the influx of vehicles. During the visit, he reiterated that M-Tag installation is mandatory for every vehicle travelling within the federal capital. He said the step is part of a broader plan to improve city management, streamline traffic flow and enhance public safety. The DC shared that the city now has 10 active M-Tag points, established to make the process easier and more accessible for residents. These points have been set up across major entry routes and busy locations so motorists can complete tagging without delays. He added that more points could be added if the need arises and if vehicle flow continues to increase.—APP

COURT NOTICE	
In the Court of Shagufta Sabir, Civil Judge 1st Class Jhelum, Suit For Possession through partition etc	
Case title: Imran Khan etc vs Shafqat Mahmood etc Against: 2B- Mah Jabeen daughter of Tassaduq Mahmood residing in Chak Kharsa Tehsil and District Jhelum (Currently residing abroad abroad) As there is not possible to call the defendant through Summons in the instant suit so through proclamation in Newspaper, you are directed to appear in the court on 24.11.2025 at 09:00 AM, otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.	

Briefs

HEC's law admission test

DNA

ISLAMABAD/QUETTA: Education Testing Council (ETC), the testing entity of Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan has announced November 30, 2025 as a new date for Law Admission Test (LAT) in Quetta for the test candidates of Balochistan. LAT was earlier set for November 9, 2025 in Quetta, however it was postponed due to law-and-order situation in the province. It is pertinent to note that ETC is now issuing new Roll Number Slips to the candidates to appear in the test.—APP

ANF seizes over 329 kg of drugs

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) arrested 4 suspected drug traffickers and seized 329.22 kilograms of narcotics valued at Rs 346.1 million during 5 operations conducted across the country, an ANF Headquarters spokesman said on Thursday. He informed that 1.226 kilograms of heroin were recovered from a Dubai-bound passenger at Allama Iqbal International Airport, Lahore. In another action, 36 kilograms of hashish were seized from a vehicle near a mall on the National Highway in Hyderabad, and the accused was arrested on the spot. During a separate operation, ANF recovered 10 kilograms of heroin from a vehicle near Industrial Estate Road, Peshawar, leading to the arrest of the suspect. Likewise, 9 kilograms of ice were seized from the luggage of an accused in Hussaini Chowk, District Bhakkar. The spokesman added that 273 kilograms of heroin were recovered from bushes in Kulli Sharan Ali Zai, District Loralai.—APP

Wife, companion held as Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: The Banni Police have claimed to have solved a month-old 'blind murder' case, arresting the victim's wife, her companion and an accomplice for allegedly plotting and carrying out the killing, a police spokesman said on Thursday. According to the spokesman, the investigation revealed that the suspects stopped the vehicle of Waqar Ahmed and shot him dead in a planned attack. The wife's companion allegedly executed the murder with the help of an employee working at his shop. He said that during the initial stage of the case, a woman had been nominated in the first information report, but the inquiry later confirmed that she had no connection with the incident. When investigators expanded the scope of the probe, the victim's wife and her companion emerged as the main suspects. The police examined hundreds of CCTV camera recordings alongside other technical and human intelligence sources to trace the culprits. During interrogation, the arrested suspects reportedly confessed that they had eliminated Waqar Ahmed to gain access to his property and money.—APP

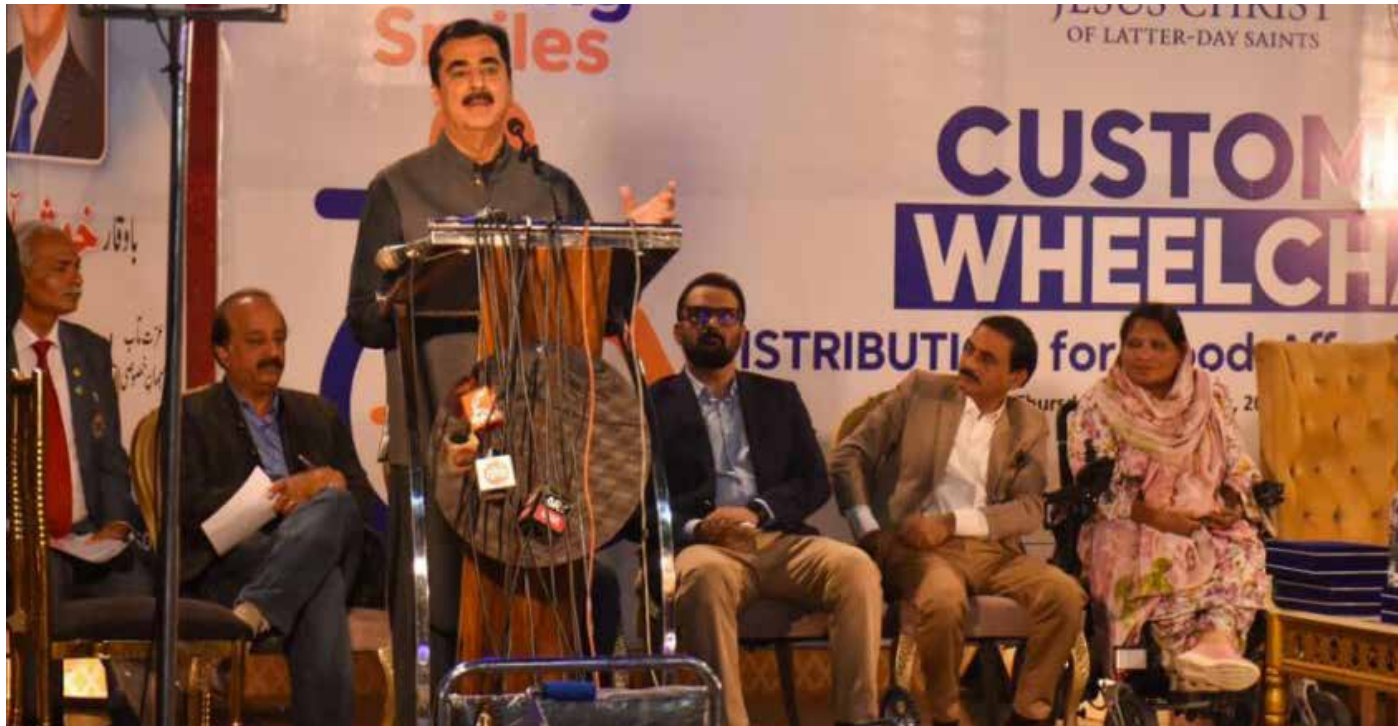
Women empowerment key to sustainable development

Gilani underlined that the Pakistan Peoples Party has completed several major development projects in South Punjab including the Kot Mithan and Head Muhammad Wala bridges as well as the Cadet College. He stated that these initiatives reflect the party's long standing commitment to strengthening the region

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, while addressing a ceremony in connection with wheelchairs distribution ceremony in Multan, stated that empowering women is fundamental to achieving sustainable development. He emphasized that women hold a vital position in society and declared that a woman is the true leader of every family. He specifically mentioned about Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) which is benefiting large number of families and supporting those with meagre opportunities of livelihood. Mr. Gilani underlined that the Pakistan Peoples Party has completed several major development projects in South Punjab including the Kot Mithan and Head Muhammad Wala bridges as well as the Cadet College. He stated that these initiatives reflect the party's long standing commitment to strengthening the region.

Mr. Gilani appreciated the welfare work being carried out in the region by the Church of Jesus Christ and noted that 150 wheelchairs were distributed among persons with disabilities affected by floods in collaboration with the Society for Special Persons. He reiterated that the Benazir Income Support Programme was launched to empower women and was widely acknowledged at the international



level with thousands of women benefitting from it.

The Acting President noted that when these incentives were introduced an overwhelming majority registered themselves, thereby enabling women to directly receive the benefits of the programme. He stated that the initiative did not merely provide temporary assistance or create dependency but was designed on such a broad and transparent

scale that it earned international recognition. He added that during his official visits abroad other countries frequently sought briefings on the BISP model due to its effectiveness and credibility. Gilani said that the true spirit of humanity is to work for those who cannot return the favour. Reiterating his long-standing stance on the creation of a separate South Punjab province, he said he was the first political leader to have

resolutions for the new province passed by the Punjab Assembly, National Assembly, and Senate. He stressed that South Punjab should not be a "province in name only" and must have its own assembly, chief minister, governor, budget, and full share in the NFC Award. He further remarked that the programme operates on the principle of dignity and self respect similar to the compassionate approach adopted by chari-

table institutions. He reaffirmed that the technical component of BISP ensures that at least one individual from each beneficiary family is provided with employment so that they transform into a permanent asset for their household rather than remain dependent. Gilani observed that helping the downtrodden is a shared responsibility of all and this event reflects a true spirit of the philosophy behind humanitarian work.

