

Meeting on law & order, crime prevention held

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chaired a high-level meeting on Tuesday at the Central Police Office to review the prevailing law-and-order situation, crime prevention measures, and ongoing police operations in the federal capital. The meeting was attended by DIG Islamabad Muhammad Jawad Tariq, DG Safe City Muhammad Haroon Joiya, DIG Security Muhammad Atiq Tahir, DIG Headquarters Malik Jameel Zafar, as well as AIGs, SSPs, and other senior police officers. An official told APP that the IGP conducted a detailed assessment of the current crime rate, ongoing intelligence-based operations, and the implementation of technology-driven reforms within the Islamabad Capital Territory Police. While receiving briefings on Safe City smart integration, new tech initiatives and development projects, he stated that Islamabad Police are enhancing the use of modern technology to deliver fast, transparent and smart services to citizens. He directed all officers to further strengthen these initiatives and align them with public needs. IGP Rizvi ordered a comprehensive crackdown on illegal weapons, drug dealers, motorcycle lifters, suspects involved in residential and commercial thefts, and organized criminal groups. He emphasized intensifying intelligence-based measures to ensure crime prevention at the earliest stage. He instructed all divisional officers to enhance targeted search operations, checkpoints and daily patrolling to maintain a safe and secure environment for the public. Furthermore, the IGP reviewed matters related to police welfare and stressed that the well-being of police officials — including housing, duty schedules, medical facilities and essential amenities — must be prioritized. He noted that effective service delivery is only possible when personnel work with satisfaction and proper facilities, and directed that ongoing welfare programmes be further improved. _APP

Kashmiri leaders' delegation discuss Kashmir issue Qasim

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Kashmiri leaders called on Federal Minister, Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon, along with the National Assembly Chairman of Standing Committee on Defence Sardar Fateh Ullah Khan, here on Tuesday. The delegation comprising Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai (Washington), Abdul Hameed Lone, Waris Ali, Zulfikar Khan, Sardar Zubair Khan (USA), Zaffar Ahmad Qureshi, and Nazir Ahmad Qureshi (USA), said a press release. The minister briefed the delegation on the recent measures taken for the resolution of the Kashmir issue and stressed the need for allowing divided families on both sides of the Cease-fire Line to meet without hindrance. He informed the participants about his upcoming visit to the United States to highlight the Kashmir cause at international forums and expressed his intention to organize an international conference on Kashmir in Islamabad in the near future. _APP

Govt's eco steps steer country out of crisis: Hanif

Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi and Parliamentary Secretary for Information & Broadcasting Danyal Chaudhry visit RCCI

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi visited the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), where he addressed a gathering of traders and briefed participants on recent developments within Pakistan Railways. President RCCI Usman Shaukat, Group Leader Sohail Altaf, and other chamber officials warmly welcomed the minister upon his arrival. They appreciated the steps taken for the improvement of the railways and the performance of the Ministry of Railways. Sohail Altaf said that the provincial minister has announced the establishment of an industrial estate around the Ring Road, your cooperation will be needed. Senior Vice President Khalid Farooq Qazi, Vice President Fahad Barlas, Former Presidents, VP FPCCI Tariq Jadoon, Executive Committee Members, trade representatives and members also present on the occasion. Speaking to the business community, Minister Hanif Abbasi stated



ed that Pakistan has successfully emerged from difficult economic times due to effective policy measures implemented by the government. He announced that more business-friendly policies and initiatives aimed at boosting investment and strengthening the economy will soon be introduced.

Highlighting the significant progress achieved in Pakistan Railways over the past eight months, he described the ongoing transformation as a "revolution." Key improvements include the digitalization of 54 railway stations, provision of Wi-Fi services for passengers, and comprehensive

upgrades across the railway network. He noted that the Rawalpindi Railway Station is now equipped with a modern security system comprising 184 cameras, making it the second most advanced facility in Pakistan after Islamabad Airport. Similar "smart and secure"

systems are being introduced in Karachi and Lahore. Referring to the briefing on Railways where SIFC National Coordinator Lt. Gen. Sarfaraz Ahmad and SAPM Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan were present, President Usman Shaukat and Group Leader Sohail Altaf lauded the minister's efforts and acknowledged his dedication to reviving and modernizing Pakistan Railways. They emphasized that Minister Abbasi's initiatives are timely and reflect his strong commitment to national development. Earlier, Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Danyal Chaudhry, also addressed the gathering and said that Pakistan has "left the crutches behind" and is now moving steadily toward economic recovery. He praised the business community as the "backbone and heart" of the government's economic policies. "When we took office, Pakistan was bleeding," he remarked, adding that concerns about banking sector challenges were among the most common issues raised by businessmen.

Sindh Assembly informed on labour, promotion of cricket

KARACHI: The Provincial Assembly of Sindh on Tuesday was informed about the performance of Labour and Human Resources Department. The session of the Assembly commenced with a recitation from the Holy Quran and Naat Sharif with the Speaker in the chair. The questions and answers session was held regarding the labour and human resources department. While speaking on the floor of the house, Sindh Senior Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon, said the Sindh government supported the promotion of Cricket in cities across the province, including Hyderabad. He said the government had already written several letters to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and made its position clear on hosting matches at Niaz Stadium. The Senior Minister said that Hyderabad Stadium has its own identity and has hosted matches in the past. Memon said that every district should have quality stadiums so young players could get opportunities and new talent could emerge. He asked MQM-Pakistan MPA to withdraw his privilege motion, as the house had already supported his resolution. _APP

Bahrian's envoy meets CDA chief

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Bahrain, Mohamed Ebrahim Mohamed Abdulkader called on Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, at the CDA Headquarters on Tuesday. The meeting involved discussions on matters of mutual interest and further enhancing bilateral cooperation. On this occasion, both sides reiterated their commitment to strengthening relations and mutual co-operation. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that Pakistan holds its brotherly country Bahrain in the highest esteem and respect. Bahrain's Ambassador, H.E. Mohamed Ebrahim Mohamed Abdulkader, appreciating the efforts made by the CDA for the beauty and development of Islamabad, said that Islamabad is ranked among the extraor-

dinarily green, lush and most beautiful cities. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that efforts are ongoing to make Islamabad an even more beautiful and modern city. The meeting also discussed the possibilities of relocating embassies and diplomatic missions to the Diplomatic Enclave. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that they are prepared to provide all kinds of facilitation for relocating embassies to the Diplomatic Enclave. He also apprised about the

beautification and uplift project for the Diplomatic Enclave. Chairman CDA said that along with the beautification of the Diplomatic Enclave, recreational and sports facilities are being increased. He further added that to make the Diplomatic Enclave more beautiful, aesthetically pleasing landscaping and horticultural work is also being carried out at various locations. The meeting also reaffirmed the resolve to further strengthen mutual relations and cooperation.



