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Türkiye greatly values relations with Pak, says Ambassador

Detailed News On Page-08

CDS notification is a matter of days: Naqvi

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Sherry urges for urgent population control measures

Detailed News On Page-03



Briefs

India airspace blockade delays Pak aid for Sri Lankans

FIAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's humanitarian mission to assist cyclone-hit Sri Lanka has been delayed after India refused to allow the use of its airspace for the delivery of aid, creating an unexpected obstacle for the relief effort. A 45-member Urban Search and Rescue team of the Pakistan Army — prepared for deployment through a C-130 aircraft with the support of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Pakistan Air Force — was ready to depart for Sri Lanka. However, the mission could not proceed after India declined airspace permission for what Pakistan termed a purely humanitarian operation. Efforts to send 100 tonnes of aid through commercial cargo aircraft have also stalled, as these flights too require passage through Indian airspace. With New Delhi's refusal, the dispatch of relief goods has slowed significantly, forcing Pakistan to send the supplies via sea — a route that will take approximately eight days to reach Sri Lanka.

Cop martyred, six injured in Lakki Marwat

DNA

PESHAWAR: At least one police personnel was martyred and six others injured in a suicide blast targeting a police mobile in Lakki Marwat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday. The suicide bomber, accompanied by his accomplice, was standing by the roadside and blew himself up as the police mobile drove past in the Bakhmal Ahmadzai area of Lakki Marwat, said the police. After being informed, the police and rescue officials rushed to the scene and shifted the body and the injured to the hospital. The bomber's accomplice managed to escape after the attack, the police said, adding that a search operation was underway to arrest the suspect. Talking to the media, Lakki Marwat district police officer (DPO) said that the two attackers arrived at the crime scene on a motorcycle.

Inflation edges down to 6 per cent

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Inflation edged lower in November to 6.1 per cent, official data showed on Monday, easing slightly after a jump last month and staying within the finance ministry's projected range. Food items and energy spiked the inflation, measured by CPI, to 6.24 per cent in October against 5.6pc in September, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported in early November. According to a report published by PBS today, general inflation was just a touch lower than October's figures, increasing by 6.1pc on a year-on-year (YoY) basis. On a month-on-month (MoM) basis, inflation stood at 0.4pc after a 1.8pc jump in October. "SPI inflation on [a] YoY basis increased by 4.2pc in November 2025, as compared to an increase of 4.8pc a month earlier and an increase of 7.3pc in November 2024," the report read.

Dr. Badr, calls on Field Marshal

Pak-Egypt military ties on the move

During the meeting, both dignitaries reviewed bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries, with a particular focus on defence and security cooperation, military-to-military contacts, training collaborations, and regional

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Egypt have reaffirmed their identical positions on the situation in Gaza, stressing the urgent need for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire while expressing deep concern over continued violations of the humanitarian truce. Both sides also underscored that any proposal aimed at disarming Hamas is unacceptable to Pakistan, reiterating that durable peace can only be achieved through justice, dialogue, and respect for the rights of the Palestinian people. The shared views emerged during a meeting between H.E. Dr. Badr Ahmed Mohamed Abdelatty, Foreign Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of

Army Staff (COAS), at General Headquarters Rawalpindi. The two dignitaries held wide-ranging discussions on bilateral relations, with a particular focus on defence and security cooperation, military training, and regional peace. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening coordination in security and strategic matters, highlighting the historic, fraternal bond between Pakistan and Egypt. The Egyptian Foreign Minister conveyed warm greetings from his country's leadership and expressed Cairo's keen interest in expanding cooperation with Pakistan across political, defence, economic, and cultural spheres. Both sides emphasized the importance of sustained high-level engagement to address emerging regional challenges, especially in the backdrop of the rapidly evolving security environment in the Middle East and the wider region.

Govt-Opposition tensions rise

KP CM dares Centre to impose governor's rule

Even a small mistake may trigger CM Afridi's disqualification, cautions Vawda

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi on Monday dared the federal government to impose governor's rule in his province, saying that his government is not afraid. His remarks came a day after State Minister for Law Aqeel Malik had said that the federal government was "seriously pondering" imposing a governor's rule in KP, citing poor governance, terrorism and the border situation with Afghanistan. The chief minister said those enforcing "closed-door policies" in KP should realise the consequences of their actions. Talking to the media outside the Parliament House, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said he doesn't foresee any governor's rule in KP. "KP cannot bear governor's rule," the PTI chairman said, adding that the incumbent government would try to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the province. Meanwhile, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said that governor's rule is a "constitutional option" and is available in every government. Taking a dig at the PTI-led

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Imran Khan's sons voice fears for his safety

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The sons of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan fear authorities are concealing "something irreversible" about his condition after more than three weeks with no evidence that he is still alive, one of them said. As court-ordered prison visits stay blocked and rumours swirl about possible prison transfers, his son, Kasim Khan, told Reuters the family has had no direct or verifiable contact with Khan, despite a judicial order for weekly meetings. "Not knowing whether your father is safe, injured, or even alive is a form of psychological torture," he said in written remarks, adding that there had been no independently confirmed

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RAWALPINDI: H.E Dr. Badr Ahmed Mohamed Abdelatty, Foreign Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at Rawalpindi. — DNA

Situation ripe for Governor rule in KP

The step will not be against any law: Tarar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government stressed on Monday that the imposition of governor's rule in a province is an option provided by the Constitution, even as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi dared the Centre to impose the measure. The federal government is seriously considering imposing governor's rule in KP, citing "security and governance issues" in the province as the reason for this potential move. "Governor's rule is not the face of any martial law. It is provided for in the Constitution by its creators," said Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar while speaking at the National Assembly today.

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Israel targets Gaza in violation of Gaza truce

DNA

ISRAELI army has once again targeted several locations in southern Gaza under the military-controlled yellow zone, Anadolu Agency reported citing local witnesses. As per residents, Israel bombarded eastern Rafah via artillery, along with attacks by helicopters in Khan Younis as well. Although no casualties have been reported so far from the latest attacks, the Gaza's Media Office has said that there have been over 590 ceasefire violations by Israel which have resulted in 357 fatalities.

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Interior Minister says

CDF notification cannot be issued simply by pressing a button

COAS Munir was elevated to the rank of field marshal — Pakistan's second and the first in more than six decades — following the country's resounding victory over India in the May war

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has rebuffed widespread speculation regarding the delay in issuance of the notification of the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) — a top military post created under the recently passed 27th Constitutional Amendment — saying that creation of a new system cannot be done simply by "pressing a button". "[...] let these people speculate for a few [more] days. Changes have been made to the Constitution, and a new institution is being established. They [rumour mongers] believe such things can be done simply by pressing a button. When a new system is established, it takes time," the security czar said while addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Monday. "Those who are minting money out of

Continued on Page 06

Official process underway, says law minister

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar said on Monday that the government would issue the notification appointing Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir as the country's first chief of defence forces (CDF) in the coming days, adding that he was already "holding the office in all respects". The CDF position, created under the 27th Constitutional Amendment, replaced the now-abolished office of the Chairman Joint Chiefs of

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan's economic potential hinges on managing population

The Minister stressed that Pakistan has long understood the "what" and the "why" of population challenges, and that the real task now lies in the "how" of implementation

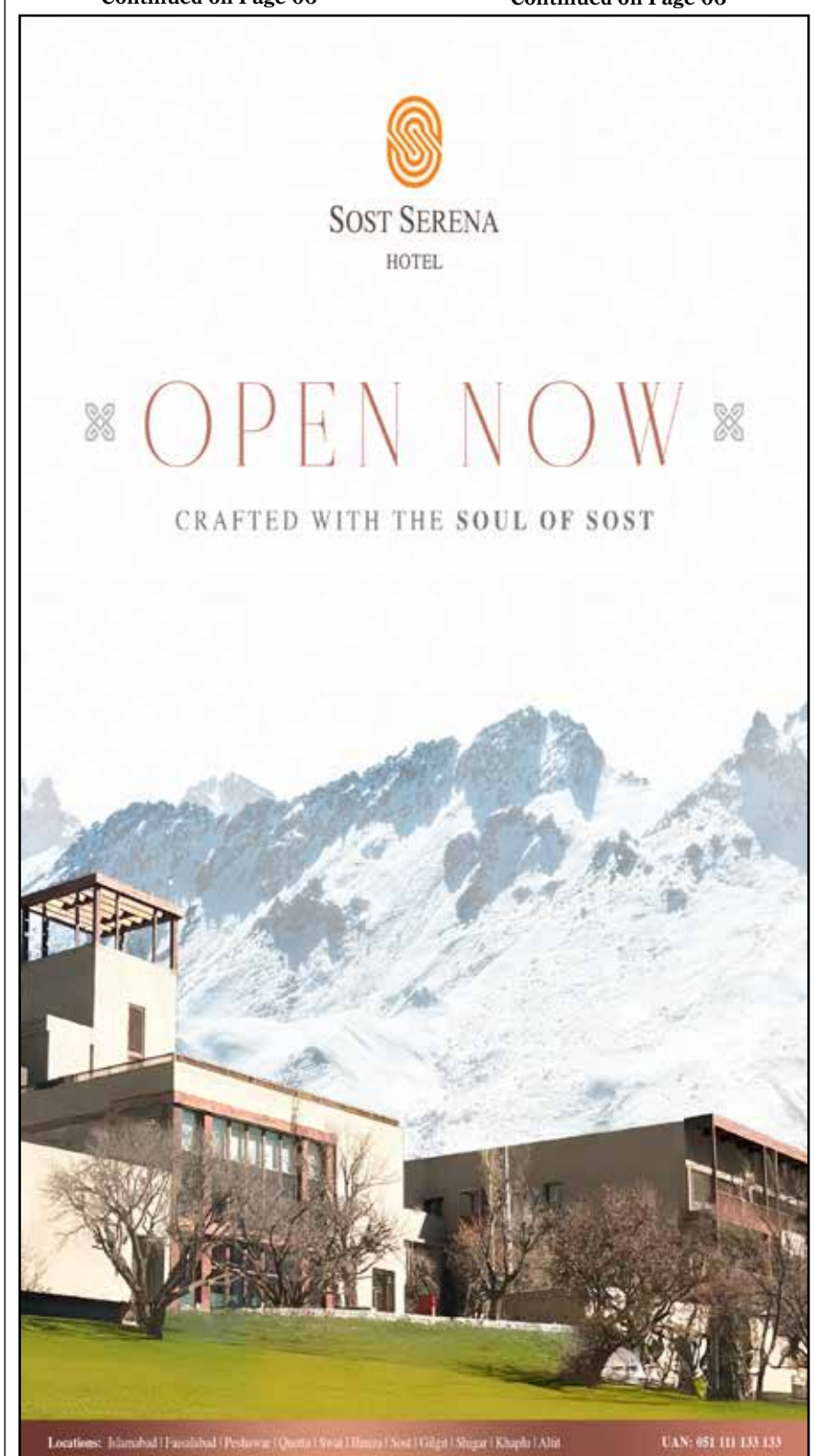
MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, while chairing a session titled "Accelerating Economic Growth for a More Optimal Balance" on the opening day of the two-day "The Pakistan Population Summit 2025" in Islamabad today, underscored that climate change and population growth remain the two most critical existential challenges for Pakistan. He said that while the government continues to focus on economic recovery and the transition from stabilisation to growth, the country's long-term potential envisioned in various studies projecting Pakistan as a three-trillion-dollar economy by 2047, cannot be realised without addressing these core issues. He acknowledged the leader-



ship role played earlier in the year by the Dawn Media Group in building public discourse on climate change and noted that population must now be approached with the same seriousness. The Minister stressed that Pakistan has long understood the "what" and the "why" of population challenges, and that the real task now lies in the "how" of implementation. Drawing parallels with global engagements on climate financing, he said that while technical ministries lead on policy, it is ultimately finance ministries that mainstream these issues through budgeting and planning. He expressed hope that the sessions over the next two days would collectively produce actionable pathways for implementation. Senator Aurangzeb welcomed the inclusion of sensitive yet essential dimensions

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Tessori visits Lal Shahbaz Qalandar's Shrine

HYDERABAD: Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori on Monday visited Shewan Sharif, where he paid homage at the shrine of the revered Sufi saint Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. He laid floral wreaths and offered special prayers for the security, stability and prosperity of the country. According to the district information office, the governor was accompanied by his family and also distributed "langar" among the devotees at the shrine. On this occasion, the governor excused himself from talking to the media. Earlier, Tessori had breakfast at the residence of the chief minister of Sindh, Senior Private Secretary Muhammad Saleem Bajari in Shewan. On the occasion, governor Tessori excused himself from talking to the media. Earlier in the day, he had breakfast at the residence of Sindh chief minister's senior private secretary Muhammad Saleem Bajari in Shewan.—APP