Around \$1.538b food commodities exported

The food commodities that contributed to negative growth in trade included rice, the exports of which decreased by 46.40 percent, from \$1084.192 million to \$581.169 million

ISLAMABAD: Food group exports reached \$1.538 billion during the first four months of the current financial year (2025-26), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. Food group exports showed a decline of 34.93 percent from \$2.365 billion during the same month of last year (Jul-Oct 2024-25). The food commodities that contributed to positive growth in trade included fish and fish preparations, the exports of which grew by 12.80 percent, from \$116.114 million to \$130.976 million. The other food commodities that contributed to positive growth included fruits, the exports of which increased by 11.78 percent, from \$116.650 million to \$130.391 million whereas the exports of meat and meat preparations rose by 6.29 percent, from \$160.135 million to \$170.209 million. The food commodities that contributed to negative growth in trade included rice, the exports of which decreased by 46.40 percent, from \$1084.192 million to \$581.169 million. The exports of vegetables dipped by 41.08 percent, from \$91.122 million to \$53.693 million; tobacco by 28.53 percent from \$65.473 million to \$46.793 million, spices by 4.46 percent from \$31.006 to \$29.623 million, oil seeds, nuts, and kernels by 66.38 percent, from \$209.423 million to \$70.410 million. The export of sugar dipped by 100 percent from \$108.247 million to zero export during the months under review while the exports of all other food items decreased by 14.90 percent, from \$382.749 million to \$1325.702 million. Meanwhile, on a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the food group exports from the country witnessed a decrease of 42.51 percent during October 2025 as compared to the corresponding month of last year. The food exports in October 2025 were recorded \$430.260 million against the exports of \$748.435 million in October 2024. On a Month-on-Month (MoM) basis, the food exports, however, increased by 28.59 percent in October 2025 when compared to the exports of \$ 334.599 million in September 2025, according to PBS data.—DNA

Pakistan, Sri Lanka vow to deepen sports ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, and Sri Lanka's Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Sugath Thilakarathne agreed on Thursday to strengthen sports cooperation stressing that games serve as a powerful medium for fostering people-to-people connections and enhancing mutual understanding between the two nations. The meeting focused on promoting cricket, enhancing cooperation in various sporting disciplines and strengthening broader bilateral ties, with Minister Attaullah Tarar noting that Pakistan and Sri Lanka share relations founded on trust, respect and common values. Tara emphasized that cooperation in sports not only fosters unity among the younger generation but also serves as a powerful bridge, strengthening the bonds of friendship between the peoples of both nations. The minister expressed gratitude to the Sri Lankan government and its leadership for fostering stronger cooperation in the field of sports. He emphasized that Pakistan is undertaking significant initiatives to advance sports diplomacy in the region.

The minister said that the Sri Lankan Deputy Minister's visit to Pakistan, despite the ongoing budget session of the Sri Lankan Parliament, underscores the deep-rooted and trusted friendship between the two nations.

He expressed confidence that the visit will pave the way for new opportunities in bilateral cooperation, particularly in the areas of sports and youth development.

The Sri Lankan delegation praised Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi for the outstanding arrangements made for the Tri-Nation Cricket Series. They highlighted that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had also conveyed his appreciation to the Sri Lankan team and government during a luncheon held in honour of the participating sides on Wednesday. Commending Pakistan's gracious hospitality and dedication to advancing sports diplomacy, the delegation confirmed its attendance at the ongoing Tri-Nation Series matches in Pakistan. Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Rear Admiral Fred Seneviratne, along with Deputy High Commissioner Christie Ruben and Minister Counsellor (Defence) Brigadier G.A.K.R. Gunaratne, attended the meeting, underscoring the strong diplomatic and defence ties between the two nations

China-Pakistan drone technology workshop held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Faculty members from Karakoram International University (KIU) took part in an advanced technical workshop on drone technology for remote sensing. The training was jointly organized by the China-Pakistan Joint Research Center (CPJRC) and the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST). The venue of the workshop was Institute of Geographical Information Systems (IGIS), NUST, Islamabad. According to KIU, the program offered hands-on instruction in drone-based data collection, advanced geospatial processing and environmental monitoring. The university said participants learned how drone systems can support natural hazard assessment, precision mapping, glacier and watershed monitoring, land-use planning and climate resilience efforts. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, KIU representatives, Dr. Aftab Khan, Syed Najam ul Hassan and Dr. Garee Khan, joined scientists and engineers from Pakistan and China to explore opportunities for collaborative research, data sharing and technological innovation aimed at strengthening geospatial capabilities in mountainous regions such as Gilgit-Baltistan. The faculty members highlighted the growing importance of drone-enabled remote sensing for evidence-based decision-making and sustainable development planning in the north. The initiative, KIU said, is part of its broader effort to expand research capacity in geospatial sciences and emerging technologies. KIU expressed appreciation to CPJRC and NUST for providing a platform that supports skill development, knowledge exchange and international scientific cooperation.—DNA

Conciliation committee's central office inaugurated

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Thursday inaugurated the central office of the Conciliation Committee at the DIG Islamabad headquarters, marking a key step toward strengthening community-level dispute resolution. An official told APP that DIG Muhammad Jawad Tariq attended the ceremony as the chief guest and formally opened the new office. DIG Tariq highlighted that conciliation committees play an essential role in promoting social harmony and ensuring the timely resolution of public disputes. "The conciliation mechanism is an effective step toward resolving day-to-day conflicts within communities," Muhammad Jawad Tariq added. He further stated that the committees are significantly helping reduce disputes at the community level, enabling citizens to receive quick and peaceful settlements. "Providing swift justice to citizens is the primary objective of the conciliation committees," the DIG emphasized. The DIG Tariq noted that the establishment of these centers aims to resolve personal and domestic issues efficiently and to provide immediate relief to the public. He said transparency, neutrality and merit are the core values of all conciliation centers.—APP

Police conduct grand search, combing operations

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police carried out grand search and combing operations in various areas of Secretariat and Sangiani police jurisdictions, checking 340 houses and 636 individuals as part of ongoing efforts to curb crime in the federal capital. An official told APP on Thursday that the operations were conducted under the supervision of SSP Operations Qazi Ali Raza, while SP Sadder and SP City monitored the field activities. He said that ladies police and CTD teams also participated in the exercise. Before launching the activity, a detailed briefing was given to all deployed personnel. During the operations, a total of 636 individuals and 340 houses were checked, along with 40 motorcycles and 15 vehicles. He added that 20 suspicious individuals were shifted to the respective police stations for further verification and legal scrutiny. The official said that the purpose of these operations is to prevent crime, trace suspects, and enhance security in the area. Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad has directed district-wide grand search operations to eliminate criminal elements. Citizens have been urged to cooperate with police during checking.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Dean of Faculty of Health and Sciences Professor Dr Muhammad Irshad handing over the degree to student at Comsat University Convocation 2025 held at Jinnah Convention Center in Federal Capital.

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Islamabad's E-Tag initiative: a good reform poorly executed

ISLAMABAD Traffic Police (ITP) recently announced an ambitious move to introduce an E-Tag system across the federal capital, along with the establishment of seven dedicated checking points to regulate and streamline vehicle movement. On paper, the initiative is both timely and necessary, especially considering the rising number of vehicles, frequent VIP movements, and increasing security sensitivities in the capital. However, despite its promising design, the implementation so far remains disappointing. According to the official announcements, the E-Tag points were meant to function as permanent stations where motorists could be screened, verified and issued E-Tags on the spot. The idea was to create a seamless, technology-driven system that would reduce manual checking, cut unnecessary traffic stops, prevent long queues, and strengthen security. But the situation on the ground appears starkly different. Several motorists report that none of the seven announced E-Tag points are fully operational. What seems to be happening instead is a pattern: the police set up a point, shoot the necessary video footage, circulate it to the higher-ups to show "progress", and then pack up and disappear. The practice not only questions the seriousness behind the initiative but also creates confusion among the public, who arrive expecting a functional service and leave disappointed. One such E-Tag point was briefly seen operating at F-9 Park, a location strategically important due to its centrality and traffic volume. Yet within a few days, the point vanished—reportedly because the rush of vehicles caused congestion. Instead of improving the system to handle the rush, the authorities appeared to simply shut it down. This raises a fundamental concern: if the system cannot withstand public response even in its initial phase, how will it function citywide? Every few days, press releases are issued proudly announcing the setup of E-Tag checkpoints. But these announcements rarely match the on-ground reality. Motorists driving to the supposed points find no staff, no equipment, and no mechanism to obtain an E-Tag. The inconsistency between statements and actual service delivery undermines public trust and wastes valuable time. Despite the flawed execution, the policy itself is undeniably a good and forward-looking step. E-Tags can significantly ease traffic burdens, especially during rush hours and VIP movements. They can save police manpower, reduce unnecessary roadblocks, and enhance overall security with automated verification systems. For these reasons, the ITP must revisit its implementation strategy rather than abandoning or half-heartedly executing the project. Islamabad's traffic management challenges are growing by the day. The E-Tag system can be a transformative solution if implemented with seriousness and continuity. The authorities must now move from symbolic activity to practical delivery—because good reforms only matter when executed well.

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Brazil's planned railway to Amazon draws fire

INDIGENOUS protesters at UN climate talks in Brazil have zeroed in on a major grievance: A planned railway that would stretch almost the distance from London to Berlin and cut through the Amazon rainforest. To farmers, the Ferrograo – meaning Grain Railway – would be a logistical revolution. Critics see yet another massive infrastructure project coming to threaten the Amazon, undermining President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's commitment to the environment. Brazil is the world's largest exporter of soybeans and corn, much of which is produced in the central state of Mato Grosso. Currently, this cargo travels long distances by truck to either southern seaports or northern river ports. For over a decade, Brazilian governments have tried to advance a 933-kilometer (580-mile) railway that would link Sinop in Mato Grosso to the northern river port of Miritituba. From there, grain can reach the Amazon River and the Atlantic Ocean. She said that Mato Grosso, responsible for about 32 percent of national grain production "needs a more efficient logistics route to keep pace with the sector's growth." Lopes said the railway was expected to cut the logistics cost of grain exports by up to 40 percent, while reducing road traffic and the associated CO2 emissions. Mariel Nakane of the Socio-Environmental Institute (ISA) told the railway will impact Indigenous lands and drive deforestation and land grabbing. She said the switch by agribusiness in the last decade to exporting their goods more cheaply via northern river ports had already transformed the Tapajos River that the Miritituba port sits on. "Riverside communities are being expelled... they can no longer fish in some regions because now it's just ports and this barge traffic. "The idea is to install the railway and have it increase the volume transported on this route by five times." Meanwhile, she fears a free-for-all in areas already vulnerable to deforestation. Nakane said Brazil's current licensing procedures were not enough to protect the rainforest and its residents. She pointed to other controversial projects, such as oil exploration near the Amazon River – which began in October – and plans to pave the BR-319, a major highway in the rainforest. "The government is not capable of doing this right. It's very easy for the government to claim that it's committed to the climate agenda, but sweep these controversial projects under the rug." With the eyes of the world on Belem during the UN climate summit, Indigenous communities have sought to cast a spotlight on their grievances, such as the Ferrograo. Protesters are also furious about a decree signed by Lula in August establishing major Amazon rivers, including the Tapajos, as priorities for cargo navigation and private port expansion. "We will not allow it because it is our home, our river, our forest," said Indigenous leader Alessandra Korap of the Mundurucu people. Brazil's environmental agency Ibama said in a statement that "the licensing process for the Ferrograo railway is in its initial stage, with an assessment of its environmental viability." However, the process was suspended in 2021 by Supreme Court judge Alexandre de Moraes after a constitutional challenge to plans to alter the limits of a national park to build the railway.