Dr Tariq grieves over destruction in Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry has expressed deep grief over the loss of lives and widespread destruction in Indonesia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka caused by devastating floods. "Heartbreaking scenes are emerging from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka, where devastating floods have caused immense destruction and tragic loss of life," the minister wrote on his social media platform X. "In this difficult hour, we stand in full solidarity with the resilient people of these nations and their leadership, who are working tirelessly to protect lives and restore normalcy," it further said. "Our deepest condolences go out to all families who have lost their loved ones, homes, and livelihoods. May the injured recover swiftly, and may those affected find strength and support to rebuild their lives," the minister said. _APP

Punjab launches strict property protection drive

MULTAN: Deputy Commissioner Waseem Hamid Sindhu said that the Punjab government had launched effective and historic measures to protect citizens' immovable properties. In this regard, the "Tahaffuz-e-Haq-e-Malkiat Ordinance 2025" has been enforced to safeguard properties from land grabbers, fake documents, and illegal transactions. He said the ordinance sets strict punishments for offences such as fake ownership papers, forged registries, and illegal map preparation, including imprisonment ranging from five to ten years. He expressed these views while presiding over a meeting of the Anti-Encroachment and Property Retrieval Committee at the DC Office. Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Muhammad Abu Bakar also attended the meeting. The DC heard multiple applications related to illegal possession and issued on-the-spot orders to hand over properties to rightful owner. The DC said special district-level committees have been formed to address property disputes and complaints against land grabbers. These committees

aim to resolve citizens' cases swiftly and clear long-pending matters. As per government directives, all property cases must be decided within 90 days. So far, the committee has retrieved over 90 properties from land grabbers and restored them to citizens. During the meeting, dozens of cases were decided after hearing both parties, and several disputes were settled in record time. The district administration said timely resolution of citizens' issues and protection of their properties is its top priority. _APP

Providing drinking water to people of Gwadar top priority

QUETTA: Balochistan Minister for Public Health Engineer (PHE), Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran on Tuesday said that providing drinking water to the people of Gwadar is the top priority of the government, therefore all projects should be completed within the stipulated time. He expressed these views while visiting the office of Secretary PHE Hashim Ghilzai. The Minister was given a detailed briefing on the serious water problems in Gwadar. Chief Engineer North Azam Zarkoon and Deputy Secretary PHE Tanveer Jamot were also present during the briefing. The officers apprised the provincial minister about the current status of water supply in different areas of Gwadar, maintenance of lines, tanker service, performance of desalination plants and under-implemented schemes. Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran said that providing drinking water to the people of Gwadar is the top priority of the government, therefore all projects should be completed within the stipulated time. _DNA

Safe city project to transform Karachi into tech-driven metropolis

KARACHI, Dec 02 (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah stated that the Safe City Project is designed to transform Karachi into a secure, technology-driven metropolis through comprehensive video surveillance and also noted that operations in the Katcha area have resulted in the surrender of 71 dacoits. The CM said this while addressing the 52nd Specialised delegation of 47 Initial Command Course participants, headed by Deputy Commandant (NPA) Mr Sarfraz Ahmed Falki, PSP, who called on him at CM House. IG Police Ghulam Nabi Memon, Home Secretary Iqbal Memon, and Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh also attended. Murad Shah outlined the government's commitment to transforming Sindh Police into a modern force powered by technology. He highlighted the department's vast scale, with 131,850 personnel serving across 31 districts, eight zones/ranges, and 618 police stations, backed by an annual budget of Rs 189.7 billion. The Chief Minister noted that the Sindh Police, established in 1843 by Sir Charles Napier on the model of the Royal Irish Constabulary, is the oldest police force in the subcontinent and the second largest in Pakistan. For administrative and operational purposes, the police are organised under the Inspector General of Police, who oversees the Central Police Office in Karachi. Operations are managed through multiple ranges and regions such as Karachi, Hyderabad, and Sukkur, as well as specialised units like the CTD and SSU. Shah stressed that modernisation focuses on advanced technology and infrastructure. The chief minister said that the flagship Safe City Project aims to make Karachi a secure, tech-driven metropolis through comprehensive video surveillance and data analysis. It uses a large network of high-resolution CCTV cameras with Facial Recognition (FR) and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR). All footage is monitored in real time at the Command, Control, and Communication Centre (C4) at Central Police Office. According to Shah, Phase-I covers the high-security red zone and airport corridor, while Phase-II will soon expand to Districts South, East, and Malir, with thousands more cameras and Intelligent Traffic System (ITS) cameras for e-Challan enforcement. The S4 Project (Smart/Safe Surveillance, Security, and Strategic Support) will be integrated with the Safe City platform to further enhance police operations. The automation of police station systems will digitise processes such as FIRs and case files to boost transparency and public efficiency. The initial riverine Katcha area operation led to the surrender of 71 dacoits, marking significant progress against organised crime in remote regions, said Mr Shah. The force is actively fighting narcotics from January 1 to December 20 to reduce drug-related crime. For personnel welfare, measures include Shaheed Packages for fallen officers, health cards, and scholarships for their families. "This comprehensive approach demonstrates Sindh's dedication to strengthening public safety through infrastructural, technological, and welfare reforms," the Chief Minister said. _DNA

Graduation ceremony held at PAF academy Asghar Khan

DNA

RISALPUR: The Graduation Ceremony of the 151st GD(P), 97th Engg, 108th AD, 10th Nav (Alpha), 28th A&SD, 11th Log, 134th Combat Support, and 98th EC (RSAF) Courses was held at PAF Academy Asghar Khan, Risalpur. Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, graced the ceremony as the Chief Guest. Upon his arrival, Chief of the Air Staff was received by Air Vice Marshal Shahryar Khan, Air Officer Commanding PAF Academy Asghar Khan. Addressing the parade, Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmed Baber Sidhu congratulated the graduating cadets and

their families, appreciating the high standards upheld by the Academy. He lauded the achievements of distinction holders and recipients of the Swords of Honour, offering special compliments to the Royal Saudi Air Force cadets

on their successful completion of training. He highlighted the participation of Saudi cadets as a reflection of the strong and enduring friendship between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Chief Guest in

his address urged the young officers to honor their legacy and defend Pakistan's skies with courage and professionalism. Highlighting the paradigm shift in PAF training, the Air Chief underscored the integration of future-foc-

used technologies, leadership development, character building, intellectual enrichment, mental resilience and physical robustness to prepare cadets for the complex challenges of modern warfare. Referring to recent regional developments, he recalled attempts to challenge Pakistan's sovereignty during the conflict in May, praising the unity of the nation and the professionalism of the Armed Forces. He further said that the victory also reflects great credit on the firm resolve of our national leadership, as well as on the well-executed tri-service synergy, aggressive decision-making, full support and the pivotal leadership role of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir.