Crackdown against traffic violators intensified

MULTAN: Following recent directives from the Punjab government to take strict action against traffic violators, the City Traffic Police (CTP) in Multan issued 8,773 challans and collected Rs. 6.63 million in fines during a three-day crackdown from November 27 to 30, 2025. The intensified operation focused on violations identified by the provincial government as key contributors to road accidents. According to the performance report, 1,125 motorists were fined for driving without a license, resulting in penalties totaling Rs. 640,700. Another 456 challans, worth Rs. 139,200, were issued for non-standard number plates. Helmet violations were also a significant issue, with 1,339 motorcyclists fined a total of Rs. 2,678,000 for riding without helmets. The crackdown went beyond routine ticketing, with 1,258 vehicles impounded and 954 drivers arrested. FIRs were registered for serious traffic breaches.—APP

NCCIA unearths notorious blackmailing network

PESHAWAR: The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Peshawar has uncovered a dangerous blackmailing network following a complaint filed by a woman The agency registered a case, arrested the suspect and initiated further investigation. According to NCCIA officials on Monday, the complaint was filed on November 25 by the brother of the victim, Haris Masaleh. During the investigation, the woman revealed that the accused, Imran, contacted her and lured her into trusting him by falsely promising marriage. He then obtained her photos and videos, which he later used for blackmail. The accused also demanded Rs 2 million from the woman's brother and brother-in-law, Mujeeb, threatening to release her videos on websites and share them with family members if the money was not paid. Evidence showed that the suspect even sent one of the videos to her brother-in-law to pressure them into paying the extortion amount.—APP

CDA, ADB discuss smog mitigation, air quality improvement

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, held a meeting with a delegation from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Monday at the CDA Headquarters regarding smog mitigation, environmental protection and the air quality improvement in Islamabad. ADB delegation included Senior Financial Sector Economist Andrew McCartney and the ADB's urban team. The meeting discussed smog mitigation, elimination of air pollution and environmental protection in Islamabad. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that environmental protection, including the reduction of smog and air pollution in Islamabad is among the top priorities and in this regard, work is underway on various eco-friendly projects including policy measures. Chairman CDA said that the CDA has adopted the regulations of the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NECA) in its Electric Vehicle (EV) policy. He said that comprehensive measures are being taken to promote the establishment of



electric vehicles and charging stations in Islamabad. Chairman CDA said that the CDA has introduced 160 environment-friendly electric feeder buses in Islamabad using its own resources. He said that vehicle carbon emission tests are being conducted to control air pollution in the transport sector and work is underway to install more monitoring stations in Islamabad for an authentic

Air Quality Index. Chairman CDA said that a modern solid waste management project will be introduced for garbage, which is one of the factors contributing to air pollution in Islamabad city. He said that in this regard, a feasibility study for establishing a scientific landfill site in Islamabad is being initiated. Chairman CDA said that various projects are under consideration

to make the acquisition of carbon credits possible in environment-friendly projects in Islamabad. He said that ADB can provide its technical support to enable green financing for acquiring carbon credits in Islamabad. ADB delegation said that ADB will complete its consultation process and provide its technical support regarding various eco-friendly initiatives. Delegation

further said that ADB is providing its technical assistance in preparing Islamabad's first Transport Master Plan and the Inter-City Bus Terminals project. The meeting agreed to further enhance cooperation between ADB and CDA for smog mitigation, the air quality improvement and environmental protection. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said

that the purpose of these measures is to control air pollution in Islamabad and ensure the provision of a healthy and high-quality life for the citizens. He further said that the partnership between ADB and CDA will not only improve the environmental standards of Islamabad but will also enable the city to become an excellent model of sustainable development for the entire Pakistan.—DNA

Minister reveals major drug bust in Karachi

KARACHI: Sindh's Home Minister Zia-ul-Hassan Lari, Excise and Taxation Minister Mukesh Kumar Chawla, and senior police officials on Monday jointly briefed the media at the Karachi Police Office, announcing what they described as the biggest anti-narcotics operation in the history According to the Home Minister, the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) carried out major raids in Gulistan-e-Jauhar and Pak Colony, recovering 508 kilograms of narcotics. The seized drugs are estimated to be worth around Rs 280 million. Police arrested 14 suspects during the operation. Officials said all of them belong to Balochistan and have previously been detained in similar drug-related cases. Police added that 50 kilograms of narcotics were recovered from the home of a drug dealer identified as Saifur-Rehman, alias Pappu. His disclosures led to the arrest of Assistant Excise & Taxation Officer Javed Rasheed from the Excise Narcotics Control Wing, where 10 kilograms of ice and hashish were seized from his residence. Excise Minister Mukesh Chawla acknowledged that several Excise Department personnel were found involved in drug trafficking. So far, 28 employees have been arrested and dismissed from service.—APP

OGRA hikes LPG price by Rs87 per cylinder for Dec

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has increased the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) for December 2025, pushing up the cost of the essential household fuel for millions of consumers nationwide amid winter season. According to the notification issued on Monday, the maximum consumer price of LPG has been set at Rs 208,991.40 per metric ton, compared to Rs 201,600.43 per ton in November. This reflects an increase of Rs 7,390.97 per ton. For households — who commonly buy LPG in 11.8 kg cylinders — the revised rate translates into a price of Rs 2,466.10 per cylinder, up from Rs 2,378.89 last month. Consumers will now pay Rs 87.21 more per cylinder, representing a monthly increase of 3.66% OGRA attributed the upward revision to two global and financial factors. The Saudi Aramco Contract Price (CP), which directly influences Pakistan's LPG producer price, rose by 4.93% this month. Additionally, a 0.15% depreciation in the average US dollar exchange rate contributed to

higher import-linked LPG rates. The producer price has also been revised upward, with the cost increasing from Rs 160,300.43 per ton in November to Rs 167,691.40 per ton in December. This reflects the same increase of Rs 7,390.97 per ton and an impact of Rs 87.21 per cylinder at the producer level. The detailed breakdown shows that the maximum LPG consumer price includes the producer price with GST, plus Rs 35,000 per ton in marketing, distribution margin, and transportation charges. The new producer price with GST stands at Rs 167,691.40, while the marketing and distribution charges contribute to the final consumer rate of Rs 208,991.40 per ton. For consumers already facing rising winter-season energy costs, the increase in LPG rates adds further pressure on households — especially in regions without access to natural gas. LPG remains the primary cooking and heating fuel in millions of Pakistani homes, making any increase in its price immediately felt by low-

and middle-income households. OGRA stated that the revised prices are effective December 1, 2025 and will remain in place for the month unless revised due to global market fluctuations. LPG is widely used across Pakistan, especially in areas where natural gas is unavailable or unreliable. Millions of households rely on LPG for cooking, room heating, and water heating, particularly during the winter when gas load-shedding increases. In rural and mountainous regions such as Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Kashmir, Balochistan, and remote villages without pipeline networks, LPG serves as the primary fuel source. It is also used commercially in restaurants, tandoors, bakeries, and small businesses, while small industries utilize it for heating, cutting, and processing. Due to its portability and easy availability, LPG remains an essential energy option for both domestic and commercial consumers across the country.—DNA

40,000 people living with AIDS in KP: Dr. Tariq

PESHAWAR: Around 40,000 people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) are currently living with HIV/AIDS, while 15 to 20 new cases are being registered on a daily basis. Dr. Tariq Hayat Taj, Director of the Provincial AIDS Control Program shared these alarming statistics during a media briefing at the Peshawar Press Club on World AIDS Day on Monday. He said 9,800 HIV/AIDS patients are registered in KP, but the actual number is much higher because many people avoid getting tested due to social stigma and discriminatory attitudes. He emphasized that illegal clinics and unqualified practitioners are playing a major role in spreading the disease. "The Health Regulatory Authority must take strict action because this is a matter affecting society as a whole," he added. Dr. Hayat clarified that AIDS is no longer considered untreatable and the KP gov-

ernment is providing free medication to all registered patients. Reuse of syringes, especially among drug users, is one of the major causes of transmission, he noted. According to a UN survey, approximately 40,000 people in KP and about 330,000 across Pakistan are living with HIV/AIDS — a situation Dr. Hayat described as extremely alarming. Sharing specific data, he said that during vaccination drives at Peshawar's Iqbal Plaza and other transgender community hotspots, 197 transgenders were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. "This caused emotional distress among them, but their treatment is ongoing," he said. Dr. Hayat stressed that HIV can spread not only through sexual contact but also through unhygienic practices such as using contaminated blades, unsterilized equipment at hair salons and beauty parlors and

sharing syringes. Gender-wise statistics show that in KP, 60% of HIV-positive individuals are men, 30% women and 10% are transgenders and others. He urged citizens to get tested and adopt preventive measures, warning that HIV is slowly spreading into the general population as well. UNICEF Health Specialist Dr. Inamullah Khan, speaking at the event, urged the public to treat HIV patients with respect. "They deserve dignity and support because they are already vulnerable and dependent on God's mercy," he said. Assistant Director Abbas Durrani stated that many Pakistanis returning from African and Gulf countries are found to have HIV symptoms. He advised those traveling abroad to follow Islamic values and avoid behaviours that may put them at risk of contracting diseases like HIV/AIDS.—DNA

Sindh okays Rs 6.6b railway project, blacklists fraudulent firm

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, while presiding over a cabinet meeting, discussed and decided on 27 agenda items, including approving the release of Rs6.6 billion for constructing a railway line from Thar Coalfield to Chhor, ordering the blacklisting of a company involved in alleged fraud in the solar project, and endorsing the use of brownfield sites with strategies to attract carbon finance and prioritise climate-friendly solutions. The cabinet also granted an extension for the deployment of Pakistan Rangers in Karachi and approved a reduction in water rates for DHA from Rs0.75 per gallon to Rs0.60 per gallon. The meeting, held at CM House, was attended by provincial ministers, advisers, special assistants, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, and other relevant officers. The Cabinet considered a proposal from the Local Government Department regarding the revision of the water sale rate applicable to the project "Laying of Pipeline from Dumlotee to DHA and Construction of Pumping Station, Forebay, Filtration Plant and Ancillary Works (through Government-to-Government Agreement)." Originally, the KWSC set a water sale rate of Rs. 0.85 per gallon for supply to DHA, as approved by the Cabinet and made a condition precedent for the Sindh government's loan assistance of Rs10.566 billion towards the project's completion. Following negotiations with DHA, KWSC proposed revising the water sale rate to Rs. 0.60 per gallon while retaining the payment schedule of 10 years. The revised rate seeks to balance affordability for DHA — already supplying water at Rs. 0.75 per gallon through bowzers — with the project's financial sustainability. The Cabinet approved the revised water sale rate of Rs. 0.60 per gallon for DHA. Digitalisation of authenticated Record of Rights & e-transfer of land titles. The Sindh Cabinet, in principle, has approved a groundbreaking project aimed at overhauling the province's land management. This project, led by the Board of Revenue, assigns Sukkur IBA University the task of developing and implementing a digital land record system. In its pilot phase, data entry work is nearly complete, and there is a clear plan to extend this digitisation effort to every district within three years. At the core of these changes, the government will first verify and rewrite all current land records, moving them into a blockchain-based digital database. Sukkur IBA University will handle both software creation and technical support to keep the project on track. A new Sindh Land Records Authority will supervise this transition and ensure land transfers become fully digital. The platform integrates with national bodies like NADRA and the FBR and uses GIS mapping to visualise land boundaries. The new system introduces an online portal where people will upload documents, verify their identities using biometrics, pay fees, and receive a digital land title all securely recorded on the blockchain. To make this happen, the government is proposing updates to existing land revenue laws, paving the way for digital management and electronic title transfers. The CM directed the Board of Revenue (SMBR) to prepare a bill and bring it to cabinet to review and, if passed, set up a transparent, fully digital land registration process for Sindh.—DNA

ICCI calls meeting against CDA's crackdowns, mulls shutter down strike

ICCI reaffirmed its unwavering support for the traders and industrialists of Islamabad and urged the CDA to immediately halt such hostile actions and adopt a consultative, transparent, and business-friendly approach in the larger interest of economic stability and national progress