Afghanistan's Historic Reversal

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



In this inversion of history, the task of carrying the banner once held aloft by Afghan sultans seems to have fallen upon Pakistan's own military leadership. Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, in defending the frontiers and strategic interests of Pakistan, has revived the spirit of those epic struggles—not in the sense of conquest, but in the resolve to safeguard the Muslim world's geopolitical future, a resolve seemingly forgotten by those who claim direct descent from the conquerors of old

HISTORY bears solemn testimony to the fact that for nearly a millennium, the rugged mountains of Afghanistan produced Sultans and Conquerors who altered the civilizational map of the Sub Continent. From the Eleventh century onward, wave after wave of Afghan and Turkic commanders descended upon the Hindu Kingdoms of India, shattering idols, restructuring power and re-shaping the region's religious demography. Among these towering figures, Mahmud of Ghazni, Muhammad Ghori and Zahiruddin Babur stand unmatched. They were not merely battle-hardened warriors; they were state-builders whose campaigns paved the way for the establishment of enduring Islamic polities across northern India. Their victories did not simply replace rulers; they transformed societies. With them came Sufis, Jurists, Theologians and Bearers of spiritual learning who settled in the plains of Hindustan, erecting Khanqahs, Madrasas and centres of scholarship. Through their guidance, the call of "Al-lahu Akbar" echoed across a land previously steeped in idolatry, and multitudes entered the fold of Islam not by sword, but by persuasion, example and the magnetism of spiritual truth. For centuries thereafter, Afghanistan remained a crucible of Muslim authority, and its rulers—whether from Ghazni, Ghor, the Lodis or the Durrani—cherished the legacy of those early conquests. To follow in the footsteps of their ancestors was considered a badge of honour, a duty owed to their history. Yet time has a cruel way of unsettling the certainties of nations. Today, the heirs of these mighty conquerors, the very descendants of those who once smashed idols and subdued kingdoms, have sought friendship with those same idol-worshippers whom their forefathers defeated on the plains of Panipat, Kanwah and Tarain. What was once the battlefield of civilizations has slowly been replaced by a marketplace of interests, and in that marketplace the modern rulers of Kabul appear willing to barter away even the memory of their own past. In this inversion of history, the task of carrying the banner once held aloft by Afghan sultans seems to have fallen upon Pakistan's own military leadership. Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, in defending

the frontiers and strategic interests of Pakistan, has revived the spirit of those epic struggles—not in the sense of conquest, but in the resolve to safeguard the Muslim world's geopolitical future, a resolve seemingly forgotten by those who claim direct descent from the conquerors of old. Against this backdrop, the growing bonhomie between Afghanistan's Taliban regime and India is a spectacle that history itself struggles to comprehend. As reported in media, Nooruddin Azizi, the Taliban's Minister of Industry and Commerce, is set to visit New Delhi on 19 November 2025 for official talks aimed at expanding bilateral trade, easing import-export channels and securing new trade routes for Afghan commerce. This visit comes on the heels of an unprecedented eight-day trip by Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi to India in October—a journey made possible only after he received a temporary exemption from UN sanctions, despite India's refusal to grant formal recognition to the Taliban government. This overture marks a sharp departure from two decades of Taliban rhetoric. During the years of conflict, their propaganda tirelessly characterised India as a Hindu, "kafir" state conspiring against Islamic governance in Kabul. Yet today, the same Emirate that once condemned India as an enemy of Islam now seeks its markets, its dams, its investments and its diplomatic benevolence. It is an extraordinary reversal, one that would have been unthinkable in the era when the Taliban justified the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas as part of a righteous war against the remnants of Hindu-Buddhist civilization. The statues are gone, but ironically the heirs of the civilization they destroyed now offer the Taliban trade access, rebuilding funds and the promise of international visibility. Even more striking is the shift from accusations of Indian espionage to dependence on Indian assistance. Not long ago, the Kabul republic was denounced by the Taliban as an "Indian puppet," and Indian consulates were labelled hubs of RAW-backed subversion against both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Now the Emirate eagerly requests Indian wheat, port access, reconstruction aid and banking facilitation—requests

that reveal a quiet desperation for economic lifelines regardless of ideological discomfort. This new approach also exposes the gulf between Taliban rhetoric and Taliban policy. While they speak of Islamic brotherhood and centuries-old bonds with Pakistan, the moment relations grew tense over the TTP, border issues and refugees, they turned not to their Muslim neighbour for reconciliation, but to a Hindu-majority power for patronage. The same movement that condemned Western financial systems as tools of infidel domination now petitions one of the world's largest partners of Western capital to help unlock investments, banking channels and global institutional access. Similarly, the once-uncompromising champions of "pure Sharia"—who refuse girls' education, women's employment and media freedom at home—display remarkable flexibility abroad, swiftly normalising relations with any state that offers economic relief or political recognition, even if that state was once branded as hostile to Islam. Their narrative on Kashmir, too, has evaporated. Celebrations of "jihad in Kashmir" have fallen silent during their visits to Delhi, where concerns over the suffering of Indian Muslims give way to the priorities of trade and legitimacy. Their refusal to accept the internationally-recognized Durand Line sits awkwardly beside their quiet acceptance of Indian-drawn borders, as if principles may be bent depending on who sits across the negotiating table. Despite frequent declarations that they "do not beg for recognition," the repeated ministerial visits to a state that has not recognised them betray a different reality. These trips are unmistakably a search for de-facto recognition, diplomatic photographs and the illusion of legitimacy—achieved even at the cost of historical memory and ideological consistency. The truth is simple; the Taliban employ the language of faith, sacrifice and resistance only when addressing Pakistan or the West. But when they approach India, they set aside jihadist rhetoric and behave like any fragile regime desperate for survival—willing to forget past idols, past enemies and past claims for the price of trade routes, wheat shipments and a seat at the diplomatic table.

Trump-MBS: A Trillion-Dollar Partnership

Qamar Bashir



This lopsided coverage exposes a deeper truth about American media culture: controversy sells better than diplomacy. A trillion-dollar bilateral agreement — one of the largest foreign investment pledges in U.S. history — received only a fraction of the airtime given to a tense reporter-president exchange. A United Nations-backed peace council, a designation elevating Saudi Arabia into America's closest security circle, and a USD 20-40 billion US weapons package designed to rebalance...

THE grand state dinner hosted by President Donald Trump for Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was more than a ceremonial display of power; it marked a turning point in global politics and signaled a new era in the U.S.-Saudi relations. In a night filled with diplomatic theatre and historic announcements, Trump declared that Saudi Arabia had fulfilled and expanded its earlier commitments, raising its total promised investment in the United States from USD 600 billion to a staggering USD 1 trillion. At a time when global markets remain volatile and geopolitical tensions are escalating, such an unprecedented financial commitment is not just an economic boost — it is a strategic recalibration of the world's most critical alliances. Trump also announced a dramatic upgrade in Saudi Arabia's status, declaring the Kingdom a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) — a designation reserved for America's most trusted security partners. Only 20 countries hold this status, and the inclusion of Saudi Arabia marks one of the most consequential geopolitical decisions of this decade. The designation opens doors for enhanced defense cooperation, priority access to advanced U.S. weapons, joint research programs, and expanded military training — all of which further elevate Saudi Arabia as the anchor of Middle Eastern security. With the region facing ongoing instability — from the Gaza crisis to shifting alliances after the Abraham Accords — Trump's move makes clear that the U.S. intends to rely on Riyadh as its principal stabilizer. In an even more startling announcement, Trump revealed that the United Nations had approved a global "Board of Peace," an unprecedented multinational initiative intended to oversee conflict resolution in Gaza and the broader region. Trump further stated that he would serve as the head of this board, with internationally recognized leaders from across continents joining the council. Although the details remain vague, the symbolism was unmistakable: Trump sought to position the United States not simply as a mediator, but as the architect of a new peace framework for the Middle East — one that would integrate Arab leadership rather than marginalize it. For decades, peace in the region was considered either unattainable or politically inconvenient. Yet Trump declared with confidence that "for the first time, peace is established in the Middle East," contrasting sharply with decades of diplomatic stagnation. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, in his address, praised Trump for the warm reception and the trust placed in Saudi Arabia's expanding global role. He highlighted Vision 2030's successes — from the opening of the Kingdom to foreign tourism and investment to the acceleration of tech innovation and industrial diversification. According to MBS, the infusion of Saudi capital into critical U.S. sectors