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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
Dec 07/India Armed Forces Flag Day
Dec 09/Tanzania National Day
Dec 11/Oman Armed Forces Day
Dec 12/Kenya Independence Day
Dec12/Turkmenistan Neutrality Day
Dec 16/Bahrain National Day
Dec 16/Kazakhstan Independence Day
Dec 18/Qatar National Day
Dec 18/Niger National Day
Dec 23/Philippines Armed Forces Day
Dec 23/Japan National Day



Emergency
Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....9266044
Motorway Police.9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20
Enquiry
Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals
CMH.....5611111
MH.....561116
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



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



Islamabad Metropolitan
Corporation.....9209224
Potohar Town.....9209224
Rawal Town.....5773343
Water Tank
Islamabad.....0321-5744480

NUML Equity Lounge to promote stock market awareness

Mr. Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman - ZLK Islamic Financial Services emphasized that while Pakistan's stock market presents strong long-term potential, the lack of financial literacy has historically limited youth engagement

DNA

ISLAMABAD: ZLK Islamic Financial Services, Pakistan's first and premier Shariah-compliant brokerage firm licensed by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), has officially launched the "NUML Equity Lounge" at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML). The inauguration ceremony was graced by Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi, Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Major General Shahid Kiyani (R), Rector NUML; and Mr. Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman, ZLK Islamic Financial Services, who collectively inaugurated the equity lounge. Developed in collaboration with the Department of Accounting & Finance, NUML, powered by ZLK Islamic Financial Services, the NUML Equity Lounge is a landmark initiative aimed at advancing financial literacy and fostering deeper student engagement with Pakistan's capital markets. The facility provides access to real-time market data, analytical tools, research materials, and Shariah-compliant investment guidance, bridging the gap between academic theory and practical financial application. During the ceremony, dignitaries emphasized the importance of equipping youth with the knowledge and skills needed to participate responsibly in Pakistan's stock market. They highlighted how initiatives like the NUML Equity Lounge play a crucial role in empowering students to understand ethical investing, risk management, and the dynamics of modern financial markets. Mr. Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman - ZLK Islamic Financial Services emphasized that while Pakistan's stock market presents strong long-term potential, the lack of financial literacy has historically limited youth engagement. This initiative aims to empower students with the knowledge and confidence to participate responsibly in the capital markets while adhering to Islamic financial principles. Located at Ibn-e-Rushd Block, NUML, the lounge provides easy access for students, including QR-enabled account opening support and direct interaction with financial professionals. The facility stands as a symbol of ZLK Islamic's commitment to nurturing the next generation of financially aware and ethically responsible investors. ZLK Islamic Financial Services continues to lead the way in shaping Pakistan's financial landscape by promoting Shariah-compliant investing, enhancing financial literacy, and strengthening the connection between academic institutions and capital markets.

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Proactive campaign to amplify global advocacy for Kashmir cause

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Media and Kashmir affairs experts on Tuesday emphasized the need for replacing reactive communication with a proactive, thematic, and strategically coordinated media campaign to effectively highlight the Kashmir cause at both national and international levels. They stressed the development of strong narrative themes, structured editorial and activity calendars, and harmonized outreach efforts to ensure sustained global attention on the human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). This emphasis came during a visit of a high-level delegation of the United Kashmir Journalists Association (UKJA), led by its President Dr Muhammad Ashraf Wani, to the office of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) here. The discussions centered on strengthening communication frameworks and enhancing the overall visibility of the Kashmir issue across media platforms. APHC Convener Ghulam Muhammad Safi thanked the delegation for its detailed input and described Dr Wani's briefing as "a guiding light" for future communication strategy. He reaffirmed that APHC's mandate was to internationalize the Kashmir freedom movement by foregrounding humanitarian concerns and the political rights of the Kashmiri people rather than serving any organizational considerations. He reiterated APHC's principled stance that the Kashmir dispute must be resolved in accordance with the Kashmiris' right to self-determination and rejected any bilateral or step-by-step arrangement that sidestepped this foundational principle. APHC General Secretary Advocate Parvaiz Ahmed noted that the forum had consistently highlighted the Kashmir cause with responsibility and clarity. He underlined the need for stronger APHC-UKJA coordination, stressing that journalists formed a crucial pillar in amplifying the voices of Kashmiris facing repression under occupation. During the meeting, the UKJA delegation presented a comprehensive set of recommendations aimed at strengthening APHC's strategic communication. They underscored that content creation must remain central, with the most impactful material emerging directly from IIOJK, including issues such as demographic engineering, domicile policies, land-grabbing, and human rights violations. They advised introducing fresh angles to storytelling and developing six-to twelve-week thematic calendars featuring messages such as "Humanity First" and "Criminalization of the Word Kashmiri," along with observing international and national days through meaningful, unique messaging. The delegation emphasized consistent narrative framing that positions APHC as a humanitarian voice advocating the rights and dignity of the Kashmiri people, supported by well-written, concise, targeted.

Pakistan develops Cotton five heat-tolerant varieties

ISLAMABAD: Scientists at the Central Cotton Research Institute (CCRI) are working on five new cotton varieties that can survive temperatures of up to 47°C, offering a possible shift for farmers struggling with climate pressure. The research is part of a wider effort to revive cotton production, which has been declining due to extreme heat, erratic weather, pests, and disease, said a press release issued here on Tuesday. CCRI officials said the new varieties aim to help growers in the plains of Punjab, where temperatures during the sowing and fruiting stages often exceed levels that current crops can tolerate. Sajid Mahmood, Head of Technology Transfer at CCRI Multan, told Wealth Pakistan that the work focuses on heat and drought tolerance as well as resistance to major pests and diseases. He said the institute has already developed Bt Cyto-511, a variety that has gained quick acceptance in Punjab for maintaining performance even at 45°C. The next set of varieties is being designed to survive up to 47°C. Other varieties produced by the CCRI so far include Bt CIM-775, Cyto-537 and CIM-343. These triple-gene types are built to handle climate stress, fend off multiple bollworms, tolerate drought and allow the use of specific herbicides for better weed control. Mahmood noted that shifting weather patterns have altered Punjab's sowing window. A decade ago, cotton was planted soon after wheat harvest in late April. But now, temperatures from 40°C to 47°C in May have caused many crops to lose flowers and bolls before they form. "Our priority is to develop seed that can hold fruit even under severe heat," he said. Beyond heat-tolerant varieties, CCRI scientists are also working on extra-long staple cotton—up to 34 millimeters—and naturally colored cotton in brown, green and blue. However, farmers have avoided these options because of lower yields.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr Musadik Malik meeting with the Canadian High Commissioner Tarik Ali Khan .