ISLAMABAD: The leadership of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has announced an emergency meeting of all industrialists and traders of Islamabad on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. at the Chamber House. The session aims to take a decisive future course of action against the Capital Development Authority (CDA) in light of its ongoing unjustified raids on industries and commercial establishments across the capital. The Chamber noted that the business community is already deeply frustrated and disheartened due to the unilateral, oppressive, and anti-business actions being taken under the directives of the Chairman CDA which have led to the closure and shifting of industries, ultimately causing irreparable financial losses and long-term damage to Islamabad and country's economic landscape. ICCI leadership said it appeared as though the Chairman CDA was deliberately undermining

the pro-business policies of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, acting on one pretext or another to disrupt industrial and commercial operations instead of facilitating them because whenever the economy is on the verge of takeoff some hidden hands come out to hinder it. During the last three days alone, the CDA's Enforcement Directorate has conducted multiple raids without any prior notice, sealing industrial units in an abrupt and heavy-handed manner. These coercive actions have caused severe financial harm, created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, and resulted in immense disrespect and harassment for the business community. The Chamber strongly condemned these measures, calling them unacceptable, unjustified, and detrimental to the already challenging business environment in the federal capital. The emergency meeting will be addressed by ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood,

Chairman Founder Group Sheikh Tariq Sadiq, President Islamabad Industrial Area Association Shaikh Abdur Razzaq, President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajraan and Traders Action Committee Islamabad Ajmal Baloch, Secretary General Khalid Chaudhry, Presidents of Traders Welfare Associations and other leading representatives from the industrial and trading sectors. The leadership will discuss and finalize a unified and robust response, which may include a shutter-down strike, a sit-in outside the CDA headquarters, and other peaceful protests to safeguard the rights, dignity, and economic interests of the business community. ICCI reaffirmed its unwavering support for the traders and industrialists of Islamabad and urged the CDA to immediately halt such hostile actions and adopt a consultative, transparent, and business-friendly approach in the larger interest of economic stability and national progress.—DNA

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

DECEMBER
Dec 01/Romania National Day
Dec 02/United Arab Emirates National Day
Dec 02/Laos Republic National Day
Dec 05/Thailand National Day
Dec 06/Finland Independence Day
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Potohar Town.....9209224
Rawal Town.....5773343
Water Tank
Islamabad.....0321-5744480

IHC rejects ex-wildlife board chair’s case dismissal plea

The FIA had initiated a formal investigation against the former chairperson, which led to the registration of a case. The charges allege corruption and misuse of authority, resulting in a financial loss to the national exchequer

DNA

ISLAMABAD:The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday rejected a petition filed by former chairperson of the Wildlife Management Board, Raina Saeed Khan, seeking the dismissal of a corruption case registered against her by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). Justice Muhammad Azam Khan dismissed the plea to quash the case. Islamabad city guide A detailed written order outlining the reasons for the rejection will be issued at a later date. This marks another legal setback for the former official. Earlier, on November 3, 2025, the same judge had rejected her application to stop the FIA’s inquiry into the matter. Raina Saeed Khan had also approached the court with a separate request to prevent what she termed as “harassment” by the

FIA. However, the IHC Registrar’s Office raised technical objections to this plea, which were subsequently upheld by the court. The Registrar’s Office questioned the legal basis of combining a request to prevent harassment with pleas for pre-arrest bail and protection from arrest. The FIA had initiated a formal investigation against the former chairperson, which led to the registration of a case. The charges allege corruption and misuse of authority, resulting in a financial loss to the national exchequer. The case will now proceed in accordance with the law following the high court’s decision to reject the petition for dismissal.It may be mentioned here that So-called climate activist Rina Saeed Khan, widely known for her role in the Supreme Court case that led to the closure of Islamabad’s iconic Monal Restaurant, has hired one of the coun-

try’s top legal minds to defend herself in an ongoing FIA investigation.Islamabad city guide According to official documents, Khan has submitted a power of attorney authorizing Barrister Salman Safdar, Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan, to represent her in all legal proceedings related to the inquiry. The document grants the counsel full authority to appear, plead, file applications, receive records, and pursue all necessary legal remedies.Pakistan travel guide Sources familiar with the matter say Khan’s decision to hire a high-priced, top-tier lawyer has raised eyebrows in various quarters. Critics allege that her move reflects concerns that the FIA inquiry could lead to serious legal challenges. Some officials claim that Khan may be attempting to “shield herself from possible financial misconduct findings”—allegations she has consistently rejected. According to indi-

viduals close to the FIA investigation, the probe revolves around claims of financial irregularities during her association with wildlife-related projects. Some insiders allege that donor-funded initiatives suffered major setbacks due to mismanagement and improper financial transfers. These accusations are currently under review by investigators. While environmental groups hailed the ruling as a win for conservation of the Margalla Hills National Park, large segments of the public, business community, and civic groups strongly opposed the closure. Many accused environmental activists – including Khan – of exercising undue influence and using personal connections to secure the verdict. The decision, delivered during the tenure of then-Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, sparked intense debate about the balance between environmental protection and tourism development.

Sadiq reiterates to safeguard parliamentary supremacy

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has reiterated that he will continue to perform his constitutional responsibilities as the custodian of the House to safeguard parliamentary supremacy, uphold the Constitution and protect the democratic process. He warned that those who, while sitting inside the House, seek to conspire against Parliament are in fact acting against the interests of the state, said a press release issued here on Monday by the National Assembly Secretariat. Ayaz Sadiq said that there will be no compromise on the Constitution, the rule of law, parliamentary sanctity and public order. He said that immature political leaders who claim to champion constitutional supremacy while simultaneously undermining the dignity and decorum of Parliament should first reflect on their own conduct. Ayaz Sadiq has said that new attempts are being made to weaken the Parliament and obstruct the legislative process; however, no pressure or attack against Parliament or democratic institutions will ever succeed.—APP

FOSPAH hosts powerful art exhibition

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment (FOSPAH) on Monday held an art exhibition titled “Workplace Harassment – Breaking the Silence,” bringing together artists, students, professionals, and rights advocates from across the country to spark dialogue, encourage accountability, and promote safer workplaces in Pakistan. The exhibition, themed “Workplace Harassment: Breaking the Silence”, showcased over 250 remarkable entries across three categories – Handmade Posters, Digital Art, and Short Videos – submitted by participants who used art as a bold medium to challenge stigma, amplify survivors’ voices, and call for systemic change.—APP



ISLAMABAD: A nomad woman gathers dry tree branches from a greenbelt in G-8 for domestic use, particularly for cooking and heating pupose during winter in the Federal Capital.

Education Board extends SSC form submission date

RAWALPINDI: Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Rawalpindi, on Monday announced a significant extension in the admission submission schedule for the First Annual Examinations 2026 The exams, which will mark the first full-scale annual matric examinations after years of pandemic-disrupted cycles, are set to begin on March 3, 2026. However, a large number of both regular and private candidates had been struggling to meet the original deadlines due to delays in result announcements, school registrations, and online portal issues. Responding to repeated requests from students, parents and school heads, the Board has pushed the deadlines well into the new year. Speaking to reporters, a BISE Rawal-

pindi spokesman confirmed that candidates can now submit their online admission forms with single fee until December 10, 2025. Those who miss this window will still have until December 23 with double fee and until January 6, 2026 with triple fee. Even after the third last date, the admission forms will continue to be accepted until February 10, 2026 with triple fee plus a daily late fine of Rs. 200, and till February 20, just ten days before the papers begin with an enhanced daily penalty of Rs. 700.0 “The decision has been taken purely in the interest of students,” the spokesman said. “We don’t want any child to miss the examination just because of procedural delays”, he said. He emphasized that while the online

submission window remains open, the hard copy of the admission form, cut list (for institutions), original bank challan of MCB, and printed copy of the online submission receipt must reach the Board office by hand or registered post within the respective deadlines. “Online submission alone is not enough,” he informed and added “If the hard copies are not received on time, the higher fee slab will automatically apply.” Students and private candidates have been directed to use the official portal www.biserawalpindi.edu.pk for form submission and fee deposit. For technical or procedural help, the Board has activated dedicated help-lines, including direct access to Assistant Controller (Matric).—APP

Sherry urges to address timely Pakistan’s escalating population

ISLAMABAD: The ‘Pakistan Population Summit’ being held here aims to hold an urgent, coordinated national action to address Pakistan’s escalating population, water, climate, and resource crises. The two-day national dialogue summit organised by DawnMedia in collaboration with the Population Council brought together politicians, economists, development specialists, private sector leaders, and experts to develop a shared vision as the rising population continues to place pressure on health systems, food and water security, and employment, said a press releases issued here on Monday. One of the key speaker Sherry Rehman, the chairperson of the Parliamentary Forum on Population, in her opening address stated that “Population is a crisis of scarcity.” She described the three ticking time bombs namely “Unchecked Population growth, Water scarcity and Climate stress” as they are no longer ticking rather they have noiselessly exploded all around us. “Water is scarce in 2025, as predicted by UN; Climate is at its frontline heat as we are the most vulnerable globally; and population growth has passed the danger line. It’s at 6 million more people per year. Do we wonder why, then, our children go hungry? Or our health clinics can’t service the sick? Or why we have 26 million children out of school? Or where the 3 million jobs will per year come from?”, she said. Highlighting the acute water scarcity now defining 2025, Senator Rehman stressed “Our water consumption is way higher than resources and with this population growth rate we will need 60 MAF of water by 2050 to

match basic needs as the population rises toward 315 million” she emphasized that “every drop is now competing with millions of new claimants every year. She stressed that Pakistan must urgently find its “pivot of balance,” noting “What are we thinking? Why are our children going hungry, out of school, and undernourished while our population growth outpaces our capacity to sustain it?”, she enquired. Senator Rehman while underscoring an alarming demographic trends said that according to UNFPA, Pakistan’s population has reached 241.5 million, ranking fifth largest in the world. Annual growth rate: 2.55%, among the highest in Asia. 6 million people are added every year. She warned that when population growth matches or outpaces GDP growth, every macroeconomic indicator deteriorates. A 1% increase in population growth reduces per-capita income by Rs. 35,000 annually. “If fertility is reduced to 2.1 births per woman by 2030,” she said, “the per-capita income could rise by 37% and GDP growth to 3.9% by 2033.” Senator Rehman stressed that population pressure is not neutral—it is a gendered public health crisis, borne overwhelmingly by women and girls. She noted that every 50 minutes, a woman in Pakistan dies from pregnancy or childbirth complications, 82% of children have been deprived of a meal according to WFP and 40% of children under 5 face stunting (World Bank). Women face a massively disproportionate burden in water collection—72% of women, especially in rural areas, spend nearly

nine hours a day fetching water. “When women carry the burden of water, food insecurity, reproductive health, and inadequate services, the scarcity vector becomes a gendered crisis,” she said. She stressed that unmet need for contraception—17.3% of couples—and a contraceptive prevalence rate of only 34% fuel population momentum not by choice, but by lack of access and agency. Senator Rehman proposed to include integrating family planning into major social protection programmes that includes ensuring national coordination across ministries of health, education, women’s development, social welfare, water, and climate; scaling the Lady Health Worker (LHW) Program, launched by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, which contributed significantly to reducing fertility from 6.2 in the 1980s to 4.8 by 2000; making contraceptives affordable and easily accessible, including eliminating taxes; engaging faith leaders to emphasize responsible parenting and birth spacing, echoing the Council of Islamic Ideology’s endorsement grounded in the principle of balance advocating for the proposed 10 billion population fund. Senator Rehman concluded by thanking the DawnGroup for their support and for “helping sustain a conversation the country urgently needs.” She added that “This issue demands national attention—not the burden of a single council or ministry. If we can feed our population, provide clean water, and give women agency, Pakistan can reclaim its future. I hope we continue to address this subject at the highest level”.—DNA