such as artificial intelligence, space exploration, advanced defense manufacturing, cyber security, and electric vehicles would create tens of thousands of high-quality American jobs while strengthening the long-term security and economic resilience of the United States. Trump echoed this sentiment, saying the partnership "strengthens American security because money is coming in, jobs are being created, and our industries are expanding." Yet instead of covering the trillion-dollar investment, the MNNA designation, or the UN-endorsed peace initiative, much of the American media fixated on a brief, contentious moment during Trump's interview on ABC. When the journalist pressed Trump about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, Trump lashed out, calling her "a nasty reporter from a nasty network," accusing her of attempting to embarrass his "honored guest." What should have been a footnote in an evening of historic announcements became, in American media hands, the dominant headline. CNN, ABC, MSNBC, and several major outlets spent hours dissecting the exchange, replaying the clip endlessly, and debating ethical angles — while largely ignoring the massive geopolitical and economic significance of the evening. This lopsided coverage exposes a deeper truth about American media culture: controversy sells better than diplomacy. A trillion-dollar bilateral agreement — one of the largest foreign investment pledges in U.S. history — received only a fraction of the airtime given to a tense reporter-president exchange. A United Nations-backed peace council, a designation elevating Saudi Arabia into America's closest security circle, and a USD 20-40 billion U.S. weapons package designed to rebalance Middle Eastern military power were overshadowed by a single provocative question about a crime committed six years earlier. None of this is to diminish the seriousness of the Khashoggi affair or the suffering of his family. But the stark imbalance raises a legitimate question: Is the American media more interested in sensationalism than in informing the public about transformative geopolitical developments? The disproportionate reaction confirms why Trump has spent years criticizing mainstream networks, often calling them biased, selective, and adversarial to constructive diplomacy. The agreement between Trump and MBS goes far beyond ceremonial declarations. The multi-billion-dollar U.S. arms sale — including advanced missile defense systems, long-range precision munitions, and next-generation surveillance platforms — will fundamentally upgrade Saudi Arabia's military posture. This brings significant consequences: Israel, long accustomed to enjoying unchallenged regional military superiority, will now face a more balanced power environment. For the first time in decades, another Middle Eastern country will possess the capability to de-

ter Israeli unilateralism. This shift could compel Israel to adopt more cautious strategies, knowing that its regional monopoly on advanced weaponry is no longer absolute. The partnership will also embolden Saudi Arabia — and other Gulf nations — to question the necessity of hosting extensive U.S. military bases on their soil. These bases, originally justified as security guarantees for Gulf monarchies, have increasingly functioned as outposts for protecting Israel's regional interests. With Saudi Arabia's defense capabilities rising and U.S.-Saudi relations deepening, these states may eventually demand that the U.S. limit or restructure its military footprint in the region. Economically, the ripple effects are global. A stable Middle East, backed by enhanced Saudi defense capacity and U.S.-Saudi political alignment, ensures more reliable oil supply routes, reduced price volatility, and protection for energy-dependent developing countries. Many nations across Asia and Africa spend up to 40 percent of their foreign exchange reserves on oil imports; even modest price spikes can destabilize their economies. Therefore, any partnership that promotes stability in the Gulf directly strengthens global economic security. Trump described his May visit to Saudi Arabia as "out of this world," praising the royal welcome and the Kingdom's commitment to investing USD 600 billion within its borders under Vision 2030. Now, with an additional USD 400 billion pledged toward U.S. sectors, Saudi Arabia is positioning itself as not only a Middle Eastern powerhouse but a central pillar in America's industrial future. MBS has repeatedly emphasized that the Kingdom seeks partnerships that uplift both sides, and this vast investment — one of the largest in modern financial history — underscores his ambition to place Saudi Arabia at the forefront of global transformation. The new U.S.-Saudi partnership carries enormous promise. It symbolises not only economic cooperation but a redefined approach to security, diplomacy, and global leadership. It signals to Israel that unchecked impunity will no longer be tolerated, and to the wider world that peace in the Middle East is no longer a distant dream but an emerging reality shaped by political courage rather than political convenience. As the strategic marriage between Trump and MBS deepens, one can hope that this partnership ushers in a lasting period of stability, prosperity, and fairness — a Middle East where power is balanced, justice prevails, and nations cooperate not through coercion, but through shared vision and mutual interest.

– 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

Briefs

ECP seeks deployment of army

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individuals had “changed their votes” ahead of the November 23 by-election, The News reported. Urging voters to support PTI in the upcoming by-election, he warned the local administration and law-enforcement agencies against any attempt to manipulate results. “If the people’s mandate is tampered with, the consequences will not be good. Any attempt at rigging will create a serious situation,” he said. Stressing that justice was being denied and democratic norms were being undermined, CM Afridi said: “The situation now leaves only one option — and we will definitely adopt it,” he cautioned, without specifying what that option might be.

CM Afridi says remarks ‘taken out of context’

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CM Afridi also pointed out that authorities had repeatedly refused to allow him to meet Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan. The PTI leader said that he had been refused the meeting for the seventh time since his election as the chief minister, despite his requests to the federal government and the provincial government of Punjab. “Not only are we denied access to Imran Khan, but his sisters were also man-handled and injured by the authorities,” he added.

‘Security Forces killed 30 terrorists...’

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troops successfully neutralised eleven more khwari. Sanitization operations are being conducted to eliminate any other Indian sponsored khari found in the area, as a relentless Counter Terrorism campaign under division “Azam 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 terrorism from the country.

President, PM laud security forces

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were defending the country with full commitment. He said that the elimination of terrorism, backed by foreign elements, from Pakistan’s soil was being ensured through complete national consensus. “The nation will always remember the sacrifices of the martyrs and war veterans (Ghazis),” he added. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that the entire nation stood firmly with the armed forces in the fight against terrorism. He reaffirmed the government’s commitment to completely eradicating all forms of terrorism from the country.

Pak has achieved a dignified...

FROM PAGE 01
The Prime Minister said Daanish schools have opened up avenues of progress and development for the hardworking students from underprivileged backgrounds. He said bright students of these schools are winning accolades across the world in different fields. The Prime Minister said Pakistan has achieved a dignified stature globally following its victory against India in May this year. He said the latest report submitted to the US Congress by US-China Economic and Security Review Commission clearly mentions Pakistan’s success while US President Donald Trump has also mentioned several times the downing of Indian jets by Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Officials of Serena Hotels and PAF inaugurate the trophies of the Chief of the Air Staff-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship. — DNA

Arshad Nadeem wins gold medal in Islamic games

Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani expressed great satisfaction that both Arshad Nadeem and Yasir Sultan have earned new honours for Pakistan through their exemplary performance

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting President of Pakistan, Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, has paid glowing tribute to Pakistani athletes Arshad Nadeem and Yasir Sultan for their remarkable achievements at the Islamic Solidarity Games. The Acting President said that Arshad Nadeem’s gold medal and Yasir Sultan’s silver medal have not only made the nation proud but also stand as clear proof of their exceptional hard work, dedication, and perseverance. He noted that the outstanding performance of Pakistani athletes on the global stage continues to enhance the country’s prestige. Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani expressed great satisfaction that both Arshad Nadeem and Yasir Sultan have earned new honours for Pakistan through their exemplary performance. He also appreciated the commitment and efforts of national athletes and their coaches, saying that their tireless work has consistently raised Pakistan’s flag high in international arenas. The Acting President further stated that the excellent performance of Pakistani athletes in global competitions reflects the national tradition in which the youth bring honour to the country with hard work, passion, and determination. He reaffirmed the state’s commitment to providing young athletes with modern sports facilities and quality training opportunities so that Pakistan may secure a distinguished position in future international competitions.



PM felicitates Pakistan javelin team

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday congratulated the Pakistan javelin team for their outstanding performance in the Islamic Solidarity Games held in Riyadh. The prime minister, in a statement, appreciated Pakistan javelin throwers Arshad Nadeem and Muhammad Yasir for securing the gold and silver medals, respectively. He said that Pakistani javelin throwers were bringing pride to the nation and the country worldwide, as both Arshad Nadeem and Muhammad Yasir had achieved success in the Games through exceptional hard work and skill. “The hard work of the athletes and their coaches has brought fame to the country. It is heartening to see that athletes are displaying excellent performance across different formats,” the prime minister remarked. He said that the government was taking priority steps to provide the best sports opportunities to the country’s youth. — APP

Zimbabwe stun Sri Lanka with 67-run victory
Set to chase 163, Sri Lanka score 95 runs before being bowled out in 20 overs

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A disciplined Zimbabwe stunned Sri Lanka with a 67-run victory in the second match of the Pakistan-hosted T20I tri-series here at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Thursday. Set to chase 163, Sri Lanka’s batting unit could yield 95 runs before being bowled out in 20 overs, succumbing to a massive defeat in their campaign-opener. Captain Dasun Shanaka waged a lone battle for the former champions with a gritty 34 off 25 deliveries, laced with two sixes and as many fours. Besides him, only returning Bhanuka Rajapaksa (11) could amass double figures. Evans was the standout bowler for Zimbabwe, taking three wickets for just nine runs in his four overs, followed by Richard Ngarava with two, while Tinotenda Maposa, Graeme Cremer, Ryan Burl and Raza chipped in with one apiece. Put into bat first, the Chevrons accumulated 162/8 in their allotted 20 overs despite Wanindu Hasaranga’s economical bowling spell that jolted their middle order. Zimbabwe got off to a shaky start to their innings as they lost their opener, Tadiwanashe Marumani (10), on the first delivery of the fourth over with just 26 runs on the board. The African side then suffered another setback in the batting powerplay as experienced Brendan Taylor (11) was cleaned up by Eshan Malinga on the third delivery of the sixth over, resulting in them slipping to 40/2. Following the early stutter, skipper Raza joined Bennett in the middle, and the duo anchored Zimbabwe’s innings by putting together a 61-run partnership for the third wicket. Hasaranga eventually broke the crucial partnership in the 13th over by getting rid of the opening batter.