ILO,HSA for strengthening OSA for quality health services

ISLAMABAD: The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Health Services Academy (HSA) have agreed to strengthen institutional coordination and enhance the focus on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) to ensure Pakistan's workforce has access to quality, timely, and prevention-focused social security services. A two-day "National Dialogue on Strengthening Service Delivery in Employees' Social Security Institutions (ESSIs) of Pakistan" was held here under the joint auspices of the ILO and the Health Services Academy, as part of the "Working for Health Programme". The initiative aims to promote a safe, dignified, and healthy working environment in the health sector. ESSIs play a central role in Pakistan's labour and social protection system by providing healthcare, compensation, and rehabilitation services. Strengthening their institutional capacity was identified as critical for developing a more worker-centred and prevention-oriented system aligned with international standards and advancing towards universal social protection. Senior representatives from ESSIs in Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in the national dialogue. Through technical sessions and experience-sharing discussions, participants explored ways to improve service delivery, contribution compliance, hospital governance, and OSH practices. Vice Chancellor of the Health Services Academy, Professor Dr Shahzad Ali Khan, said the dialogue provided an important opportunity to strengthen OSH across both government institutions serving insured workers and the broader health sector. He noted that bringing all provincial social security institutions to a single platform for knowledge and experience-sharing would help improve health services and promote decent work in Pakistan. ILO Pakistan Country Director, Geir Tonstol, said that the Employees' Social Security Institutions stand at the frontline of protection for millions of workers and their families; however, quality services cannot be ensured without safeguarding the health.—DNA

Smart, business friendly policies top priority: Hanif

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister Muhammad Hanif Abbasi has said that Pakistan has come out of the difficult time as the government has employed policies for its economic revival. He announced that soon, government would announce more business friendly policies to push the investments in the country. The minister was addressing the business community on Tuesday at the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), and highlighted the significant progress within Pakistan Railways over the past eight months, describing it as a "revolution." He underlined major improvements, including the digitalization of 54 railway stations, widespread provision of Wi-Fi for passengers, and enhanced amenities across the network. He highlighted that Rawalpindi Railway Station now boasts a modern 184-camera security system, making it the second most advanced in Pakistan after Islamabad Airport, with 'smart & safe' facilities, also introducing in Karachi and Lahore. The minister announced the planned restoration of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) train service by December 31st, emphasizing strengthened regional connectivity with countries like Iran and Saudi Arabia. He stressed the importance of leveraging these improved links for trade. "To facilitate this, Pakistan Railways aims to provide transport by year-end, urging the business community to capitalize on these new opportunities", he said. He also underlined the country's economic challenges, acknowledging high taxes, interest rates, energy costs and gas prices as barriers to investment and exports. "The government is committed to resolving these issues to boost the economy, which currently sees USD 32.0 billion in exports, with 18 billion from textiles, despite 150 textile units having closed", he said. Abbasi advocated for fostering an environment where businesses can enhance, ensuring that increased exports would drive the success of new freight train services. Moreover, the minister underscored the government's aggressive out-sourcing initiatives for schools, hospitals, and train operations to generate revenue and improve services. "6 of 12 schools have already been outsourced, expected to generate Rs. 2.0 billion annually instead of costing 80 million as debiting cost. Hospitals and numerous train services are next", he said. The minister expressed confidence in upgrading the country's old track infrastructure, some dating back to 1861-1871. He informed that a USD 2.0 billion loan from the Asian Development Bank has been approved for a 500 km track from Rori to Karachi, with groundbreaking expected by June/July the next year. Additionally, 884 km of new/upgraded track from Nokundi to Rori will be funded by a mineral company through bridge financing. He also mentioned a plan for a 2.5-hour train journey between Lahore and Rawalpindi, approved by the Punjab Cabinet and awaiting Federal Government approval, by employing best rail service and tracks. The minister emphasized that the government is fully aware of economic issues and is working day and night to create a conducive environment for business. "Pakistan's survival hinges on economic turnaround and national unity", he said. He assured the traders to take up their issues at the highest government level. Abbasi termed the recent diplomatic, defence uplift and economic confidence as a culmination of the collective resolve and valour shown in May this year by the armed forces and the people of Pakistan. Earlier, President RCCI, Usman Shaukat and Group Leader Sohail Altaf during their speeches appreciated the minister for his supper for the business community and also lauded his restless efforts in railways revival.—DNA

Seminar on countering extremism through sufism

ISLAMABAD: Government College University in Faisalabad (GCUF) organized an enlightening seminar titled "Countering Extremist Ideologies in Pakistan through Sufism and/or Interfaith Harmony," aiming to explore how the diverse spiritual traditions of the subcontinent might contribute to establish peace, religious harmony, coexistence, and social structure. The seminar was organized by the Chairman and Faculty of the Department of History, with Dr Mazhar Abbas serving as moderator. Prof. Dr Asim Mehmood, in charge of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, attended the session as the Chief Guest. Famous researchers, faculty members, and students were also presented. Among the keynote speakers were Professor Dr Tanvir Anjum from Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad and Dr Tarunjit Singh Butalia from Ohio State University in the United States of America. Prof. Anjum delivered a talk that was very well received, and it was titled "Competing Narratives of Love and Fear: Silencing of Inclusive Sufi Discourse in the National Narrative in Pakistan." On the other hand, Dr Butalia focused on "Revelation and Reasoning: Al-Ghazali's Sufi Understanding and Sikh Faith.—APP

Pakistan, Gavi for boosting vaccination process

ISLAMABAD: Federal Health Minister Mustafa Kamal met Gavi Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr Sania Nishtar in Geneva to discuss a joint strategy, focused to further strengthen the vaccination process in Pakistan. The meeting held particular significance as it took place ahead of the upcoming Gavi Board meetings. According to a spokesperson for the Ministry of Health on Tuesday, both leaders reviewed ongoing cooperation and mutual priorities in detail. The minister appreciated Gavi's sustained partnership with Pakistan, while Dr Nishtar commended the country's ongoing efforts to strengthen immunization initiatives. Dr Sania reaffirmed Gavi's commitment to further improving vaccine coverage in Pakistan and expressed confidence in the future of Pakistan-Gavi collaboration. Minister Kamal also reiterated the government's resolve to enhance immunization coverage, stressing that improving the health sector remains a top priority for the government.—APP

Briefs

**Naqvi inspects
Lahore airport,
praises faster
immigration
process**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi paid a surprise visit to Lahore Airport on Monday to review passenger facilitation and the efficiency of immigration procedures.

During the visit, the minister inspected the immigration counters and observed the system linking passengers' travel history with their identity cards and passports. He commended the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Director and his team for implementing a faster, streamlined system.