PNCA hosts ‘seen, unseen’ exhibition for activism

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) will host a special ceremony and the opening of a nationwide art exhibition on Tuesday, as part of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. The event will begin at 6:00 p.m. and bring together government officials, UN representatives, artists, and civil society to spotlight the urgent need to end gender-based violence in all its forms including the rising threat of technology-facilitated abuse. The ceremony will be chaired by Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister of Human Rights, alongside Pernille Ironside, the Acting UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan. Participants will be briefed on ongoing UN initiatives to address digital and technology-facilitated gender-based violence, a growing concern as online spaces increasingly mirror offline inequalities and risks. Following the ceremony, PNCA will unveil ‘Seen & Unseen’, an art exhibition featuring works by 19 artists from across Pakistan. Curated under the guidance of Prof. Salima Hashmi, Honorary Advisor, the exhibition brings together diverse mediums and artistic expressions that confront the realities of gender-based violence. Through painting, photography, sculpture, and mixed media, the artists give voice to both visible and hidden dimensions of abuse, resilience, and resistance. The evening will also include the launch of UNFPA’s new reel series, “Salma Lives” a digital campaign aimed at raising awareness through storytelling – followed by a reception hosted by Marriott Islamabad. Observed annually from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day), the 16 Days of Activism is a global call to end violence against women and girls. This year’s UNITE Campaign theme – “UNITE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls” – highlights how digital platforms, while powerful tools for empowerment, have also created new avenues for harassment, surveillance, and exploitation. The PNCA event aims to amplify this message, bringing together art, advocacy, and public engagement in a united call to safeguard the rights and dignity of women and girls in both physical and digital spaces.—DNA

Sultan vows to enhance public service

ISLAMABAD: Sultan Ahmad Chaudhry on Monday assumed charge as the 25th Inspector General of the National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP), pledging to further strengthen the institution and uphold its reputation for professionalism, integrity, and public service. Chaudhry, who previously served as Additional Inspector General of Police in Punjab and has held various key positions in the Pakistan Police Service, is widely respected for his competence, exemplary performance, and commitment to ethical policing, said a press release. Upon his arrival at the Central Police Office (CPO) Islamabad, he was presented with a guard of honour. He was introduced to officers and given a detailed briefing on various departmental matters. The new Inspector General reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening the institution, upholding high professional standards, and ensuring quality public service. He further emphasized that every possible measure will be taken for the welfare and well-being of the department’s officers and staff. In his address, he said that leading this institution is a matter of great pride for him an organization regarded not only in Pakistan but also internationally as a symbol of honesty, professionalism, and transparency. He added that the core values of the Motorway Police integrity, courtesy, and helpfulness are its true strength and will be upheld at all costs. The Inspector General directed officers to ensure timely assistance to travelers on national highways, protect the lives and property of citizens, and work diligently to prevent road accidents, noting that the National Highways and Motorway Police holds a distinguished position among national institutions. On this occasion, the Inspector General also paid tribute to the martyrs, laid floral wreaths at the Martyrs’ Monument, and offered special prayers for the elevation of their ranks.APP

54 business ideas by female university students shortlisted

ISLAMABAD: The Punjab Women Development Department has shortlisted 54 business ideas submitted by students from 40 universities across the province for seed funding. Salma Saadia, Parliamentary Secretary for Women Development Department, told Wealth Pakistan that these ideas would be funded by the Youth Pitch Program, which has been initiated to empower female innovators across the province. She said Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz aims to nurture entrepreneurial talent among female university students in Punjab. The department will strive to equip young women with the confidence, skills, and support needed to transform their business ideas into viable startups. The government’s slogan “Muzboot Aurat, Muzboot Punjab” (Strong Woman, Strong Punjab) encourages students to envision a practical future beyond graduation. The initiative focuses on ensuring that women have a clear professional direction, helping them enter the workforce with purpose and preparedness Female students from 40 universities engaged by the Women Development Department were invited to participate, helping generate many ideas and representations from institutions across the province. A structured and transparent selection framework has been adopted. Students applied online and submitted their startup concepts. A faculty committee in each participating university reviewed the submissions and shortlisted business ideas under three thematic areas, ensuring alignment with program goals, she added. Currently, 54 innovative ideas have been shortlisted for the next phase. The shortlisted participants will be invited to present their ideas next month. The department has planned training sessions for them. This platform creates a collaborative environment, allowing young women to learn, grow, and showcase their entrepreneurial potential, Salma added. To support the best concepts, the department plans to award seed money ranging from Rs500,000 to Rs1 million to the top 10 business ideas, helping students kickstart their startups and bring their visions to life. Salma said for the Financial Year 2025–2026, Rs35 million has been allocated to implement and expand the Youth Pitch Program.—APP

Briefs

**CCP
authorizes
acquisition
of elite
hospitality
ventures by JS
Hotel REIT**

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has authorized the proposed acquisition of Elite Hospitality Ventures (Private) Limited by JS Hotel REIT. The approval has been granted under Section 11 of the Competition Act, 2010 and the Competition (Merger Control) Regulations, 2016, a news release said here on Monday. JS Hotel REIT is a newly established Shariah-compliant Hybrid REIT Scheme operating under the Real Estate Investment Trust Regulations, 2022. It intended to acquire shares of Elite Hospitality Ventures through a Share Purchase Agreement. The Target entity is a Special Purpose Vehicle formed to develop and operate a planned four-star "Hilton Garden Inn" hotel in Hyderabad.—APP

**Nandipur
power plant
supports local
school with
new donations**

ISLAMABAD: A team from the Nandipur 425/525 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant visited a local primary school in Nandipur, distributing new schoolbags and stationery to every student—another gesture of China's continued care for the surrounding community. The visit follows an earlier initiative by the project team in which the school underwent major upgrades, including renovated classrooms, repaired walls, and improved electrical systems, ensuring a safer and cleaner learning environment for children Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. The return visit was warmly welcomed by teachers and residents, who said the gesture reaffirmed the company's long-term commitment to local education and student well-being. Community members expressed their gratitude, noting that "the power project has not only built a modern power plant but also lit a flame of hope in the hearts of our children." Other remarked that the visit oshowed how "true partnership connects people heart to heart." Operated by PowerChina, the Nandipur Power Plant continues to extend its role beyond energy production, representing a broader approach to social responsibility embedded across the company's overseas projects. From improving school infrastructure to supporting students with essential supplies, the Chinese power company continues to turn the spirit of China-Pakistan friendship into practical actions that benefit local communities.—APP

**SSP reviews
facilities
across the
Capital**

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Qazi Ali Raza visited Bahara Kahu, Phulgran, Shehzad Town and Nilore police stations, as well as various checkpoints across the federal capital, to inspect facilities, review performance and assess security arrangements. A police official told APP on Monday that the SSP Qazi inspected all sections of the police stations, including the front desk, record room and lock-ups, and issued directions for the immediate improvement of service delivery. He also met citizens present at the police stations and reviewed the facilities being provided to them. SSP Qazi examined renovation works, development activities and various public-service initiatives under the Special Initiative Protocol. During the visit, Qazi Ali Raza listened to citizens' concerns and instructed the relevant officers to ensure prompt resolution of complaints. SSP Qazi directed all officers to treat visitors and complainants with courtesy and respect, emphasizing that misconduct or inappropriate behavior towards senior citizens, women or children would not be tolerated. The SSP Operations also inspected security arrangements and checking procedures at different checkpoints.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Visitors taking interest in various items displayed on the occasion of Christmas Bazaar held at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. DNA

Cataract burden rising with diabetes, weak rural access

Private surgery costs remain a major barrier, while public hospitals struggle with outdated equipment and long queues. He said provincial health systems should adopt routine diabetes screening, embed eye care in basic health units, and expand training to prevent avoidable blindness

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's cataract burden continues to rise despite an expansion in treatment facilities, driven by the fast-growing diabetes epidemic, an ageing population, malnutrition, ultraviolet exposure and late diagnosis. Prof Dr Sabihuddin Ahmed, Head of the Cataract Department at Al Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, said these pressures are outpacing the system's ability to deliver timely care, especially in areas with limited specialist coverage. He said closing the treatment gap requires a shift toward decentralized services, including mandatory

screening for diabetic patients and integrating basic eye exams into primary healthcare networks. He said doctors under the Al Shifa network carry out about 8500 free cataract surgeries every month across six hospitals. This expansion is donor-supported but remains insufficient as diabetes driven cataracts rises. Pakistan ranks first globally in diabetes prevalence with 34.5 million adults suffering from the disease, which could reach 70.2 million by 2050. Provincial prevalence stands at 16 percent in Punjab, 15 percent in Baluchistan, 14 percent in Sindh, and 11 percent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. About 230000 Pakistanis die annually due to diabetes



Sabihuddin Ahmed speaks to related complications. Talking to the media, Prof Ahmed said the cataract surgical rate is

now more than double the 2002 level, yet millions remain untreated. There are about 570000 adults blind from cataract and 3.56 million with visual issues. Meeting needs by 2030 will require at least 1.84 million surgeries annually. He said economic losses are widening because untreated cataract reduces labour participation, lowers household productivity, and increases dependency among older earners. WHO estimates show global productivity losses of 411 billion dollars from vision impairment. IN Pakistan, the private sector performs 42.4 percent of surgeries, NGOs 39.9 percent, and the public sector 17.7 percent, keeping most of the

burden on non-state providers. Pakistan has only 15 ophthalmologists per million population, far fewer than in developed countries. Many districts have none, and most specialists are urban-based, limiting rural access. He said women face mobility barriers, fewer financial resources, and delayed hospital visits, resulting in higher untreated cataracts. Private surgery costs remain a major barrier, while public hospitals struggle with outdated equipment and long queues. He said provincial health systems should adopt routine diabetes screening, embed eye care in basic health units, and expand training to prevent avoidable blindness.

Edu moot urges immediate policy reforms for quality learning

ISLAMABAD: An education conference organized by the Pakistan Alliance of Private Schools Associations (PAPSA) in Islamabad urged swift reforms in the education policy to promote quality learning, ensure the return of out-of-school children, and strengthen the role of private educational institutions. The conference was addressed by Chairman PAPSA, Sheikh Muhammad Akram along with other officials, and attended by representatives from district, divisional and provincial bodies of private educational institutes, said a press release on Monday. Sheikh Muhammad Akram stressed the need for an immediate and comprehensive policy to bring the country's approximately millions out-of-school children back into the mainstream education system. He also called for categorizing private educational institutions based on their fee structures, proposing that low-fee institutions be formally recognized as welfare organizations. He emphasized that the private sector must be given adequate representation in policy-making bodies at both federal and provincial levels. Private institutions are committed to providing quality education, he said, expressing confidence in them to offer free education to 10 percent of deserving students. Other speakers acknowledged the sector's significant contribution to the overall improvement of education standards. Speakers emphasized that education forms the foundation of national development and reiterated that stronger public-private collaboration is essential for reforming and improving the education system.—DNA

Kohistani vows responsible resolution of coalition partners' concerns

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Religious Affairs Khalil Das Kohistani on Monday declared his party's commitment to implementing reforms and resolving all issues with PPP and JUI-F, promising that differences will be managed through responsible dialogue and mutual respect in the national interest, while stressing the Prime Minister's clear focus on unity and forward movement Kohistani, while speaking exclusively with a private media channel, said that the 26th and 27th constitutional amendments were completed in full coordination with the PPP and JUI-F. He added that any future reforms or issues will also be taken to the parliamentary forum, ensuring mutual respect, cooperation, and a spirit of understanding among all coalition partners. During the conversation, he was asked about the National Finance Commission (NFC) matter. He responded that the gov-

ernment aims to address the issue responsibly, keeping all stakeholders on board and prioritizing consensus to achieve a fair and workable outcome for the provinces and the federation. He emphasized that the government remains committed to maintaining constructive engagement with all parties to support national stability and progress. He further appreciated that from the days of the PDM government until now, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has been handling national matters with responsibility and maturity, consistently taking all allied parties into confidence. He added that this spirit of co-operation will continue, as the government's foremost priority remains the national interest. PML-N Leader Kohistani also praised the services of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, highlighting his consistent focus on responsible governance.—APP