Court extends stay order on auction of 10 cricket and 10 football grounds

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The IHC on Wednesday extended until November 28 the interim injunction restraining the Capital Development Authority (CDA) from auctioning 10 cricket grounds and 10 football grounds in the federal capital. Justice Inam Amin Minhas of the IHC heard the petition filed by Abubakar bin Talat, President of the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA). The petitioner appeared in court along with his counsel, Barrister Umer Ijaz Gilani. A female lawyer, Sabeen, represented the CDA, while no one appeared on behalf of the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI). Expressing displeasure over the CDA’s failure to submit a written reply despite previous directions, the court questioned the authority’s counsel: “Why has the reply not been filed yet?”

Baku hosts Turkic Red Network Council of Presidents Meeting

BAKU: The Meeting of the Council of Presidents of the Turkic Red Network of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) was held in Baku. Prior to the event, participants visited the tomb of National Leader Heydar Aliyev in the Alley of Honors, the Alley of Martyrs to pay tribute to the memory of the heroes who lost their lives for the independence and territorial integrity of the country, as well as the “Turkish Martyrdom” monument. In his opening remarks, Novruz Aslanov, President of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society, noted that Azerbaijan demonstrates its loyalty to the Turkic community not with words, but actions. Thanks to the successful policy implemented by President Ilham Aliyev, Azerbaijan has become one of the main geopolitical and economic pillars of the OTS, as exemplified by the recent Gabala summit. “These practical initiatives further strengthen our cultural, scientific and humanitarian relations,” he noted. Samir Sharifov, Azerbaijan’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, said that in light of geopolitical transformations taking place in the region and in the international arena, the establishment of mechanisms based on joint strategic thinking and joint activities of the OTS is more critical than ever. “The Turkic Red Network was established in order to enhance humanitarian solidarity in the OTS landscape, provide a rapid response to emergencies and ensure coordination. Since its inception, the network’s activity has always been in the spotlight with-

in the OTS. We believe that the Turkic Red Network’s activity must be limited only to providing an operational response to emergencies, the network can also act as a means of demonstrating the humanitarian law of the Turkic states at the global level,” Sharifov noted. Kubanychbek Omuraliev, OTS Secretary General mentioned that one of the key achievements in this field is the formation of a civil protection mechanism. He described today’s event as a turning point in fostering humanitarian cooperation among the OTS countries. Fatma Meric Yilmaz, President of the Turkish Red Crescent Society, underlined the importance of organizing joint trainings, conducting special exchange programs, and preparing training modules and applying digital solutions, which she believes will not only increase operational potential, but also further strengthen institutional ties. Chingiz Djakipov, President of the Kyrgyz Red Crescent Society and the Turkish Red Crescent, highlighted the significance of establishing the “Red Network” platform. Later, the meeting reviewed the final activities for 2025 and determined the Strategic Directions for 2026. The Turkic Red Network Declaration has been signed in Baku as part of the annual Council Meeting of the Presidents of the Member National Societies of the Turkic Red Network of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS). The signed document reaffirms mutual cooperation and humanitarian solidarity between the National Societies of the member countries. — Agencies

Full Court ‘rejected proposal of en masse...’

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Two of the top court’s 23 judges, Mansoor Ali Shah and Athar Minallah, have already resigned. Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Aamir Farooq and Justice Baqir Najafi did not attend the meeting, since they have been nominated as judges of the Federal Constitutional Court, following the passage of 27th Constitutional Amendment earlier this month. Also, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Ayesha Malik and Justice Musarrat Hilali could not attend due to personal engagements. The meeting convened in the chamber of CJP Afridi. At the outset, some judges said it was a sad day that some of the judges had resigned and the meeting must discuss the judiciary’s response to the 27th Constitutional Amendment, sources said. One of the judges asked what kind of response that might be. He went on to ask what constitutional and legal authority the Supreme Court has to stop parliament from exercising its legislative powers. At this point, some judges suggested writing a letter to the government on behalf of the Full Court, sources said. The chief justice said the judges should have discussed the issue with him instead of writing letters. “My doors are always open for everyone. I don’t think it’s the right thing to write a letter to the government,” he said. The apex court has the power of judicial review, which the court can use to determine what is ultra vires, he said; asking, otherwise, what powers judges have to stop the parliament from legislation. How can the parliament be prevented from passing a law, he asked. Despite chief justice’s response, several participants of the meeting kept insisting on institutional response. A senior judge said there is only one way of giving “institutional response”, and that is resignation by all judges, including the chief justice, from the Supreme Court. However, majority of judges disagreed with the proposal. Later, the meeting took up the Supreme Court Amendment Rules 2025 and approved them.

MQM-P renews push for new province in Sindh

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“feudal democracy” where those who contribute “100% are denied even 1% authority”. He questioned Karachi’s population figures and what the city “receives in return”, warning that the city’s future was under attack, its master plan being converted “into corruption”. Siddiqui also questioned whether those opposing new provinces in Sindh held the same position on Punjab. “Has the minister told whether he is against dividing Punjab as well?” he asked, while praising the Punjab Assembly for presenting Article 140-A.

‘SIFC has boosted digital sector’

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more than four hundred tech companies and eighty five incubators. Shaza Fatima Khawaja said the number of new companies, start-ups, in Pakistan has exceeded to four thousand. She said these startups and tech companies are providing their services in the United States, Canada, UK, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and other countries.

Naqvi condemns blast in DI Khan

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The Interior Minister said that the nation salutes the brave personnel of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police. KP Police continue to remain on the frontlines in the fight against terrorism. He said that the sacrifices of the martyred policemen will not go in vain.

UN General Assembly adopts Olympic truce resolution

The Olympic Truce, she said, is a powerful symbol of that possibility — “a living metaphor of what peace requires: discipline, respect and courage needed to build peace”

UNITED NATIONS: Sport gives people the courage to see an opponent “not as an enemy, but as a partner in a shared endeavour”, as the President of the UN General Assembly put it on Thursday, that “even in times of division, humanity can find common ground through sport — and an enduring hope.” Speaking ahead of the Milano-Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics, Annalena Baerbock, the UNGA president, recalled her years as a young trampoline gymnast chasing the Olympic dream — and the sense of unity that sport can forge, even between rivals. The Olympic Truce, she said, is a powerful symbol of that possibility — “a living meta-

phor of what peace requires: discipline, respect and courage needed to build peace.” Examples from recent decades show how powerful that metaphor can be in practice. In the 1990s, the Open Fun Football Schools brought together more than 150,000 children across ethnic divides in the Balkans, using play to rebuild trust after conflict. Similar programmes in Colombia and Cyprus have helped fractured communities slowly rediscover confidence through shared games, shared goals, and shared ground. Sport’s ability to break down barriers is not only about peace between nations — it is also about equality at home. She celebrated the defiant spirit of Cana-

da’s women’s hockey team, who claimed Olympic gold at Sochi 2014 and famously embraced the taunt “Play like a girl?” with the reply: Yes — fast and strong like girls.” Their message, she said, pushes back against the stereotypes that continue to limit women and girls far beyond sport. Milano-Cortina 2026 is set to be the most gender-balanced Winter Games yet, with women expected to make up 47 per cent of the athletes. Italy has committed to ensuring that the Games advance inclusion and accessibility both on and off the ice, supported by hundreds of planned legacy projects. The Italian delegation also highlighted mo-

ments of extraordinary sportsmanship that embody the Olympic spirit, recalling the generosity of bobsledder Eugenio Monti, who famously lent his rivals equipment during the 1964 Innsbruck Games — an act that cost him victory that day but earned him lasting respect. “Sport and the Olympic Games can provide a beacon of hope, an alternative to rivalry and division,” Italy’s representative said. As the world looks towards the winter games, the UN’s message is simple: the values learned on the field — fairness, courage, teamwork — are the same values needed to build a more peaceful and inclusive world. — Agencies

Briefs

Rupee gains
01 paisa
against US
Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 01 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 280.65 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 280.66.

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 281.8, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs1.84 to close at Rs323.29, from the previous day's close of Rs 325.13, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen went down by 02 paisa and closed at Rs 1.78, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed a decrease of Rs 2.06 and closed at Rs 366.84 compared to the previous day's Rs 368.90. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham the Saudi Riyal remained unchanged to close at Rs 76.41 and Rs 74.83.—APP

Around
\$1.538 b food
commodities
exported

ISLAMABAD: Food group exports reached \$1.538 billion during the first four months of the current financial year (2025-26), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

Food group exports showed a decline of 34.93 percent from \$2.365 billion during the same month of last year (Jul-Oct 2024-25).

The food commodities that contributed to positive growth in trade included fish and fish preparations, the exports of which grew by 12.80 percent, from \$116.114 million to \$130.976 million.

The other food commodities that contributed to positive growth included fruits, the exports of which increased by 11.78 percent, from \$116.650 million to \$130.391 million whereas the exports of meat and meat preparations rose by 6.29 percent, from \$160.135 million to \$170.209 million.

The food commodities that contributed to negative growth in trade included rice, the exports of which decreased by 46.40 percent, from \$1084.192 million to \$581.169 million.

The exports of vegetables dipped by 41.08 percent, from \$91.122 million to \$53.693 million; tobacco by 28.53 percent from \$65.473 million to \$46.793 million, spices by 4.46 percent from \$31.006 to \$29.623 million, oil seeds, nuts, and kernels by 66.38 percent, from \$209.423 million to \$70.410 million. The export of sugar dipped by 100 percent from \$108.247 million to zero export during the months under review while the exports of all other food items decreased by 14.90 percent, from \$382.749 million to \$1325.702 million.