Naqvi interacted with passengers departing for and arriving from foreign destinations, inquiring about the time taken and the overall experience of the immigration process. Passengers expressed satisfaction, noting that the entire procedure was completed in just two minutes. They told the minister that his repeated visits had noticeably improved airport services.

Mohsin Naqvi made it clear that no passenger with complete and valid travel documents is being stopped—nor will be stopped—from traveling. However, he stressed that those carrying incomplete or forged documents will not be allowed to leave the country under any circumstances.—APP

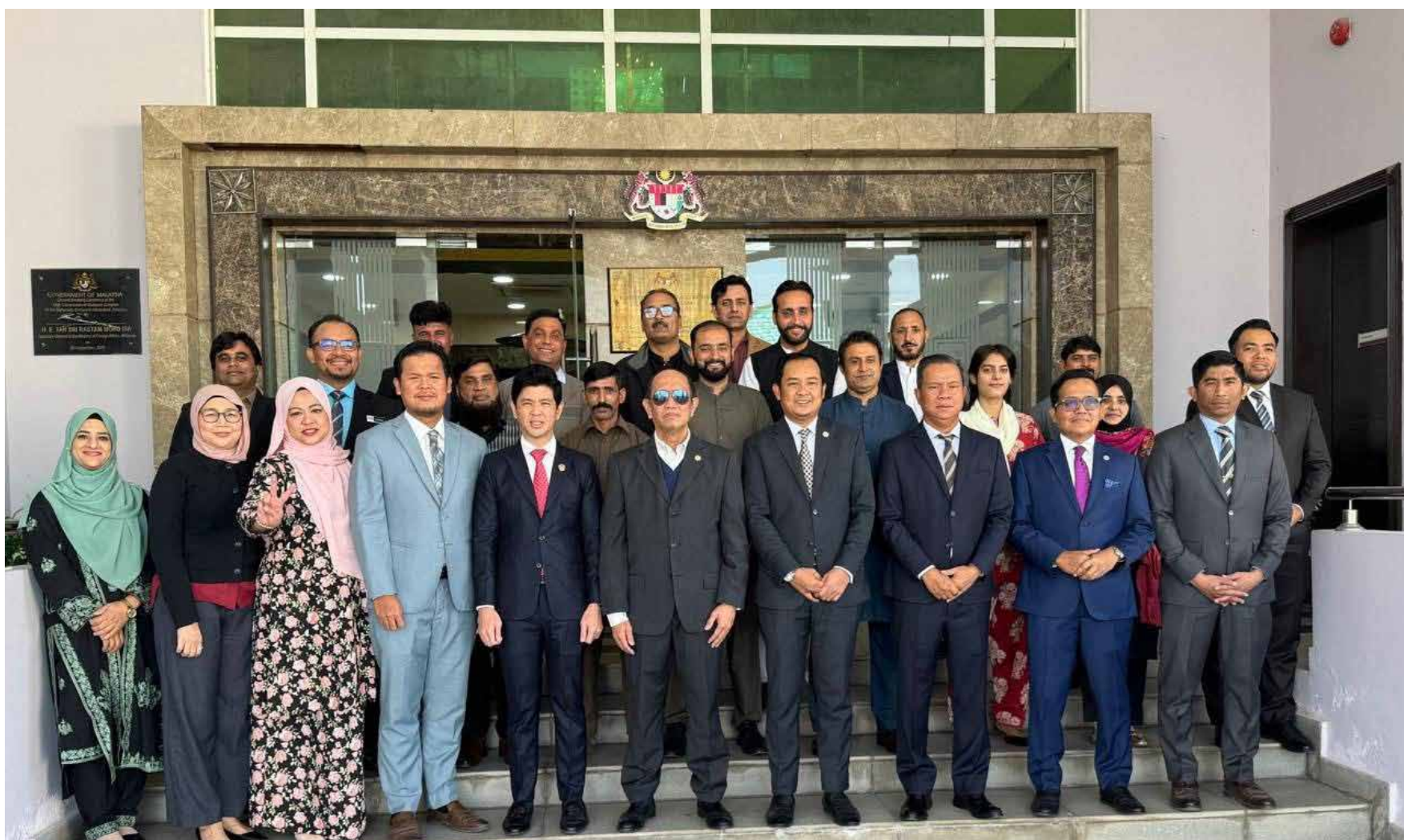
**PM extends
warm
felicitations
to UAE on
National Day**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday extended heartfelt felicitations to the leadership and people of the United Arab Emirates on the occasion of their National Day. The prime minister, in a message posted on his X timeline, said, "On behalf of the people and Government of Pakistan, I extend my heartfelt felicitations to the leadership and brotherly people of the United Arab Emirates on the joyous occasion of their National Day." He said that Pakistan deeply valued its historic and time-tested partnership with the UAE - a relationship built on mutual respect, shared aspirations, and an unbreakable bond between our peoples. The prime minister said that the vibrant Pakistani community in the UAE remained a proud bridge between the two nations, contributing to the UAE's remarkable success story. He said that under the visionary leadership of the UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the UAE continued to inspire the world with its remarkable progress, innovation and global leadership. "We remain committed to further strengthening our multifaceted cooperation and elevating our partnership for a brighter, more prosperous future for our two nations."

Long live Pakistan-UAE friendship," he commented.

**NCSW chief
urges women
to report violence,
empower change**

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Umme Laila Azhar of the NCSW called on women in low income communities to report incidents of violence, especially digital abuse, as the commission launches its 16 Days of Activism campaign, with complaints easily registered through the NCSW's website and apps. While speaking exclusively with a local media channel, NCSW Chairperson Umme Laila Azhar discussed the commission's recent efforts to combat violence against women, particularly focusing on digital violence cases. She revealed that NCSW has launched a confidential complaint cell designed to help women report incidents safely and securely. Azhar highlighted the role of social media, specifically a documentary posted on Facebook, aimed at raising awareness and collecting data from all provinces, including Gilgit-Baltistan. The initiative is focused on identifying women who are facing violence, with a special emphasis on digital abuse, she added.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Staff of the Malaysian High Commission in a group photo with the High Commissioner Dato Azahar bin Mazlan on the occasion of reception he hosted for embassy staff. DNA