Saira enthralls Islamabad with spellbinding opera performance

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's first opera singer and the world's pioneering Sufi Opera star, Saira Peter, has captivated audiences at the Sir Syed Memorial Auditorium, delivering a powerful opera performance that blended Western classical technique with the spiritual resonance of Sufi poetry. Organised by the Silk Road Culture Centre, the much-anticipated event drew music enthusiasts, students and admirers of Pakistan's cultural diversity. Saira, performing alongside her students from the recently established Saira Arts Academy, Lahore, received prolonged applause from an appreciative audience. Former federal culture minister and renowned artist Jamal Shah, who attended as chief guest, lauded Saira's contributions to the arts. Welcoming the performers, he praised her role in introducing the operatic tradition to Pakistan and showcasing the country's softer cultural image abroad. The evening opened with introductory remarks by Zafar Francis, Saira Peter's official man-

ager, after which she took the stage accompanied by her husband and music director Stephen Smith, as well as students Moosa Azeem and Azal Abbas. Speaking to the audience, the celebrity expressed her pride in representing Pakistan on international platforms. "I feel proud and honoured to participate in these events for my country," she said, adding that performing in Islamabad with her academy's students was a moment of "deep personal joy". Saira's performance featured classical Western opera arias, eastern classical and semi-classical, as well as Sufi Opera (regd with the UK Intellectual Property Office) — her own fusion of Western and Eastern classical whose notes join in a magical dance that swings in a twinkling from meend to opera, and back, producing sounds never before heard in the music world. Sufi Opera is a genre she pioneered and has come to be known for globally. Through this innovative style, she seeks to highlight Pakistan as a progressive and peace-loving na-

tion, conveying messages of love, harmony and humanity. In collaboration with her UK team of professionals, Saira is preparing to launch Marvi's Tears, the world's first Sufi opera. The opera features libretto written by Zafar Francis, recounting the tale of Sufi poet Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai. Having trained in both Eastern and Western classical traditions, Saira Peter has honed her craft under veteran UK vocal coach Paul Knight and through master classes with leading sopranos Rosemary Ashe, Louise Tucker, Sumi Jo and others. Over the years, she has introduced Western audiences to the works of classical Sufi poets, including Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, performing across Europe and the United States. Beyond performance, she heads NJ Arts, London, opened by Sir Cliff Richard OBE in 1998 and whose patrons include Jamal Shah. She also runs Saira Arts Academy, Lahore, where she is preparing Pakistan's next generation of opera singers. APP

Prime suspect in Martyr ASI case killed

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Monday exchanged fire with five armed suspects riding three motorcycles in the jurisdiction of Sabzi Mandi Police Station, resulting in the death of the prime suspect involved in the attack on martyred ASI Ali Akbar. An official told APP that the police team was conducting routine checking at a checkpoint when the armed suspects opened indiscriminate fire upon seeing the officers. Police, equipped with protective gear and bulletproof jackets, remained unharmed and immediately returned fire. He said one of the suspects was critically injured by the firing of his own accomplices and later died at the hospital. The deceased was identified as the main accused in the murderous attack on martyred ASI Ali Akbar. The police also recovered the martyr's official pistol from his possession. He said that ASI Ali Akbar was martyred the previous day on IJP Road (Inter-Junction Principal Road) when unidentified assailants opened fire on him.—APP

Physiotherapists stresses regular exercise

ISLAMABAD: To combat the effects of winter inactivity, physiotherapists Monday urge children, adults, and the elderly to embrace regular exercise and playful activities, strengthening muscles, protecting bones and staying healthy all season long While speaking to a media channel, Dr. Arif Siddiqui, a renowned physiotherapist emphasized the growing need for public awareness about maintaining regular physical activity during winter, adding, reduced movement in colder months can lead to stiffness, muscle weakness, and other bone-related problems across all age groups. Dr. Siddiqui explained that children, working adults, and the elderly are all susceptible to the negative effects of inactivity. "Winter often keeps people indoors, but staying active is crucial to maintaining muscle flexibility and bone strength," he said He advised simple daily exercises and playful routines to help combat these issues. The physiotherapist also called for communities to promote engaging activities that encourage movement. According to Dr. Siddiqui, even light exercises, stretching, and short outdoor walks can make a significant difference in preventing stiffness and improving overall health during the colder months.—APP

PIA flights operating normally despite global airbus glitches

ISLAMABAD: PIA spokesperson Abdullah Khan said on Monday that Pakistan International Airlines flights are operating normally, unaffected by the software glitches that have disrupted Airbus A320 fleets globally and assured passengers that the airline's services remain reliable and on schedule across all domestic and international routes. Speaking to a local media channel, PIA spokesperson Abdullah Khan clarified that Pakistan International Airlines flights are operating smoothly and on schedule across all domestic and international routes. He reassured passengers that the airline's services remain unaffected by the software glitches currently impacting Airbus A320 fleets globally He further explained that PIA has robust systems and protocols in place to ensure operational continuity, emphasizing that passenger safety and punctuality remain the airline's top priorities. "Our team continuously monitors all flights, and we have contingency measures ready to handle any technical issues," he added.—APP

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EXPORTERS OF
MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS
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PAKISTAN**

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KARATE
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Trump has delivered tangible results to the region

NADIM SHEHADI

THE intensity of American reactions to President Donald Trump remains intriguing. I saw it in Boston among both students and faculty during the traumatic 2016 elections. His victory was totally unexpected and there was an emotional, almost visceral response that transcended normal political disagreement. He was the establishment's worst nightmare and they projected all sorts of fears on to him. The same goes with the media. And this is still the case in his second term, with the polarization persisting beyond what I would consider rational. Trump is unpredictable, full of contradictions, breaks every rule and it is sometimes difficult to interpret what he means from what he says. I have made the effort. I listened to 20 interviews conducted with Trump by the journalist Bob Woodward while on mountain hikes in Greece and I may have gotten a feel of some patterns. But I still cannot claim to understand him. No matter. We in the Middle East do not share America's emotional extremes about Trump. As allies who depend on American partnership, the region's leaders have to adjust and build a working relationship with whoever is in power. What concerns us more is the polarization itself – when foreign policy swings dramatically with each administration for what seem like purely domestic reasons. Trump may represent something genuinely revolutionary in American politics – a fundamental challenge to established norms and institutions. In the 2020 election, Joe Biden received more than 90 percent of votes in Washington. This demonstrated how uniformly the permanent bureaucracy opposed Trump. The intelligence agencies, diplomatic corps, civil service, media and universities aligned against him with remarkable consistency. Trump's method is familiar to people around the Mediterranean but totally alien to societies like those in Northern Europe or the US. Trump's response was to bypass these institutions entirely, conducting governance through personal relationships rather than bureaucratic channels. His supporters see liberation from entrenched bureaucracy; his opponents see threats to democratic guardrails. The intensity reveals deeper conflicts about who holds power and how it should be

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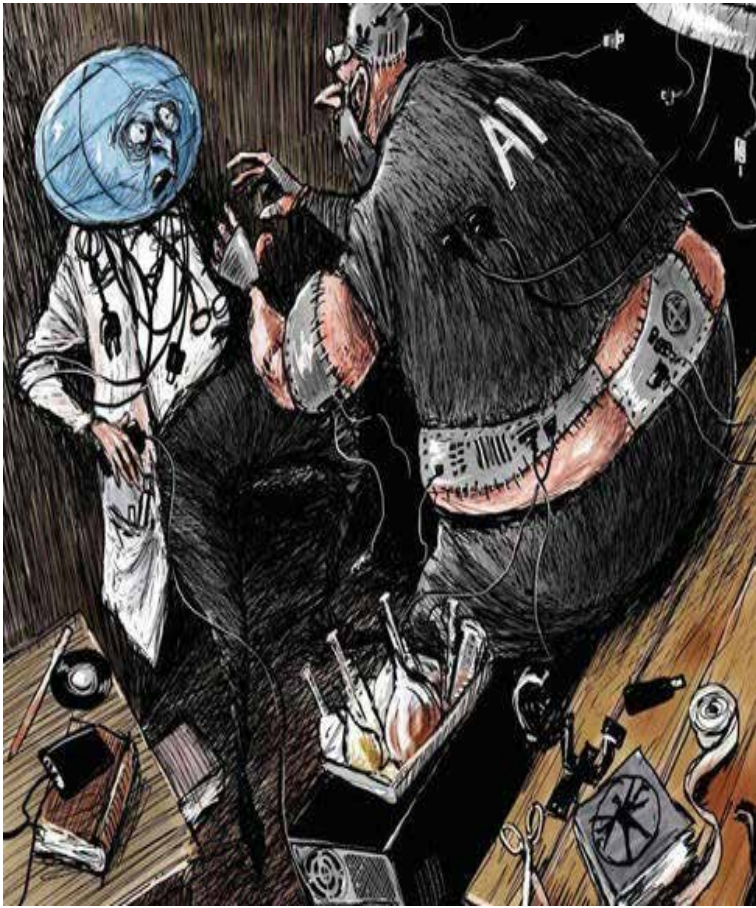
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exercised. Trump did not create America's divisions, rather he has exposed existing fault lines in the most unexpected places. What makes Trump revolutionary is his willingness to violate every convention. He dramatically says things that provoke outrage. He bypasses normal policy processes, makes announcements via social media and uses undiplomatic language. There is a parallel to Silicon Valley, which emerged by breaking established rules and challenging administrative authority. Rules can protect necessary standards but they can also become barriers preserving existing power structures. Americans struggle with the question: Which rules did Trump break that were arbitrary constraints and which were fragile pillars of the democratic process?

Trump operates through personal relationships, loyalty and dramatic gestures rather than institutional process. This is a method that is familiar to people around the Mediterranean but totally alien to societies like those in Northern Europe or the US. A parade of foreign leaders has been subjected to live Oval Office meetings. These would have normally been polite diplomatic photo ops for the media, but Trump turned them into reality TV on a dramatic scale. During Trump's recent meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the crown prince stood firm about Saudi Arabia's conditions for normalization with Israel. Trump's relational, theatrical approach is more Mediterranean or Middle Eastern than American institutional style.

From a regional perspective, Trump has delivered tangible results. Ending the Gaza war should have happened much earlier, but he did it as he said he would. While experts and political rivals often mock Trump's foreign policy approach, he also delivered the Abraham Accords. Trump ignored the experts as well as the rules and whatever consensus stood in the way. He pursued direct relations with leaders, whether in Israel or the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan or Morocco. He achieved what generations of traditional diplomacy could not.

His relationship with the crown prince has followed similar patterns – partnership rather than patronage. His earlier withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal aligned with regional security concerns. His current Gaza ceasefire efforts continue the same approach: personal engagement and dramatic gestures in pursuit of the deal.

Arab policymakers have achieved significant gains under Trump – the Abraham Accords, partnership resets and maximum pressure on Iran. Yet, even while welcoming these moves, they have maintained careful contact with the Democratic Party, understanding that the pendulum will swing. The fundamental question is: Is America reliable when its foreign policy reverses completely every four to eight years based on domestic cultural wars that are unrelated to the region?

Population: the silent crises

Dr M Ali Hamza



European countries, Japan, and South Korea today struggle with shrinking populations, raising an important lesson: the objective is balance, not simply reduction. The global experience demonstrates that sustainable population management is not about coercion, it is about informed decision-making, long-term planning, gender empowerment, and economic alignment. Pakistan is now the 5th most populous country in the world, with over 240 million citizens, and a youth-heavy demographic. While a young population can be a strategic asset...

POPULATION management is often misunderstood as an attempt to control reproduction. It is rather a broader strategy to harmonize population growth with national resources, economic capacity, and quality of life. It includes shaping demographic trends through education, health strategies, urban planning, economic incentives, and behavioral change, aiming not merely for fewer people, but for better-prepared, better-educated, and more productive populations. Many countries faced population challenges in recent past and tackled them effectively. For instance, China initially used restrictive policies like the one-child law, but in recent years shifted to encouraging births due to aging demographics, showing that population policies must adapt over time. Bangladesh successfully reduced its fertility rate through grassroots education, community-based female health workers, and empowering women economically not just by providing contraceptives. Iran drastically lowered fertility rates in the 1990s through premarital family planning courses, high literacy among women, and widespread reproductive health awareness. European countries, Japan, and South Korea today struggle with shrinking populations, raising an important lesson: the objective is balance, not simply reduction. The global experience demonstrates that sustainable population management is not about coercion, it is about informed decision-making, long-term planning, gender empowerment, and economic alignment. Pakistan is now the 5th most populous country in the world, with over 240 million citizens, and a youth-heavy demographic. While a young population can be a strategic asset, it becomes a burden when job creation does not match workforce growth, education systems are overstretched, urban infrastructure is overloaded, health-

care resources are limited and agricultural land shrinks while food demand rises. Pakistan's population grows by roughly 2% annually, meaning we add around 4 million people each year, equivalent to another Karachi every decade. No economy, however ambitious, can absorb such increases without pressure on housing, employment, and public services. For Pakistan, the issue is not just population size; it is quality. Too many births occur in households unable to afford education, healthcare, or nutrition perpetuating cycles of poverty. Why did past policies and population management plans fail? Pakistan has introduced many policies, written many frameworks, and signed many declarations. Yet implementation lags for key reasons like i) cultural and religious sensitivities; as family planning is often misunderstood as anti-family or anti-faith, ii) low female literacy; studies have established the fact that women's empowerment strongly correlates with reduced fertility, iii) weak health communication: policies exist on paper but don't reach rural communities effectively, iv) inconsistent political will because government restarts the conversation rather than continuing a long-term roadmap, v) perception of children as economic security; as in poor households, more children mean more potential earners, vi) rural-urban disparity; stats show that urban fertility is declining, while rural fertility remains high. Though each reason is a contributing factor and needs serious deliberation, but in the context of Pakistan cultural/religious sensitivities and women empowerment appears to be a larger contributor to the problem. Our policy makers and executors must recognize the fact that population management is far more than distributing pills, devices, or running isolated and irregular campaigns. It is about changing mindset, and indeed it

never happens with a magic wand. Changing the mindset of a society is a gradual, layered process that involves education, leadership, cultural evolution, and real-life demonstration of improved outcomes. It begins with awareness, where people are introduced to new perspectives through public dialogue, evidence-based communication, media engagement, and educational content. The next step is community-level engagement, because mindsets rarely shift through national messaging alone. Trusted figures such as teachers, religious scholars, community elders, and healthcare workers play a central role in reshaping norms. When messages are delivered through familiar voices, they carry greater legitimacy and acceptance. Then comes policy alignment and leadership example. Government programs, school curricula, economic incentives, and local support systems need to reinforce the desired values: it signals that the mindset shift is not just aspirational but institutional. Another critical phase is real-life reinforcement. When smaller families witness improved household stability, better child development, financial relief, and upward mobility, these visible improvements validate the mindset shift. Others observe these results and replicate the choices. Finally, the mindset truly transforms when it becomes self-sustaining; when societal norms, peer expectations, and cultural identity begin endorsing the new thinking. Over time, what once required persuasion becomes common sense, and society internalizes a new vision of progress, opportunity, and responsible planning. Look at history, social mindset never changed with a magic wand, but with clarity, commitment and consistency. The big question is, who is going to do it? And simple answer is 'WE', the people.