Meanwhile, on a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the food group exports from the country witnessed a decrease of 42.51 percent during October 2025 as compared to the corresponding month of last year.—APP

Gold price falls
by Rs5,000 per
tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24-karat gold decreased by Rs5,000 on Thursday, falling to Rs426,562 per tola compared to Rs431,562 on the previous day, according to the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold declined by Rs4,286, dropping to Rs365,708 from Rs369,994, while 10 grams of 22-karat gold fell by Rs3,929, reaching Rs335,244 against yesterday's Rs339,173. In the international market, gold was traded at \$4,042 per ounce, showing a decrease of \$50 from the previous rate of \$4,092. The price of silver also registered a downward trend. Silver per tola fell by Rs93, reaching Rs5,329 compared to Rs5,422 a day earlier, whereas the price of 10 grams of silver decreased by Rs80, dropping to Rs4,568 from Rs4,648. International silver prices stood at \$50.57 per ounce, down \$0.93 from the prior level of \$51.50.—APP

RCCI President represents Pak
at RCCI-HEPA Business Forum

During his keynote address, President Usman Shaukat highlighted Pakistan's vast trade and investment potential, stressing the need to explore new bilateral opportunities and address persistent challenges that have limited the expansion of trade volume between Pakistan and Hungary

HUNGARY: President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), Usman Shaukat, represented Pakistan at the RCCI-HEPA Business Forum held in Budapest.

He invited Hungarian investors and trade partners to take advantage of the lucrative opportunities available in Pakistan, a vibrant market of over 225 million people. The event was hosted by the Hungarian Export Promotion Agency (HEPA) under the leadership of HEPA Deputy CEO Dr. Gabor Peter Artner, in collaboration with the Ambassador of Pakistan to Hungary, Asif Hussain Memon.

During his keynote address, President Usman Shaukat highlighted Pakistan's vast trade and investment potential, stressing the need to explore new bilateral opportunities and address persistent challenges that have limited the expansion of trade volume between Pakistan and Hungary. He identified several high-potential sectors for mutual cooperation, including: Tourism, positioning Pakistan as a dynamic and attractive destination, Non-conventional sectors, particularly pharmaceuticals, Gems and jewellery, and Traditional export sectors, such as textiles, sports goods, and agricultural machinery.



The forum served as a valuable platform for structured business engagement, enabling senior-level delegations to participate in targeted B2B and partner meetings.

These interactions opened direct communication channels to support smoother negotiations and successful business outcomes. Such forums are frequently organized alongside major international

trade fairs in Hungary, further expanding opportunities for global collaboration.

On the sidelines of the event, President Usman Shaukat also paid a courtesy visit to the Em-

bassy of Pakistan in Budapest, where he presented mementos to the Ambassador and the Commercial Counselor. He also signed the Visitors' Book to mark the occasion.

Sindh CM, ADB country
head discuss uplift projects

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, in his meeting with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) delegation led by Emma Fan, Country Director (ADB) Pakistan Resident Mission here Thursday, reviewed the progress of ADB-funded development projects in the province and discuss future cooperation in major sectors, including transport, infrastructure, urban development, and climate resilience. At the outset of the meeting, the Asian bank country head told the chief minister that the Coastal Development project was at the final stage of its approval and six new projects of the province worth \$75 million were in the pipeline. The Chief Minister was assisted by Senior Minister for Transport Sharjeel Memon, Minister for Planning and Development Jam Khan Shoro, Chief Secretary Sindh Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary Raheem Shaikh, Chairman P&D Najam Ahmad Shah, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin and others. Ms Fan was accompanied by Asad Aleem, Deputy Country Director, Khayyam Sohail Abbasi, Country Programs Officer, Hamid Khan, Project Officer; and Adnan Ali, Project Officer. During the

meeting, the delegation reviewed key initiatives, including the Karachi BRT Red Line Project, urban mobility improvements, infrastructure modernization, and programs aimed at strengthening resilience against climate shocks. The discussion included updates on financing needs, institutional strengthening, project performance, and timelines for the completion of major components. Senior Minister of Transport and Information told the meeting that the bottlenecks in the BRT Redline have been removed with the intervention of the chief minister and the halted work has been resumed. Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah assured the ADB team of the provincial government's commitment to accelerate implementation and address bottlenecks. He said, "Sindh values ADB as a long-standing and reliable development partner. We are committed to resolving implementation challenges and ensuring that all ADB-supported projects achieve their full potential for the people of Sindh." Shah added, "Projects related to urban transport, water, climate resilience and infrastructure are essential for improving the quality of life in Karachi and other cities. My government is closely monitoring progress and will extend every support needed

for timely completion." ADB Country Director Emma Fan expressed appreciation for the Sindh government's engagement and reaffirmed ADB's support for ongoing and future initiatives. She said the Sindh Government has demonstrated strong ownership of ADB-supported programs. Emma Fan also stressed the importance of meeting performance benchmarks, enhancing institutional capacity – particularly within TransKarachi for the BRT system – and addressing safeguards and community concerns promptly. "ADB is ready to consider loan extensions and additional financing based on improved performance and compliance. We encourage the province to maintain momentum so that key development objectives can be achieved within agreed timelines," she added. Both sides agreed to maintain close coordination in the coming months, particularly on issues related to financing, project restructuring where needed, community grievance redressal, safeguard compliance, and capacity strengthening of implementing agencies. The Chief Minister thanked the ADB delegation for their continued support and expressed confidence that the partnership would further deepen through mutual cooperation and shared development goals.

Indonesians
fundraiser to
rebuild hospital
in Gaza

JAKARTA: A Jakarta-based NGO has launched a nationwide fundraiser to rebuild the Indonesia Hospital, one of the biggest health facilities in northern Gaza, which was severely damaged by deadly Israeli strikes.

The Indonesia Hospital, a four-story general hospital located near the Jabalia refugee camp, was built from donations of the Indonesian people raised by the Medical Emergency Rescue Committee. The healthcare facility was one of the first targeted by Israel when its military began operations in the Palestinian enclave in October 2023, and had stood among the last functioning hospitals for the last two years. "The Indonesia Hospital in Gaza has been a center of health service for the people of Palestine, but the damages to the hospital have limited the services we can provide. MERC Indonesia wants to rebuild the hospital so that we can give optimal healthcare service for the people of Gaza," MERC spokesperson Diana Caroline said in a statement on Thursday. "Once again, MERC is inviting the Indonesian people to join our drive to rebuild the Indonesia Hospital in Gaza."

When it opened in late 2015, the hospital's construction and equipment were fully financed from donations made by Indonesians, with contributions from both the wealthy and the poorest citizens, as well as organizations including the Indonesian Red Cross Society. Dozens of Indonesian engineers and builders also volunteered between 2011 and 2015 to design and build the facility and to prepare its operations, until it was officially inaugurated in 2016 by Indonesia's then-Vice President Jusuf Kalla.

Though Israel frequently has targeted medical facilities in the Gaza Strip since October 2023 – saying that they are used by Palestinian armed groups – MERC has continued to send volunteers to help. A couple of them stayed in Gaza until late last year, as MERC also sent medical volunteers to the besieged enclave as part of a larger emergency deployment led by the World Health Organization.

"We believe that access to healthcare is a human right, and MERC Indonesia is committed to help the Palestinian people have access to quality healthcare services," Caroline said. In July, Dr. Marwan Al-Sultan, a renowned cardiac surgeon who was then the director of the Indonesia Hospital, was killed by the Israeli military. He is among hundreds of doctors and medics in Gaza that Israeli forces have killed over the last two years. Al-Sultan never left his post despite multiple Israeli offensives, as the Indonesia Hospital was treating about 1,000 people at one point during the war, which has killed more than 69,000 people and injured over 170,000. As MERC launched its call for donations, Indonesians have started to make their contributions, including an elementary school in West Jakarta, which raised about \$2,000 from students and their parents. Rena, who is from Bekasi, West Java, donated her prize money from a recent race. "I am blessed with second place in this 10K female (race)," she said. "The prize money is quite decent, so I want to donate this to Palestine through MERC.—DNA

Nepal PM calls for calm
after latest clashes

KATMANDU: Nepal's prime minister has appealed for calm after clashes erupted between young activists and loyalists of the former ruling party that was overthrown in a deadly uprising in September. Police said on Thursday calm had returned to Simara, a town in Nepal's southern Bara district some 100 kilometers (62 miles) south of Katmandu, a day after clashes between rival protesters. At least 76 people were killed during demonstrations on September 8 and 9 that were triggered by anger over a brief government ban on social media and led by protesters under the loose "Gen Z" umbrella title. Gen Z members and supporters of ousted former prime minister KP Sharma Oli's Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) both held rallies in Simara on Wednesday. Scuffles broke out, some close to the airport, that prompted authorities to impose a curfew. "The situation is normal," Nepal police spokesman Abi Narayan Kafle told AFP on Thursday. "No one was severely injured." Sushila Karki, the former chief justice who was appointed interim prime minister after the September uprising, called on all parties to "refrain from unwanted political provocation," and to trust the democratic process ahead of elections set for March 5, 2026. "I have directed the Home Administration and security agencies to work with utmost restraint and preparation to maintain peace and order," Karki said in a statement issued late on Wednesday. She said she wanted to "ensure the safe movement of leaders of all political parties, and create a fair and fear-free environment for the elections." Karki also held a meeting on Wednesday with representatives of more than 110 parties. "We want this country to be in the hands of a new generation and to be managed by people with vision," she told the meeting. The September demonstrations were triggered by the former government's social media ban but anger ran much deeper after years of economic stagnation and entrenched corruption that primed the country of 30 million people for upheaval. Parliament, courts and government offices were torched before four-time premier Oli, 73, was ousted. Karki, also 73, was appointed interim prime minister to lead the Himalayan nation to the polls.—DNA