1st convocation of BS Urdu at IMCG F-7/4, Islamabad

The first convocation of BS Urdu at I.M.C.G F-7/4 stands as a testament to academic excellence, teamwork, and commitment to the promotion of national language. The institution looks forward to many more achievements in the years ahead.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Model college for girls F7.4 celebrated a remarkable achievement as 71 graduates of BS Urdu Batch 3 were awarded degrees in the First Convocation. The memorable event marked a significant milestone in the academic journey of the institution and its students. The ceremony was graced by the esteemed Chief Guest, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Niaz Ahmed, Vice Chancellor, Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad. The convocation was presided over by the respected Principal Prof. Dr. Saadia Aziz. Other distinguished guests included Mr. Yasin Afaq, Deputy Director General FDE, and Prof. Dr. Burhan Ali Shah, CMC Chairman of the college. The convocation commenced with a formal procession

of faculty members, followed by the recitation of the Holy Quran. In her welcome address, Principal Dr. Saadia Aziz extended warm gratitude to the honorable guests and congratulated the graduating students and their proud teachers. She acknowledged the dedication and hard work of the Urdu faculty that led to this significant accomplishment. A moment of pride was shared when two brilliant students who secured a full 4.00/4.00 CGPA were awarded Gold Medals, while those who achieved a 3.9 CGPA were honored with Certificates of Merit. Dr. Nabeela Sajjad, the initiator and key contributor to the BS Urdu program, was also present and received special recognition for her unwavering efforts in establishing and strengthening the department. Addressing the graduates, the Chief Guest congratulated

Principal Dr. Saadia Aziz, the faculty, students, and their parents. He emphasized the importance of the Urdu language in promoting cultural identity and intellectual development. He urged the young graduates to remain focused on their goals and continue contributing positively to society. The ceremony concluded with a photography session, where graduates and faculty members captured the joyful moments alongside distinguished guests. A lunch was served at the end, bringing the grand event to a warm and celebratory close. The first convocation of BS Urdu at I.M.C.G F-7/4 stands as a testament to academic excellence, teamwork, and commitment to the promotion of national language. The institution looks forward to many more achievements in the years ahead.

Pakistan-Kyrgyz PFG convener meets envoy to strengthen coop

ISLAMABAD: The Convener of the Pakistan-Kyrgyz Republic Parliamentary Friendship Group (PFG), Rana Iradat Sharif Khan, met with Kylychbek Sultan, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to Pakistan, here at the Parliament house Welcoming the Ambassador, the Convener reaffirmed Pakistan's longstanding brotherly ties with the Kyrgyz Republic, rooted in shared history, cultural affinity and mutual goodwill, said a press release. He noted that the forthcoming visit of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic to Pakistan, after a gap of two decades, offers an important opportunity to advance cooperation in trade, connectivity and parliamentary exchanges. Both sides emphasized the need to strengthen inter-parliamentary linkages, including enhanced coordination between the respective PFGs following the completion of the electoral process and reconstitution of the Kyrgyz Parliament. The Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic informed that, during the forthcoming visit of the President, will also hold a meeting with the Honourable Speaker, National Assembly. The Convener highlighted the strong presence of Pakistani students in Kyrgyz educational institutions and growing people-to-people linkages. Ambassador Sultan further conveyed his interest in seeing Kyrgyz students explore educational opportunities in Pakistan.—DNA

Pak-Saudi economic corridor pushes SIFC vision forward with new milestone

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's plan to boost foreign investment has taken a major step forward as work on the proposed Pak-Saudi Economic Corridor gains pace. Officials and experts say the initiative is now emerging as one of the key achievements under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), raising expectations for stronger regional trade, new investment flows and deeper cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. China International Press and Communication Center media fellow Muhammad Zamir Asadi, while speaking to APP on Tuesday, said the SIFC's recent measures are helping rebuild investor confidence and draw global attention toward Pakistan's economic potential. He said international partners are now viewing Pakistan as an active regional economic player with growing opportunities for long-term collaboration.—DNA

Who is responsible for the failed Afghan policy?

NUSRAT KHAN

In reality, the recent tensions with Afghanistan did not emerge suddenly; rather, they have a long and complex history behind them. The prevailing perception about Pakistan's Afghan policy has always been that elected representatives in Parliament have little to no role in shaping it. This issue can be understood in the broader context that when major national decisions are made above and beyond the elected leadership, the Afghan policy naturally suffers the same fate. We are well aware of when, why, and by whom the terms "Good Taliban" and "Bad Taliban" were introduced. The unfortunate truth is that during the conflict between the United States and the Afghan Taliban, Pakistan continued to provide safe havens for the so-called

"Good Taliban." This policy eventually resulted in hundreds of drone strikes and the martyrdom of countless innocent Pakistanis. There has never been a shortage of educated and conscious voices in Pakistan who consistently criticized General Zia-ul-Haq's Afghan policy as well as the strategies that followed it. Sadly, their concerns were never taken seriously. Today, once again, the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has become a major challenge for the state. The wave of frequent suicide attacks is a clear indication of the gravity of the situation. Yet, it is regrettable that even now no collective political wisdom is being applied. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, along with almost all major political parties in the province, opposes the current counterterrorism policy. However, their suggestions and concerns continue to be dismissed without consideration.

Ahsan proposes four-point plan to boost regional connectivity

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday called for renewed commitment to regional connectivity, economic integration and long-term cooperation among China, Central Asia and South Asia, stressing that "great nations and great cultures do not rise in isolation; they flourish through exchange. In his televised address at the Tian Shan Forum on Economic Cooperation in Central Asia, being held in Urumqi (China) from December 2-3, the minister said the region, home to 3.9 billion people, was emerging as a major engine of global growth, with unmatched strategic and economic potential. "This is not a peripheral region. This is the heartland of the world's future," Ahsan said the shifting global economic landscape demanded collective action and a development-centered approach. "Economic strength is moving from the Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific," he observed, adding "Within our own region, China, Central Asia and South Asia are becoming a new pole of global growth." He said the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) had revived the ancient spirit of the Silk Road through modern infrastructure, trade and peo-

ple-to-people linkages. "More than 150 countries are now part of BRI, almost half a million jobs have been created globally and BRI transport corridors are projected to increase global rail income by 2 to 4 percent," he noted. Referring specifically to Pakistan, the minister said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was far more than a set of infrastructure schemes. "For Pakistan, CPEC is not just an infrastructure project - it is a strategic development framework built on trust and long-lasting partnership for mutual and regional prosperity," he added. The minister highlighted that CPEC had already added 8,000 MW to Pakistan's national grid, built over 1,000 km of modern highways and motorways, operationalised Gwadar Port, initiated groundwork for special economic zones, and established a digital backbone for future cooperation in information technology and artificial intelligence. "CPEC's success shows what regional cooperation can achieve when driven by clear purpose and commitment," he said. Ahsan underlined that Pakistan was reorienting its strategic paradigm from geopolitics to geoeconomics, with a clear objective to become the "most efficient, reliable and cost-effective connectivity hub" linking Central Asia, China,