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Swamy's Tweet Leaves Modi Exposed

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



India's political history offers numerous examples where the personal lives of national icons were woven—fairly or unfairly—into political narratives. Mahatma Gandhi's lifelong experiments with celibacy remain a subject of historical debate, puzzling admirers and critics alike. His unconventional practices, carried out in the pursuit of spiritual discipline, were questioned even by his close associates

PUBLIC life, especially in South Asia, has long been shaped by the uneasy intersection of personal morality, political authority, and the public's expectation of virtue from those who govern. In recent days, Indian politics has been unsettled by a series of remarks posted on X (formerly Twitter) by veteran politician and economist Subramanian Swamy. In one such post, Swamy suggested that "It will be difficult for Modi to avoid the Blackmail of US and Modi, using the ugly sex revelations of Hardip Puri, Modi's former Cabinet Minister. Modi claims to be a Brahmachari, but in truth he is a Bachelor who has had flings with women, willing or unwilling. The US agencies have the photos to blackmail. This hurts India's national interests". The idea that the personal life of a national leader might intersect with matters of state is neither new nor unique to India. Yet Swamy's intervention carries weight because it comes from a figure long known for his insider knowledge, frankness, and unpredictability. Whether one agrees with his assertions or dismisses them as political provocation, they have undeniably opened a debate on the delicate boundaries between private conduct and public responsibility. In a geopolitical environment as complex as India's, even the perception that a leader could be susceptible to external manipulation becomes a matter of strategic concern. India's political history offers numerous examples where the personal lives of national icons were woven—fairly or unfairly—into political narratives. Mahatma Gandhi's lifelong experiments with celibacy remain a subject of historical debate, puzzling admirers and critics alike. His unconventional practices, carried out in the pursuit of spiritual discipline, were questioned even by his close associates. Jawaharlal Nehru's deep and openly affectionate friendship with Edwina Mountbatten became a recurring theme in popular writing, academic discussion, and political gossip, despite the absence of credible evidence suggesting impropriety. Later decades

saw regional leaders ensnared in scandals, some grounded in fact, others designed for political take-downs. The Indian electorate, while often tolerant of human imperfections, has not been indifferent to the moral halo traditionally expected of its leaders. What differentiates the present moment from earlier eras is the unprecedented power of digital communication. A comment posted online—whether measured or reckless—can shape global perceptions within minutes. Allegations that once required months of political manoeuvring now travel instantly, creating narratives that policymakers, diplomats, and security institutions must urgently address. Even if the underlying claims lack verification, the velocity of modern discourse ensures that their political impact precedes their factual scrutiny. From a national security perspective, Swamy's implication—that hypothetical personal secrets could be used by foreign powers to influence India's highest office—raises disturbing questions. It suggests a scenario in which statecraft might be compromised not by ideology or policy failure but by the vulnerabilities of individuals. Such a prospect, even as a theoretical concern, invites deeper reflection on the institutional safeguards that protect democratic governance. History shows that scandals—real, perceived, or fabricated—often become turning points in Indian politics. Indira Gandhi's Emergency-era decisions, Rajiv Gandhi's entanglement in the Bofors controversy, and the scandals involving various chief ministers all shifted political trajectories, in some cases altering the direction of the nation. When moral allegations become entangled with political contestation, they seldom remain confined to private criticism; they spill into questions of governance, legitimacy, and public trust. The current episode, driven by Swamy's comments, may influence the future of Indian politics in several possible ways. First, it may intensify internal tensions within the ruling party, especially if the controversy

fuels debates over leadership direction, succession, or ideological purity. Second, it may embolden opposition parties to frame new narratives around transparency, accountability, and character, themes that have often resonated with India's middle and urban classes. Third, it may shape India's diplomatic posture if foreign governments perceive political fragility or internal discord at the top. Yet beyond the immediate political ripples lies a broader truth: modern democracies often expect their leaders to embody moral perfection, even though history repeatedly shows that statesmen, like all human beings, are complex, flawed, and sometimes contradictory. The danger lies not in acknowledging this humanity but in allowing unverified allegations to overshadow critical issues of policy, governance, and national strategy. When political discourse becomes dominated by personal insinuation rather than substantive debate, the democratic process itself is diminished. India today aspires to great-power status, seeking a central role on the global stage. Such ambition requires political stability, institutional maturity, and a leadership that commands confidence both domestically and internationally. Allegations—whether rooted in fact or born of rivalry—must therefore be handled with seriousness, transparency, and due process. Neither blind acceptance nor dismissive rhetoric strengthens the nation; only truth, accountability, and institutional robustness do. Whether Swamy's remarks prove to be a fleeting controversy or a catalyst for deeper political shifts will become clear in time. What already stands revealed, however, is the immense power of digital communication to reshape national conversations and the enduring importance of integrity—both perceived and real—in the life of a democracy. In India's political theatre, where personalities are as consequential as policies, the intersection of private life and public duty will remain a subject of scrutiny, speculation, and debate for years to come.

Briefs

Pakistan's economic potential hinges on...

FROM PAGE 01 such as religious perspectives and appreciated contributions by leading religious scholars who have clarified misconceptions around population management. He said that Pakistan cannot shy away from action, especially when evidence-based guidance is available and consensus is emerging among credible voices. Referring to economic challenges, the Minister reiterated that climate impacts are already affecting growth, with recent flooding expected to shave 0.5 percent off GDP this year. He said population pressures similarly constrain real economic gains, as higher growth figures lose meaning if population expansion is not managed. He highlighted that real progress hinges on harnessing the population dividend, particularly the youth, who make up 64 percent of the population. He emphasised that economic transformation will come not from government jobs but from freelancers, IT professionals and young innovators leading Pakistan's digital economy.

CDF notification cannot be issued...

FROM PAGE 01 this [speculations regarding CDF appointment] – let them," the interior minister quipped. In a similar statement, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Sunday dismissed speculation about a notification for the appointment of the CDF, saying the announcement will be made in due time. The government introduced the CDF post through the 27th Constitutional Amendment earlier this month. "There is unnecessary and irresponsible speculation about CDF notification. Please be informed that the process has been initiated, PM is returning shortly," Asif wrote in a post on X. The defence minister said a notification in this regard would be issued in due course, emphasising that there was "no room for conjecture

Official process underway, says law...

FROM PAGE 01 Staff Committee (CJSC), which formally ended on November 27. It will be a dual-hatted position combined with the office of the army chief. A day prior, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said the notification would be issued "in the due course of time" and urged people to refrain from speculation. Speaking to reporters at the Pakistan National Arts Council, Tarar said, "The notification will happen; there's nothing for you or me to worry about. He's holding the office in all respects." The minister elaborated that official processes are underway to issue the notification.

KP CM dares Centre...

FROM PAGE 01 KP government, the information minister said: "When governance is poor, such discussions begin." Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar said that the governor's rule is part of the Constitution and the law. "Using the government's machinery to attack Islamabad is an unconstitutional act," he added. The law minister said that the leadership of PPP and PML-N was targeted multiple times but they didn't cross the line on the injustices done to them. During his interaction with journalists outside the Parliament House, Senator Faisal Vawda said that if lawlessness continues, governor's rule could be imposed in KP. Vawda – once a close aide of PTI founder Imran Khan – emphasised that the provincial chief minister should perform his duties responsibly.

Pakistan rout Sri Lanka to clinch T20 tri-series final

Pakistan Clinch Tri-Nation Series Title as Bowlers Spark Sri Lanka Collapse and Saim Ayub, Babar Azam Seal Comfortable Six-Wicket Win Ahead of World Cup Preparations in Dominant Rawalpindi Final Performance



RAWALPINDI: A fine show by bowlers, backed well by batters Saim Ayub and Babar Azam, steered Pakistan to a comfortable six-wicket victory against Sri Lanka in the tri-nation series final at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Saturday. Chasing a modest 115 for victory, the hosts came home in 18.4 overs thanks to Saim (36 off 33 balls). Babar (37 not out off 34) played an exquisite cut shot through point off pacer Dushmantha Chameera for a boundary to complete a well-deserved victory. Mohammad Nawaz won the Player of the Match, as well as Player of the Series. "To deliver when the team requires you is very important," he said in the post-match presentation. "I plan with the coaches and try to keep it simple because as a fingerspinner, you don't have

many options. So I try to read the game and bowl accordingly. Speaking on his batting, he said: "I try to see what the situations demands: to build a partnership or attack. So I try to play accordingly." Skipper Salman Agha was pleased with his side's performance ahead of the World Cup. "It was a great performance from us. This has been very good two months for us, against South Africa and Sri Lanka. We have been doing well in both ODIs and T20Is," he said after the match. "Before going to the World Cup, you want your 15 ready. If anything happens to your main players, you want to have the back-up ready. So we are giving chances to everyone. "I think we are pretty much ready for the World Cup. We still have six games before the World Cup to try out things if we

want but think we are pretty much clear on our 15 players." Sri Lanka skipper Dasun Shanaka said his side needed to fine-tune their game ahead of the next series. "We expected the wicket to play better than this but they also bowled well in the middle overs. We couldn't have taken some chances: right-handers getting out to the left-arm spinner and left-hander to offspinner," he said after the match. "We need to fine-tune our game ahead of the next series. Mishara, Nissanka, Kusal Mendis, Chameera, Maheesh, Hasaranga were the positives. And we showed good intent in the field." Earlier, Pakistan bowlers made a spectacular comeback to dismiss Sri Lanka for a paltry 114. After being sent in to bat, Shanaka's side dominated the proceedings in the first half of their innings, reaching a solid

81-1 in 10 overs before they faced a dramatic collapse. Spinners Mohammad Nawaz (3-17), Abrar Ahmed (2-18) and Saim Ayub (1-17) checked the Sri Lankan progress while fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi (3-18 off three overs) mopped up the tail. The Sri Lankans were eventually dismissed in 19.1 overs when pacer Salman Mirza cleaned up Dushmantha Chameera. TEAMS: Pakistan: Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Babar Azam, Salman Agha (C), Fakhar Zaman, Usman Khan (wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Faheem Ashraf, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Salman Mirza, Abrar Ahmed Sri Lanka: Pathum Nissanka, Kamil Mishara, Kusal Mendis (wk), Kusal Perera, Janith Liyanage, Dasun Shanaka (C), Pavan Rathnayake, Wanindu Hasaranga, Dushmantha Chameera, Maheesh Theekshana, Eshan Malinga. – APP

F1 set for final-race showdown as Verstappen exploits McLaren blunder

LUSAIL: The three-way F1 title fight will go down to the last race of the season after Max Verstappen took full advantage of a McLaren blunder to win the Qatar Grand Prix on Sunday. The Red Bull driver made an immediate pit stop during an early safety car intervention, when McLaren duo Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris stayed out, and he capitalised by driving with cool precision to triumph in convincing style. His win lifted him into second place in the title race with 396 points, 12 behind championship leader Norris, who finished fourth. Pole-sitter Piastri slipped to third in the standings but trimmed his deficit to Norris to 16 points with one race remaining in Abu Dhabi next Sunday, where Verstappen has won four times in the last five years. "It's all possible," said Verstappen, who is chasing a fifth successive world title.