Japanese restaurant owners in China
lament flare-up in diplomatic tensions

"I've lived a long time in China and I have experienced diplomatic tensions between Japan and China several times," said Sone who moved to China in 2012 and opened a yakitori restaurant, Hyakumanben, two years ago. "But people in general, especially good friends, don't treat me any differently ... That's why I am still able to work here in China," he said

SHANGHAI: Takashi Ito, owner of a restaurant in Shanghai, had been looking forward to China's lifting of a ban on imports of Japanese seafood – only to have his hopes dashed this week amid an increasingly heated diplomatic spat between Beijing and Tokyo. Tensions between the Asian neighbors flared up after new Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said this month that a Chinese attack on Taiwan threatening Japan's survival could trigger a military response. China, which regards the democratically governed island as its own, responded with ire. In addition to reinstating a ban on Japanese marine produce, it has boycotted travel to Japan, and threatened stern counter-measures. Numerous meetings and cul-

tural events have also been canceled. "Every time a major incident like this happens, we are in great pain because our hearts rise and fall as the relationship between Japan and China rattles every time. It's very painful," Ito told Reuters at his Japanese seafood restaurant Merase. In perhaps a worrying sign, the restaurant also had a few cancellations on Wednesday night, although the potential customers didn't say why. Chinese customers generally account for half of Merase's bookings. Beijing had only recently partially eased restrictions on Japanese seafood that had been imposed due to Tokyo's decision two years ago to release treated wastewater from its Fukushima power plant, the site of a 2011 nuclear meltdown

that followed a massive earthquake and tsunami. Ito has tried to source locally as much as possible but some types of fish can only be procured from Japan. "This incident is one of the biggest incidents so far," he said, adding that he believes it's unlikely there will be any good news about seafood imports soon. "Takaichi said what she said and I don't think she will change it. If possible, I hope diplomats in Japan and China can work together to improve the situation. I hope that the people of China and Japan will be able to enjoy the same foods without fighting each other," he said. The dispute has seen vitriolic responses by a Chinese diplomat in Japan and Chinese state media aimed at Takaichi. That's prompted Japan to warn

its citizens in China to step up safety precautions and avoid crowded places. But both Ito and fellow Shanghai-based restaurateur Kazuaki Sone say they are not concerned about their own safety – only about the potential that problems between governments will make it harder for people to continue connecting for business, food or cultural exchange. "I've lived a long time in China and I have experienced diplomatic tensions between Japan and China several times," said Sone who moved to China in 2012 and opened a yakitori restaurant, Hyakumanben, two years ago. "But people in general, especially good friends, don't treat me any differently ... That's why I am still able to work here in China," he said.—Agencies

Volcano
eruption
forces
rescue of
more than 170
climbers

JAKARTA: Indonesian authorities said Thursday they helped more than 170 climbers who were caught a day earlier by Mount Semeru's sudden eruption to return to safety as the seismic activity of Java island's highest volcano indicated that the eruption will continue. About 178 people, including climbers, porters, guides, tourism officials and tourists, started their way up the the 3,676-meter (12,060-foot) mountain in the Lumajang district of East Java province Wednesday and became stranded at the Ranu Kumbolo camping area. "They are safe and now being helped to return," said Priatin Hadi Wijaya, head of the Center for Volcano and Geological Disaster Mitigation, told a video news conference. Another official at the center, Hetty Triastuty, added that Ranu Kumbolo is a safe area located outside the main danger zone of 8 kilometers (5 miles) from the crater. The camping area is on the northern slope of the mountain, which is not in the path of the hot cloud flow that was observed moving south-southeast.—APP

Iran releases
tanker and
crew it seized
last week

DUBAI: Iran on Wednesday released a Marshall Islands-flagged tanker with all its 21 crew members, days after Tehran seized the ship without explanation, the vessel's managers said.

Tehran had no immediate comment on the release of the Talara, which marked the first ship seizure by Iran in months. The Middle East remains tense after Iran's 12-day war with Israel in June, and as concerns remain over the Islamic Republic's nuclear program.

Cyprus-based Columbia Shipmanagement said the crew "are safe and in good spirits." "We have informed their families, and the vessel is now free to resume normal operations," the firm said. It added that "no allegations were made against the vessel, her crew and the vessel's managers and owners." Ship-tracking data suggested Iranian authorities offloaded its cargo of high sulfur gas oil as the ship was traveling in ballast. The oil shipment website Tanker Trackers, citing satellite photos, said it appeared Iran offloaded its cargo on Tuesday, before letting it go. Iran's military seized the vessel Friday as it traveled through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Arabian Gulf through which 20 percent of all oil traded passes. The ship had been traveling from Ajman, United Arab Emirates, onward to Singapore.—APP

Syrian teen
activist wins
Children's
Peace Prize

STOCKHOLM: A sixteen-year-old Syrian girl who caught the world's attention as a seven-year-old tweeting from the siege of Aleppo on Wednesday won the KidsRights Prize for her advocacy for children affected by war. Bana Al-Abed, who was evacuated to Türkiye in 2016 with her family, was awarded the International Children's Peace Prize for her work "reuniting families, reopening schools and offering tangible hope to children in conflict zones like Gaza, Sudan, Ukraine and Syria," the Netherlands-based KidsRights Foundation said. Al-Abed has attended conferences around the world campaigning for children's rights, visited kids in refugee camps in Türkiye and Jordan, written two books, and earned global recognition from world leaders, including French President Emmanuel Macron. "With a voice that knows no fear, I ask (ex-Syrian president) Bashar Assad, (Israeli Prime Minister) Benjamin Netanyahu, (Russian President) Vladimir Putin, the Sudanese warlords, and all the other warlords across the globe: How many children have had their lives and dreams stolen by wars, by a regime that kills its citizens, in the name of survival by a criminal who markets war as a political agenda, by an empire that justifies aggression in the name of security, and by those who have turned violence into a deliberate policy.—APP

Briefs

US presses
Ukraine to
cede land

TERNOPIL: A new US peace proposal would see Kyiv ceding land and more than halving its army, a source told AFP Wednesday, as a Russian strike in the west of Ukraine killed 26 people, including three children. The proposal appears to repeat Russia's maximalist terms to end the war – demands consistently rejected by Ukraine as tantamount to capitulation. The surprise initiative comes as Russian missiles hit the city of Ternopil, far from the front line, in one of the deadliest attacks on western Ukraine since the invasion began in 2022. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's efforts to re-engage US President Donald Trump's administration in the peace process during a visit to Turkey fell flat after an American envoy thought to be joining him did not make the trip. The draft US peace proposal provides for "recognition of Crimea and other regions that the Russians have taken" and "reduction of the army to 400,000 personnel", a source familiar with it, who did not wish to be identified, told AFP. It would also see Ukraine giving up all long-range weapons. "An important nuance is that we don't understand whether this is really Trump's story" or "his encouragement", the official added. It was "unclear" what Russia was supposed to do in return, according to the source. – Agencies

US approves
\$93m sale
of military
hardware
to India

Development marks first purchase of US defence equipment by India since ties soured in August

DNA

NEW DELHI: The US State Department has approved the sale of Javelin anti-tank missile system and Excalibur guided artillery munitions worth \$93 million to India, the US Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said on Wednesday. The purchase of US defence equipment is India's first under Washington's foreign military sales programme since ties soured in August after President Donald Trump doubled tariffs on Indian goods to 50% as punishment for New Delhi's purchases of Russian oil. It follows a re-order this month of fighter jet engines made by General Electric to power more of India's home-produced Tejas combat aircraft. Raytheon's Excalibur Projectile (top) and other Raytheon munitions are displayed during the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Global Force Symposium & Exposition in Huntsville, Alabama, US March 28, 2023. Raytheon's Excalibur Projectile (top) and other Raytheon munitions are displayed during the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Global Force Symposium & Exposition in Huntsville, Alabama, US March 28, 2023.

ADB approves \$330 mn
for Pak power sector

The project will construct a new 500-kilovolt, approximately 290-kilometer transmission line and upgrade critical grid infrastructure feeding Islamabad and Faisalabad



SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved loans totaling \$330 million to Pakistan for the Second Power Transmission Strengthening Project, one of the government's top priority investments to expand the national transmission network and enable the evacuation of low-cost renewable and hydropower to major load centers. The project will con-

struct a new 500-kilovolt, approximately 290-kilometer transmission line and upgrade critical grid infrastructure feeding Islamabad and Faisalabad, said ADB press release received here on Thursday. These investments will address long-standing constraints in Pakistan's north-south power corridor, enabling the transfer of up to 3,200 megawatts of clean energy from hydropower plants in the north of the country. This will help reduce reliance on imported fuels,

improve energy security, and support Pakistan's transition to a more affordable and sustainable energy mix. The initiative supports Pakistan's broader power sector reforms and contributes to state-owned enterprise (SOE) reforms by solidifying institutional, financial, operational, and governance improvements of the National Grid Company of Pakistan Limited (NGC) – formerly National Transmission Dispatch Company (NTDC) – on its pathway to a modern grid operator. The

NGC will serve as the executing agency for the project. ADB's financing package comprises a \$285 million loan from its ordinary capital resources and a \$45 million concessional loan. This financing will help NGC expand and modernize transmission assets, strengthen institutional capacity, improve financial management, and advance public outreach and gender equity initiatives. "This project represents ADB's strong partnership with Pakistan and our shared commitment to accelerate clean energy transition and integration, and to achieve a resilient and sustainable energy sector," said ADB Country Director for Pakistan Emma Fan. "By expanding transmission capacity and enabling the delivery of low-cost hydropower, the project aims to improve access to clean energy in the power mix, reduce system costs, and support Pakistan's long-term and sustainable economic development," Emma added. The Second Power Transmission Strengthening Project aligns with Pakistan's National Power Policy (2021), Vision 2025, and Pakistan's Nationally Determined Contributions (2021), which emphasize energy security, climate resilience, affordable clean power, and sustainable development. The new infrastructure will also lower technical losses, enhance grid reliability, and support the financial sustainability of the energy sector. ADB continues to work with Pakistan and development partners to advance reforms, strengthen sector governance, and expand access to greener and more reliable electricity.