South Asia, the Middle East and global markets. Gwadar, he noted, offered the shortest maritime route for Central Asian republics, cutting transit time by up to 70 percent. "Gwadar's potential is regional, not just national," he said. "It can become the anchor of a Eurasian supply chain complementing Western China and Central Asia." Envisioning a rapidly transforming integrated region, Ahsan said "Imagine a future where goods from Almaty, Bishkek, Dushanbe and Ashgabat reach global markets in days; where joint industrial clusters produce for the world; where energy pipelines, transmission lines and AI research centers create a regional knowledge economy. This future is not a distant dream - it is within our reach." To translate this vision into reality, the minister proposed a four-point cooperation framework and time-bound cooperation mechanisms. First, he called for a joint task force on connectivity and economic integration, supported by harmonised railway and aviation routes, customs digitisation, single-window trading systems and coordinated border procedures. "Such harmonisation would reduce logistics costs by 20-30 percent across Eurasia," he noted.—DNA

Sumera calls for ending stigma, saving lives in fight for AIDS awareness

ISLAMABAD: Project Director of Punjab AIDS Control, Sumera Ashraf Tuesday stressed that eliminating the stigma associated with AIDS, along with increasing awareness and access to screening and treatment is essential to addressing the widespread delays in diagnosis and improving public health outcomes.

Talking to PTV, Sumera Ashraf, emphasized that the government is paying close attention to the issue of HIV/AIDS and is actively working to raise awareness to eliminate the stigma associated with the disease. She highlighted that breaking societal misconceptions and prejudices is crucial for encouraging people to come forward for testing and treatment.

Ashraf pointed out that despite significant medical advancements, a large number of cases remain undiagnosed due to fear and social stigma, adding, awareness campaigns play a vital role in educating the public about how HIV is transmitted and treated, helping to dispel myths that often isolate affected individuals.

She also underlined that society's role is critical in this effort. Families, communities, and social institutions must create an environment of support and acceptance, which can encourage people to seek timely medical attention without fear of discrimination. Public cooperation, she said, is as important as government initiatives in controlling the spread of the disease.—APP

Pak-Italy trade witnesses over 36% surplus

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's goods and services trade with Italy witnessed a surplus of 36.14 percent during the first four months of the current fiscal year (2025-26) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. Trade surplus during the months under review was recorded at \$280.844 million against \$206.288 million last year, showing 36.14 percent growth. The overall exports to Italy were recorded at US \$431.017 million during July-October this year against exports of US \$395.153 million during the same months last year, showing an increase of 9.07 percent, SBP data revealed. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, exports to Italy during October 2025 increased by 6.49 percent from US \$98.334 million to US \$104.718 million.—APP

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Pope Leo brings his message of peace

DR. DIANA GALEEVA

AS Pope Leo last week set off on his first international apostolic journey — to Turkiye and Lebanon — since his election in May, he said: “I very much have been looking forward to this trip because of what it means for all Christians. But it’s also a great message to the whole world.” So what is the Vatican’s message amid the emerging world order, which has been transformed due to the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and Europe?

Both Turkiye and Lebanon have political and spiritual importance. Over 16 centuries, Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) served as the capital of four successive empires: the Roman, the Byzantine, the Latin and the Ottoman. And Pope John Paul II once said: “Lebanon is more than a country; it is a message of freedom and an example of pluralism.” Arguably, for Pope Leo, visiting both Turkiye and Lebanon offers a message of peace for the new world order, in which morals — justice and peace — can be prioritized as the basis of the international system. Faith-based diplomacy, or spiritual diplomacy, is the political order shaped by a divinely grounded vision. Winston Scott and Victor Tyler argue that, while the Holy See has limited hard power resources (such as economic and military), “its sustained moral voice, global diplomatic network and strategic interventions position it as a unique actor in international relations.” They conclude that, “in an era of geopolitical polarization and declining trust in liberal institutions, the Vatican’s interventions offer both a counternarrative and a stabilizing moral grammar within the international system.”

Leo became the fifth pope to visit Turkiye after Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis. During his formal welcome by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the pope described the country as “inextricably linked to the origins of Christianity,” as well as a land “that recognizes and appreciates differences.” The important political message — which reflected the views of Scott and Tyler — was made during the pope’s address to civic leaders and lawmakers in Turkiye. Pope Leo said: “We are now experiencing a phase marked by a heightened level of conflict on the global level, fueled by prevailing strategies of economic and military power. This is enabling what Pope Francis called ‘a third world war fought piecemeal.’” He explicitly evaluated the current world order as being destabilized by “am-

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bitions and choices that trample on justice and peace.”

At the end of the first day of his trip, the pope met with the head of Turkiye’s Presidency of Religious Affairs, Safi Arpagus. The second day was dedicated to prayers with the Christian community. He also met with Turkiye’s Chief Rabbi David Sevi. According to the Holy See, they “discussed how Pope Leo’s visit is a sign of peace and support for all religious communities in the country.” In the city of Iznik, he prayed with Christian leaders at the site of the ruins of the basilica of Nicaea. The chronology of events illustrates the logic of delivering the message of peace to all religious communities.

On the third day, the pope visited Sultan Ahmed Mosque, aka the Blue Mosque, before meeting with the heads of Turkish Christian churches and societies at the Syriac Orthodox church of Mor Ephrem. On Sunday, his schedule included a prayer at the Armenian Apostolic Cathedral in Istanbul and a visit to the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George.

Pope Leo has also become the third pope to officially visit Lebanon after John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Here, political and religious symbolism interconnects with the present and the past. Lebanon’s Maronite Christian President Joseph Aoun, Shiite Muslim parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, Sunni Muslim Prime Minister Nawaf Salam and the Maronite patriarch, Cardinal Bechara Boutros Al-Rai, all met the pope. In the presidential Baabda Palace, Pope Leo shared his message of peace and unity. “It takes tenacity to build peace. It takes perseverance to protect and nurture life,” he said, just a week after an Israeli strike on Beirut.

The important political message was made during the pope’s address to civic leaders and lawmakers in Turkiye. On Monday, the pope visited Christian sites in the country, including the Maronite Monastery of Saint Maron in the hills outside Beirut and the Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon on a hill in Harissa, overlooking Jounieh bay, where Muslims and Christians from across the world came to pray. On Tuesday, he will travel to the Port of Beirut, where he will pray at the memorial to the victims of the 2020 explosion, before celebrating Mass for 100,000 people at Beirut Waterfront.

Recent events represent a major milestone for the change in the papacy’s role in the global order, as popes now perform as diplomats. Pope Benedict XV made efforts toward peace mediations during the First World War. And Mario Aguilar has particularly examined Pope Francis’ special role as a peacemaker. In his first public speech in May, Pope Leo stated his vision as “the peace of the risen Christ. A peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering.” This message of encouraging morals in the international system — by promoting peace and justice — can serve as a primary foundation for the emerging world order and, hopefully, will contribute to the end of all ongoing conflicts.