Britain's Norris still has his nose in front heading to Abu Dhabi and will take the title with a podium finish, no matter what his rivals do. Dutchman Verstappen came home 7.995 seconds ahead of Piastri with Carlos Sainz third for Williams, ahead of Norris and the Mercedes pair of Kimi Antonelli and George Russell. It was Verstappen's seventh win of the season, his third in succession in Qatar and 70th of his career. "That was an incredible race for us," said Verstappen, who had written off his title hopes at the end of August before embarking on a sequence of results that turned a 104-point deficit to Piastri into a four-point advantage. Piastri 'speechless' "We made the right call as a team to box under the safety car and it was scrappy, but we got there in the end." Red Bull's race strategist Hannah Schmitz joined Verstappen on the po-

dium to mark her part in his success. Australia's Piastri, who had a potential win taken from him by poor decisions, said: "I'm speechless. I have no words. "Clearly we didn't get it right tonight. I drove the best race I could and there was nothing left out there. "In hindsight it's pretty obvious what we should have done, but we'll discuss it as a team. It's obviously tough to swallow." At lights out Piastri surged clear with a near-perfect start from pole. Behind him, Verstappen swooped to pass Norris round the outside of Turn One. On lap seven Sauber's Nico Hulkenberg tagged Pierre Gasly's Alpine and spun off, prompting a safety car. Verstappen pitted immediately from second for fresh mediums, but the McLaren pair stayed out – effectively missing out on a "free stop" in a race where two stops were mandatory because of a 25-lap limit for each set of tyres. – Agencies

World Kickboxing C'ship concludes with Emirati success

ABU DHABI: Emirati fighters are celebrating success in both the seniors' and masters' divisions of the WAKO World Kickboxing Championship. Organized by the UAE Muay Thai and Kickboxing Federation at ADNEC Abu Dhabi, the event was held over six days and saw 2,000 athletes from 150 countries, representing five continents, taking part. It is the first year the championship has been held outside Europe and in the Middle East. The UAE's national team claimed a total of 25 medals – nine gold, seven silver and nine bronze, representing the country's best result in its world championship history. This edition also recorded the largest-ever UAE delegation, featuring 92 male and female athletes across various divisions and weight categories. This included the People of Determination team, whose outstanding performance contributed significantly to the UAE's medal tally. Abdullah Saeed Al-Neyadi, vice president of the International Muay Thai Federation and chairman of the UAE Muay Thai and Kickboxing Federation and Asian Arab Muay Thai Federations, said: "We are proud of the historic achievements of our national team in this global championship. – Agencies

Imran Khan's sons voice fears for his safety

FROM PAGE 01 communication for a couple of months. "Today, we have no verifiable information at all about his condition," the son added. "Our greatest fear is that something irreversible is being hidden from us." The family has repeatedly sought access for Imran's personal physician, who has not been allowed to examine him for more than a year, he added. The interior ministry did not respond to a request for comment. Speaking on condition of anonymity, a jail official told Reuters that Imran was in good health, adding that he was not aware of any plan for a move to a higher-security facility. Khan, 72, has been in jail since August 2023, convicted in a string of cases that he says were politically driven following his ouster in a 2022 parliamentary vote. His first conviction centred on accusations that he unlawfully sold gifts received in office, in a proceeding widely referred to as the Toshakhana case. Later verdicts added lengthy jail terms, including 10 years on accusations of leaking a diplomatic cable and 14 years in a separate graft case tied to the Al-Qadir Trust, a charity project prosecutors say figured in improper land deals. Imran's party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), says the prosecutions aim to exclude him from public life and elections. Family anxiety deepened by lack of information The family says the lack of communication has fuelled fears over what it calls a deliberate effort to push Khan out of public sight. "This isolation is intentional," Kasim said, referring to the authorities he believes are keeping his father cut off. "They are scared of him. He is Pakistan's most popular leader, and they know they cannot defeat him democratically."

Situation ripe for Governor rule in KP

FROM PAGE 01 He argued that if the conditions merit it, then it was within the Constitution to implement it. Similarly, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar also told reporters, "It is a constitutional option that is available to every government, so such discussions arise when governance is weak. Let's see how matters proceed." Meanwhile, Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhary advised CM Afridi not to exacerbate friction between the Centre and the province. Chaudhry said the federal government had tried to keep the KP chief minister on board with every development related to terrorism and other issues, adding that CM Afridi should fulfil his responsibilities as the provincial chief executive and desist from "political point scoring" at every opportunity. KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi had called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif last week to discuss matters concerning the province, including the imposition of governor's rule.

Israel targets Gaza in violation of Gaza truce

FROM PAGE 01 he Israeli army said Sunday that it had killed more than 40 Palestinian fighters over the past week in operations targeting tunnels near Rafah in the Gaza Strip. Earlier in the day, the army announced it had killed four people emerging from underground in the territory's southernmost city overnight. Dozens of Hamas fighters are holed up in southern Gaza's tunnels, beneath areas controlled by the Israeli military. Over the past 40 days, troops have been concentrating their efforts around eastern Rafah, "with the aim of dismantling the underground tunnel routes that remain in the area and bringing about the elimination of the terrorists hiding out within them", the military said in a statement. It added that "more than 40 terrorists were eliminated" in the last week. "Additionally, dozens of tunnel shafts and terrorist infrastructure sites, both above and below ground, were dismantled in the area."

Mbappe matches Ronaldo with rare Real Madrid landmark

KYLIAN Mbappe has become the second Real Madrid player, after Cristiano Ronaldo, to score 53 or more goals in a calendar year. The Frenchman achieved the milestone during a 1-1 draw against Girona, scoring the goal for his team. Mbappe is in brilliant form and continues to break or match the records of his idol, Ronaldo at Madrid, and added another one on Sunday, November 30. The Frenchman achieved the landmark in his first full calendar year with the Spanish club; the Portuguese star has done it five times in his nine seasons at the club. The achievement comes just days after Mbappe joined an exclusive list of four players who scored four goals in a UEFA Champions League match for Real Madrid. The former PSG player netted the ball four times in a match against Olympiacos on November 27. Ronaldo did it against Malmö in the 2015/16 campaign. In the same match, the French striker also broke Ronaldo's record of fastest hat-trick, scoring it in seven minutes. While the Portugal captain had done it in 11 minutes against Malmö in an 8-0 win in 2015/16. Earlier this season, Mbappe spoke about Ronaldo, saying he is his role model and the reference point at Real Madrid. "Cristiano has always been a role model for me. I'm lucky enough to talk to him, he gives me advice, he's helped me. I think in Madrid he's still the number one. – Agencies

On the battlefield or in sport, our soldiers glorify the nation's pride: Rana Mashhood

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan congratulated Pakistan Army's three athletes who won bronze medals at the World Fitness Challenge & Bodybuilding Championship held in Khobar, Saudi Arabia. The championship saw competitors from 57 countries in the men's events and 18 countries in the women's events, where Pakistan impressed with skill, strength, and discipline. The medalists included Sadaf Siddiqui, who won the bronze medal in the Women's Masters category. Hawaldar Maqbool Ahmed secured bronze in the Men's Individual Masters event and Inamullah claimed the bronze medal in the Men's Seniors category. Rana Mashhood said the athletes displayed "exceptional resilience and unmatched focus" throughout the championship. He added, "Whether in war or on the playground, our soldiers emerge as winners," emphasizing that Pakistan's strength shines both in uniform and in competition. He praised the Army's tradition of excellence and said the achievement has lifted the nation's pride. The medals have once again highlighted Pakistan's presence on the global sports stage. "These young athletes are role models for every Pakistani," he said. He noted that their dedication reflects the spirit and talent of the coun-



try's youth. Rana Mashhood said the victory is a powerful reminder of what Pakistani athletes can achieve with hard work and passion. "Their courage, consistency, and commitment shine through every medal," he added. The nation continues to celebrate the three bronze medalists, who have raised Pakistan's flag with honour and reminded the world that the country's defenders are also champions beyond the battlefield. – APP

Kohli hits century as India beat SA in first ODI

Virat Kohli's Record 52nd ODI Century Powers India to Thrilling 17-Run Victory Over South Africa as Kuldeep Yadav Shines and Late Fightback Falls Short in High-Scoring Series Opener On Sunday

RANCHI: Star batsman Virat Kohli hit a record-extending 52nd one-day century to set up India's 17-run win over a spirited South Africa in the first match on Sunday. Kohli's 135 came off 120 balls and he shared a second-wicket partnership of 136 with fellow stalwart Rohit Sharma to set India on course for 349-8 in the eastern city of Ranchi. Corbin Bosch made a valiant 67 off 51 balls as South Africa fought until almost the end. Entering the 50th over, the visitors needed 18 for victory with one wicket left. Bosch fell on the second ball and the South Africa were 332 all out. Matthew Breetzke, who made 72, and Marco Jansen, with 70, put on a fighting stand of 97 for the sixth wicket to revived the chase after South Africa slipped to 11-3 and then 77-4. Left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav stood out with figures of 4-68 in the high-scoring contest. His double strike to remove Jansen and Breetzke in the space of three balls was the turning point for India who took 1-0 lead in the three-match series. The 37-year-old Kohli remained the hero with his 83rd ton across the three international formats after he raised his hundred with a boundary off Jansen and lifted his bat to a raucous home crowd. An Indian fan breached security and raced to the pitch to touch Kohli's feet before he was dragged away.



Kohli has the most ODI hundreds, with Indian great Sachin Tendulkar second with 49. The Indian cricket star tops the list of hundreds in a single format with Tendulkar's count in Tests being 51. Kohli and 38-year-old Sharma, who made 57, only play the 50-over format after they retired from T20 and Test cricket. Their presence boosted India, led by KL Rahul in the absence of the injured Shubman Gill, after a 2-0 Test whitewash against South Africa. Sharma lost fellow opener Yashasvi Jaiswal early for 18 but Kohli walked in to a huge roar from a 38,000-strong capacity crowd. The pair steadied the innings and then took on the bowlers before Sharma was trapped lbw by Jansen. Sharma hit three sixes in his 51-ball knock. That took him to 352 sixes in this format, overtaking Pakistan batter Shahid Afridi's record of 351. Kohli switched gears soon after reaching his first hundred since February. He hit off-spinner Preenelan Subrayen for two fours and two sixes in a 21-run 39th over. He finally fell to Nandre Burger, caught by Ryan Rickelton, after hitting 11 fours and seven sixes. Rahul kept up the attack with 60 off 56 balls, while Ravindra Jadeja made 32 off 20. – Agencies

Briefs

Zelensky meets Macron to shore up support for Ukraine

PARIS: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky meets French counterpart Emmanuel Macron in Paris on Monday, seeking to shore up European support as US President Donald Trump expressed optimism of a deal to end Russia's war in Ukraine. US and Ukrainian negotiators held hours of what both sides called "productive" talks in Florida on Sunday on a plan Washington wants to form the basis of a peace deal between Russia and Ukraine. The diplomatic flurry after nearly four years of conflict comes as Kyiv battles military pressure and reels from a domestic corruption scandal that forced Zelensky to remove his close aide and top negotiator. The Ukrainian leader has been a regular visitor to Paris since Russia launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022 — this latest visit due to get under way at 10:00 am (0900 GMT). French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said in comments to the La Tribune Dimanche newspaper on Sunday that the meeting aimed "to move the negotiations forward." "Peace is within reach, if (Russian President) Vladimir Putin abandons his delusional hope of reconstituting the Soviet empire by first subjugating Ukraine," he added. Washington put forward an initial 28-point proposal to halt the war, drafted without input from Ukraine's European allies and regarded as too close a reflection of Moscow's maximalist demands on Ukrainian territory.—APP

PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 1,384 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Monday witnessed bullish run, surging by 1,384.50 points, a positive change of 0.83 percent, to close at 168,062.19 points compared to 166,677.70 points on the previous trading day, according to PSX data. The ready market recorded a trading volume of 735.52 million shares valuing Rs46.18 billion, up from 592.74 million shares worth Rs41.96 billion in the previous session. Market capitalization also rose to Rs19.032 trillion from Rs18.866 trillion. Out of 484 active companies, 278 closed higher, 162 declined, while 44 remained unchanged. The leading companies in terms of ready-market turnover were F. National Equities with 70.03 million shares, followed by Beco Steel Limited with 42.56 million shares, and World-Call Telecom with 41.72 million shares. The top gainers were PIA Holding Company Limited-B, which increased by Rs379.00 to close at Rs24,356.00, and Hoechst Pakistan Limited, rising by Rs56.29 to close at Rs4,257.02. APP