Dubai airport
fourth-
largest
market for
Pak travelers

DNA

DUBAI: Dubai International Airport (DXB) handled 3.2 million passengers from Pakistan in the first nine months of 2025, making Pakistan the airport's fourth-largest market, Dubai Airports said on Wednesday. Dubai Airports noted that millions of Pakistanis continue to use DXB for tourism, business travel, family visits, job opportunities, and transit to Europe, the Middle East and North America. Pakistan remains one of the UAE's most important tourism and labour-mobility partners, with steady travel demand throughout the year. Dubai airport recorded the highest quarterly traffic in its 65-year history, welcoming 24.2 million passengers between July and September – a 1.9% increase year-on-year. Total traffic from January to September reached 70.1 million, up 2.1% from last year. While Dubai Airports said its 12-month rolling traffic hit 93.8 million passengers by the end of September, the highest ever. India remained DXB's top market with 8.8 million passengers, followed by Saudi Arabia (5.5 million) and the UK (4.6 million). Pakistan ranked fourth, ahead of the United States. Dubai Airports said operational performance remained strong, with nearly all passengers clearing border and security checks within minutes. Dubai Airports said 99.6% of departing passengers cleared passport control within 10 minutes, while 99.8% of arrivals waited less than 15 minutes. Aircraft movements stayed strong, with 115,000 flights in the 3rd quarter and 336,000 flights in the first 9 months.

Pakistan
plans
artificial
island

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan is planning to construct an artificial island off the coast of Sindh to enhance its oil exploration work, as the country seeks to maximise the use of its natural resources. Islamabad has intensified its drilling efforts after US President Donald Trump expressed interest in the country's oil reserves and a recent study indicated the presence of significant yet-to-be-found hydrocarbons in offshore basins. State-owned energy company, Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL), has now announced plans to construct an island about 30 kilometres off the coast of Sindh near Sujawal, according to a report by Bloomberg. Citing the company's General Manager, Exploration and Core Business Development, Arshad Palekar, the publication reported that the launchpad would stand tall at a height of six feet, preventing high tides from interrupting round-the-clock exploration work. Palekar, on the sidelines of an oil and gas conference in Islamabad, said that PPL was undertaking the project – a first for Pakistan – inspired by Abu Dhabi's successful use of artificial islands for drilling.

Mohsin Naqvi calls
Pakistan, Oman
ties a pillar of
regional stability

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi extended heartfelt congratulations to the leadership and people of Oman on the occasion of the Sultanate's National Day on Thursday, praising the country's progress, stability and visionary governance. Naqvi said Oman's National Day marks a "historic moment" that laid the foundations of unity, stability and a bright future for the nation. He commended Oman's "dynamic leadership and wise guidance," which he said has steered the country toward remarkable development and prosperity. Highlighting Oman's economic achievements, Naqvi noted that the country's rapid progress and modern infrastructure reflect its sustainable vision and firm commitment to long-term growth. The minister underscored the strength of Pakistan-Oman relations, describing them as a robust partnership built on mutual trust, shared values and deep-rooted cultural ties. He said cooperation between the two countries continues to serve as "a pillar of peace and stability" in the region. Naqvi added that growing people-to-people exchanges and cultural harmony are enriching bilateral friendship. Both nations, he said, are eager to further enhance collaboration in trade, development and human resource sectors. "Pakistan and Oman's brotherly ties continue their journey forward as a symbol of mutual respect and a shared, brighter future," Naqvi said. Meanwhile, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday paid tribute to Pakistan's security forces after they carried out two successful intelligence-based operations against militants in the Kurram district, describing the actions as a major blow to India-sponsored terrorism in the region. According to the minister, the "brave sons of the security forces" eliminated 23 militants during the operations, terming the achievement a "significant success" in the ongoing fight against terrorism. Naqvi said the nation stands proud of the professionalism and courage demonstrated by the security personnel. "We salute the fearless soldiers who thwarted the nefarious designs of the terrorists," he said. Reaffirming the government's resolve, the Interior Minister declared that Pakistan remains fully committed to the complete eradication of what he referred to as "Fitna-e-Hindustan" from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the rest of the country. "The soil of Pakistan is being cleansed of this menace once and for all," he added.

GCDA report on Pakistan issued
'Persistent corruption,
elite capture' harming
Pakistan economic growth
Governance reforms could add up to 6.5% to GDP
over five years, says lender in crucial report

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Governance and Corruption Diagnostic Assessment (GCDA) on Pakistan, has warned that persistent corruption and weak institutions continue to undermine the country's economic development even as it stabilises under an Extended Fund Facility (EFF). Publication of the report is a precondition for the IMF executive board's approval of a \$1.2 billion disbursement next month under the \$7 billion programme. According to the executive summary, the diagnostic was launched at the government's request and began in January 2025. An interdepartmental IMF team, joined by World Bank experts, worked over eight months and two field missions with federal authorities and other stakeholders to identify governance gaps, corruption vulnerabilities with macroeconomic consequences, and priority reforms to improve performance, accountability and integrity. Guided by the IMF's 2018 Framework on Enhanced Engagement on Governance, the assessment focuses on corruption risks and governance

weaknesses at the federal level in five critical areas: fiscal governance, including public financial management, procurement, state assets and tax policy; market regulation; financial sector oversight; anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT); and the rule of law, with particular emphasis on enforcement of contracts, protection of property rights and judicial integrity. The assessment also reviews the legal and organisational anti-corruption framework and how anti-corruption strategies are aligned with the identified risks. The IMF underlined that, in line with its framework, the exercise is confined to corruption and governance issues at the federal level and does not address wider governance concerns among and between provinces. The report is based on information gathered before and during April 2025 and does not capture reforms introduced after that date. Publication of the GCDA by the end of August 2025 is also a structural benchmark under the 37-month, \$7 billion EFF approved on September 25, 2024. – APP

Pak showcases
expanding forest
revival efforts
at COP30

The session also brought together climate specialists, international partners, and civil society groups working on forest conservation and nature-based solutions

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has presented its latest forest restoration achievements to the international community, with Federal Climate Change Minister Dr Musadik Malik underscoring the country's progress at a COP30 side event focused on the Upscaling Green Pakistan Programme (UGPP). Speaking via a recorded message on Thursday, Dr. Malik said that global climate action hinged not only on

cutting greenhouse gas emissions but also on strengthening natural systems capable of absorbing them. Forests, he argued, remain "the most effective and immediate carbon-sequestration technology available". He told delegates that Pakistan's expanded tree-planting and land-restoration drive had revived degraded landscapes and encouraged thousands of local communities to play an active role in protecting forests. "We are here to celebrate climate action, the reduction of carbon burdens, and the forests that make it possible," he said. The UGPP, described by the ministry as a flagship initiative, has overseen the regeneration of large tracts of previously barren land, turning them into functioning ecosystems. Officials say the programme not only contributes to global mitigation efforts but also strengthens local resilience, with forests offering vital protection against intensifying climate impacts. A documentary screened during the event highlighted field results, including community stewardship and ecological recovery across multiple regions. The session also brought together climate specialists, international partners, and civil society groups working on forest conservation and nature-based solutions. Reaffirming Islamabad's stance, Dr. Malik said Pakistan "stands with its forests and with all the forests of the world", adding that safeguarding them was central to the country's long-term climate strategy. – Agencies

Donald Trump says will meet
with New York mayor-elect

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said he will host New York's mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani for a meeting Friday, after fiercely attacking the 34-year-old self-described Democratic Socialist during his recent campaign. Trump, while repeating his false claim that Mamdani is a "communist," said on his Truth Social platform that the meeting "will take place at the Oval Office on Friday, November 21st." Mamdani's spokesperson, Dora Pekec, confirmed the meeting in a statement. "As is customary for an incoming mayoral administration, the Mayor-elect plans to meet with the President in

Washington to discuss public safety, economic security and the affordability agenda that over one million New Yorkers voted for just two weeks ago," Pekec said Wednesday. Trump's meeting with Mamdani marks the coming together of two men raised in the Queens borough of New York, but their similarities may end there. While Trump frequently touts the record-breaking gains on Wall Street during his presidency, Mamdani's view on the economy extends beyond the bullish financial markets in downtown Manhattan to an affordability crisis facing a city of over 8 million people. As the first mayoral candidate to surpass the one-million-vote mark in New York since 1969, Mamdani campaigned on pledges of affordable housing and childcare, as well as free rides on city buses and city-run grocery stores. Experts have questioned Mamdani's ability to deliver on his idealistic and broad-reaching platform. Virulently anti-immigrant Trump has derided Mamdani's South Asian name and threatened to cut federal funding for NY upon the Muslim's election to run America's largest city. "Mamdani, whatever the hell his name is," Trump said recently – deliberately mispronouncing the Uganda-born politician's surname. Mamdani has not backed down from Trump, calling out the 79-year-old Republican during his victory rally earlier this month. "Donald Trump, since I know you're watching, I have four words for you – turn the volume up!" he said to his cheering supporters. – APP

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