Rupee gains 02 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Monday appreciated by 02 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 280.50 compared to the previous day's closing at Rs 280.52. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 281.5 and Rs 283, respectively. The price of the Euro increased by Rs1.08 to close at Rs 325.77, from the previous day's close of Rs 324.69, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen went up by 01 paise to close at Rs 1.80, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of 27 paise and closed at Rs 370.88 compared to the previous day's Rs370.61. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham remained unchanged and closed at Rs 76.37, and the Saudi Riyal declined by 02 paise to close at Rs 74.75.—APP

Pakistan, Egypt vow to deepen investment coop

CAIRO: Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Monday held a productive meeting with Eng. Ahmed Elsewedy, President and CEO of Elsewedy Electric, one of Egypt's leading multinational industrial groups and agreed to continue collaboration to enhance investment and industrial cooperation between Pakistan and Egypt. Eng. Ahmed Elsewedy expressed satisfaction with the company's current investment in Pakistan, said a news release. The minister apprised the Elsewedy leadership of the significant growth potential in Pakistan's mining sector, highlighting policy reforms, investor-friendly frameworks, emerging public-private partnership avenues, and the increasing interest being shown by major domestic and international players. He also briefed them on the wide spectrum of opportunities in Pakistan's rapidly expanding IT and technology services sector, inviting Egyptian companies to explore partnerships, innovation-led ventures, and digital trade cooperation. The Egyptian counterparts welcomed the latest economic developments in Pakistan and expressed keen interest in deepening bilateral commercial engagement.—Agencies



Cairo: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan meeting with Eng. Ahmed Elsewedy, President & CEO of Elsewedy Electric.

PKK urges Turkiye to free Ocalan to advance peace process

KANDIL: A senior Kurdistan Workers' Party commander told AFP the group will take no further steps in the peace process with Turkiye, urging it to advance negotiations and free PKK founder Abdullah Ocalan. "All the steps the leader Apo has initiated have been implemented... there will be no further actions taken," commander Amed Malazgirt told AFP on Saturday in a bunker in the Qandil mountains in northern Iraq. "From now on, we will be waiting for the Turkish state and they have to be the one taking steps," he said. The group has two demands, he added. "First, the freedom of leader Apo... without this, the process will not succeed. The second is the constitutional and official recognition of the Kurdish people in Turkiye." Female senior commander Serda Mazlum Gabar told AFP that "as long as the leadership is inside, the Kurdish people cannot be free. Nor can we, as guerrillas, feel free." "Our path to freedom passes through the freedom of our leadership," she added. Ocalan, 76, has led the peace process from his cell on Imrali island, where he has been held in solitary confinement since 1999. Turkish lawmakers from a committee tasked with fleshing out the peace process with the Kurds visited Ocalan earlier this week. In recent months, the PKK, which maintains a rear base in the mountains of northern Iraq, has taken several historic steps toward ending its decades-old fight against Turkiye that has claimed some 50,000 lives. In May, the PKK formally renounced its armed struggle against Turkiye. It then held a ceremony in northern Iraq during which 30 fighters burned their weapons in a symbolic move to show their commitment to the peace process. Last month, the group said it had begun withdrawing all of its forces from Turkish soil into northern Iraq. Earlier this month, the PKK announced their forces had withdrawn from a key border area in northern Iraq. "We have committed to not using weapons against the Turkish state," Malazgirt told AFP on Saturday. Ankara began indirect talks with the PKK late last year, with Ocalan in February urging the group's militants to lay down their weapons and embrace democratic means to advance the Kurdish cause. Turkiye has set up the cross-party parliamentary commission to lay the groundwork for the peace process and prepare a legal framework for the political integration of the PKK and its fighters. "By establishing this committee, the Turkish state has made a positive move, but it is not the only action needed. We are closely monitoring this mission," Malazgirt said. The PKK says it wants to pursue a democratic struggle to defend the rights of the Kurdish minority. But "the guerrilla is also the prototype of free life, the prototype of free humans, the prototype of free women," Serda Mazlum Gabar said.—DNA

US sanctions won't change court's handling of cases: ICC

THE HAGUE: The president of the International Criminal Court said on Monday US sanctions imposed on senior court officials disrupt their personal lives but vowed the institution would not yield to outside pressure. President Donald Trump's administration slapped targeted sanctions on nine ICC officials, including prosecutors and judges, earlier this year in retaliation for investigations into suspected Israeli war crimes. Sources have said Washington is also mulling sanctions against the entire court. "We never accept any kind of pressure from anyone on issues of interpretation of the statutory framework and adjudication of cases," Judge Tomoko Akane said on the first day of the annual meeting in The Hague of the court's governing body, made up of representatives of its 125 member states. Akane said the sanctions had unsettled the family lives of targeted officials and disrupted their financial transactions, even in ICC member states in Europe. The sanctions freeze any US assets the individuals may have and essentially cut them off from the US financial system, with which almost all internationally operating banks have close ties. The ICC has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, as well as figures from the Palestinian Hamas militant group, for alleged crimes committed during the Gaza war. They have all denied the charges mentioned in the warrants. Washington has previously targeted court officials with sanctions for their roles in those cases and in a separate investigation into suspected crimes in Afghanistan, which initially had examined actions by US troops. The ICC was founded in 2002 under a treaty giving it jurisdiction to prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes that were either committed by a citizen of a member state or had taken place on a member state's territory.—DNA

Pope arrives in Lebanon with message of peace for crisis-hit country

BEIRUT: Pope Leo XIV arrived in Lebanon on Sunday with a message of peace for the crisis-hit nation, still reeling from a war between Israel and Hezbollah and the conflict's lingering aftereffects. The pope had previously visited Turkiye, where he kicked off his first overseas tour since being elected leader of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics in May. He told journalists on the plane that the visit to the two countries had "a special theme of... being a messenger of peace, of wanting to promote peace throughout the region." Leo was met in Beirut by officials including President Joseph Aoun, the Arab world's only Christian head of state. Lebanon rolled out the red carpet and a 21-gun salute for Leo, who was also greeted at the airport by children and a brass band as ships at the port sounded their horns. Two Lebanese military aircraft escorted his plane on descent. "I came to say that the Lebanese are one people and we are united," said Zahra Nahleh, 19, from Lebanon's war-ravaged south, who was waiting along the road from the airport to welcome the pontiff. "The pope is not just for Christians but for Muslims too, and we love him a lot," she told AFP. "We want him to bless our land, we wish he could visit the south." The two-nation tour is something of a test for the first American pope, whose understated style contrasts with that of his charismatic and impulsive predecessor, Francis. Although Leo's four-day visit drew little attention in Turkiye, a Muslim-majority nation whose Christian community numbers only around 100,000, his 48-hour stopover has been eagerly awaited in Lebanon, a religiously diverse country of around six million people. Long hailed as a model of coexistence, Lebanon since 2019 has been ravaged by successive crises, from economic collapse, to

a devastating Beirut port blast in 2020, to the recent war between militant group Hezbollah and Israel, which largely ended with a ceasefire last November. The last papal visitor was Benedict XVI in 2012. Christians play a key political role in Lebanon, where the post of president is reserved for a Maronite Christian — but they have seen their numbers dwindle, particularly due to emigration. Leo held talks with Aoun, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam and parliament speaker Nabih Berri at the presidential palace, and made a speech to authorities and diplomats. A group of traditional dancers welcomed him at the entry to the presidential palace despite the rain. Youth scouting groups affiliated with Hezbollah had waited to welcome the pope along the road in Beirut's southern suburbs, where the Iran-backed militants hold sway and where posters of slain chief Hassan Nasrallah appeared near billboards welcoming the pontiff. On Saturday, Hezbollah had urged the pope to reject Israeli "injustice and aggression" against Lebanon. Israel has kept up regular raids on Lebanon, usually saying it is striking Hezbollah targets, despite the truce that was supposed to end more than a year of hostilities, including two months of open war with the group. The pope said that a two-state solution was the only one likely to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. "The Holy See has publicly backed the proposal for a two-state solution for several years. We all know that Israel still does not accept it, but we consider it the only solution likely to resolve the current conflict," he said during a brief exchange. He said he discussed the issue on Thursday in Ankara with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan "who fully supports this proposal," adding that "Turkiye has an important role to play in this process."—DNA

PN evacuates family stranded in Sri Lanka floods

DNA

ISLAMABAD: During the ongoing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) efforts in Sri Lanka, the embarked Z-9 helicopter on Pakistan Navy Ship SAIIF conducted rescue operations in the flooded Kotikawatta area. During search and rescue operation a stranded family for the last five days, including a 7-month-old infant were safely recovered from a rooftop. Subsequently, the evacuated family was transported to safe location in coordination with local authorities. The successful conduct of rescue operation is a testimony of Pakistan Navy's professionalism and commitment to international obligations. Pakistan Navy Ship SAIIF with embarked helicopter is on overseas deployment to Sir Lanka.

**Jordan, Japan chiefs of staff discuss expanding coop**

LONDON: Maj. Gen. Yousef Huneiti, the Jordanian chairman of the Joint Chiefs, met his Japanese counterpart, Gen. Hiroaki Uchikura, in Amman to discuss military cooperation. The meeting held on Sunday at the General Command headquarters focused on military training, the exchange of expertise between Jordan and Japan, and regional and international issues of mutual interest. Huneiti highlighted the Jordan Armed Forces' efforts to support Palestinians in Gaza through relief, medical care and food assistance, as well as its missions to enhance regional security, according to Petra news agency. He praised strong Jordanian-Japanese relations and said their defense partnership supports global security efforts. Uchikura highlighted Japan's commitment to enhancing military cooperation with Jordan, especially in training and expertise exchange, Petra added.—APP

Hong Kong arrests 13 for apartment tower fire

HONG KONG: Hong Kong authorities said on Monday they had detained 13 people for suspected manslaughter in a probe into the city's deadliest fire in decades, pointing to substandard renovation materials for fueling a blaze that has claimed at least 146 lives. Police have completed sweeps of four of the seven towers engulfed in Wednesday's disaster at the Wang Fuk Court estate, finding bodies of residents in stairwells and on rooftops, trapped as they tried to flee the flames. Around 40 people are still missing. Tests on several samples of a green mesh that was wrapped around bamboo scaffolding on the buildings at the time of the blaze did not match fire retardant standards, officials overseeing the investigations told a news conference. Contractors working on the renovations used these substandard materials in hard-to-reach areas, effectively hiding them from inspectors, said Chief Secretary Eric Chan. Foam insulation used by contractors also fanned the flames and fire alarms at the complex were not working properly, officials have said. Thousands have turned out to pay tribute to the victims, who include at least nine domestic helpers from Indonesia and one from the Philippines, with lines of mourners stretching more than a kilometer (a half-mile) along a canal next to the estate. APP

Landmine casualties swell amid ban challenges

GENEVA: New land mine use in Myanmar, Ukraine and other conflicts coupled with funding cuts for clearance saw casualty numbers surge in 2024, a monitor said Monday, warning the international ban faced "unprecedented challenges." According to the Landmine Monitor, 6,279 people were wounded or killed by land mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) across 52 countries and areas last year. Civilians — nearly half of them children — made up 90 percent of global casualties, it said. The number of overall casualties, which included 1,945 people killed, was nearly 500 more than a year earlier and marked the highest annual figure since 2020. The report "reveals a stark reality: civilians are bearing the consequences, as efforts to clear mined areas face waning global donor support for essential humanitarian activities," the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) cautioned in a statement. The organization also decried "unprecedented challenges" to the long-standing international ban on land mines after five NATO countries announced in March they would quit the treaty amid fears over "Russian aggression." "The norms of the Mine Ban Treaty are under direct threat as Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland are in the process of withdrawing under the treaty's Article 20," ICBL said. It also highlighted Ukraine's attempt to "suspend" its compliance due to the conflict raging since Russia began its full-scale invasion nearly four years ago, stressing that such an action was "not permitted under the treaty." "These developments, together with continued use and production, mark a dangerous erosion of the global norm that has saved countless lives since 1999," when the treaty took effect, it said.—APP