USA Has Normalised Collective Punishment

Qamar Bashir



Modern history, too, is littered with catastrophic examples of collective punishment. When one person or one small group acted, nations responded with wars that killed millions. During World War I, the assassination of a single man—Archduke Franz Ferdinand—on June 28, 1914, by a 19-year-old Serbian nationalist, led to a conflict that killed over 20 million people. In World War II, the rise of a few extremist leaders drove humanity into the deadliest war in history, killing an estimated 70–85 million...

FROM the dawn of human civilization, long before Judaism, Christianity, Islam, or Buddhism emerged to reshape the moral foundations of society, humanity lived under a brutal and irrational law: when one person committed a crime, entire tribes, cities, and nations were punished. The crime of an individual became the burden of thousands. A conflict between two men could trigger decades of warfare. A single act of adultery could unleash generational blood feuds. Ancient history is filled with examples of wars ignited by the wrongdoing of a few but fought by tens of thousands who had no connection to the original offense. Around 1200 BCE, the legendary Trojan War erupted because of the actions of one couple—Paris and Helen—but ended with the deaths of an estimated 40,000 to 100,000 warriors and the destruction of Troy. In 490 BCE, the entire city of Miletus was destroyed by the Persian Empire in retaliation for the Ionian Revolt, though only a handful of rebels had participated in the initial uprising. In 586 BCE, the kingdom of Judah was crushed and Jerusalem destroyed because King Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon; tens of thousands were exiled for the decision of one ruler. These ancient precedents reveal an era dominated by collective vengeance rather than individual responsibility.

When Judaism arrived, the moral code began to shift. The Torah introduced the revolutionary principle that “the children shall not be put to death for the sins of the father,” establishing that punishment must be confined to the perpetrators. Christianity later reinforced this concept through the teachings of Jesus, emphasizing forgiveness and individual accountability. Islam, too, declared unequivocally in the Quran that “no soul shall bear the burden of another,” and that punishment must be proportionate and directed only toward the guilty. These religions attempted to end the age-old normalization of collective punishment. Yet despite these divine instructions, humanity repeatedly drifted back into the primitive instinct of retaliating against entire populations instead of targeting the individuals responsible for the crime.

Modern history, too, is littered with catastrophic examples of collective punishment. When one person or one small group acted, nations responded with wars that killed millions. During World War I, the assassination of a single man—Archduke Franz Ferdinand—on June 28, 1914, by a 19-year-old Serbian nationalist, led to a conflict that killed over 20 million people. In World War II, the rise of a few extremist leaders drove humanity into the deadliest war in history, killing an estimated 70–85 million people be-

tween 1939 and 1945. In 1937, after one Chinese soldier went missing near the Marco Polo Bridge, Japan launched a full invasion that resulted in the deaths of 300,000 civilians in Nanjing alone. Again and again, the scope of punishment far exceeded the scope of the crime.

The twenty-first century has unfortunately normalized collective punishment in new and devastating forms. After the 9/11 attacks of September 11, 2001—committed by 19 individuals—America understandably pursued all those who plotted, supported, facilitated, or financed the attack. Justice against the perpetrators was necessary and morally justified. But the response soon expanded far beyond those responsible. The invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 resulted in more than 170,000 Afghan civilian deaths over two decades. In March 2003, Iraq was invaded even though Iraq had no involvement in 9/11; the war killed between 300,000 to 600,000 Iraqis and displaced millions. Libya was bombed in 2011, leaving 30,000 dead. Syria’s civil war, ignited by a small protest in 2011, eventually claimed over 500,000 lives and displaced more than 12 million people—half of the population. These tragedies illustrate a dark truth: the punishment for the crime of a few was extended to entire nations.

In the most recent and heartbreaking episode, the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack on Israel killed around 1,200 Israelis and took approximately 250 hostages—a horrific and indefensible act that demanded justice. Yet the response unleashed upon the civilians of Gaza escalated into one of the deadliest campaigns of the 21st century. By late 2025, more than 70,000 Palestinians had been killed, 75 percent of the population displaced, nearly all hospitals destroyed, food and medicine blocked, and children left freezing under plastic sheets in harsh winter rain. Families buried under rubble, newborn babies dying without incubators, entire neighborhoods turned to dust—this was not justice against the perpetrators but a sweeping punishment against an entire population for the crimes of a few. The world watched collective punishment become normalized once again. Instead of targeting militants, the response treated every man, woman, and child in Gaza as equally punishable, an approach that contradicts not only international law but the core moral principles of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and every civilized system of justice ever established.

And now, in November 2025, America risks repeating this ancient mistake within its own borders. After a lone gunman killed one National Guard soldier and severely wounded another, the United States had every right and duty to pursue the killer and anyone who supported or

facilitated him. The safety of American soldiers and citizens must always come first, and no one can dispute that justice must be delivered swiftly and firmly. But instead of targeting the perpetrator and his network, sweeping executive orders were issued that affected millions of immigrants who had no connection whatsoever to the crime. Immigration processing was halted. Asylum cases were frozen. Green card holders and legal permanent residents—people who have committed no crime, who work hard, pay taxes, raise families, and contribute to America’s GDP—were suddenly labeled suspicious, stereotyped as criminals, and threatened with deportation. Collective punishment once again overshadowed common sense. American immigrants, who statistically commit fewer crimes than native-born citizens, found themselves trapped under suspicion because of the actions of one man. These families fled economic collapse, persecution, and violence in their home countries; now they face being thrown back into the very instability they escaped. Their dreams, their years of sacrifice, their contributions to the U.S. economy have been jeopardized by an act they neither supported nor participated in.

The logic is simple and eternal: punish the guilty, not the innocent. Every major religion, every moral code, and every civilized legal system supports this principle. Collective punishment is not justice—it is a return to the darkest chapters of human history. It destroys trust, divides societies, and creates new cycles of hatred.

The United States is a great nation with strong institutions and a history of self-correction. It has the capacity to distinguish between a criminal and an entire community. It can choose a path guided by law, reason, and fairness rather than anger. As President Trump often says, his movement is a movement of “common sense.” But common sense does not support punishing millions for the crime of one. Common sense teaches us to hold the perpetrator accountable, not innocent families. Common sense demands proportionality, fairness, and justice—not blanket retaliation. The question now is whether America, and indeed the world, will learn from history. Will we continue to repeat the ancient mistakes of punishing nations for the crimes of individuals, or will we finally embrace the moral clarity that has been taught to us for thousands of years? The answer will determine whether humanity advances toward justice—or falls backward into its brutal past.

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Understanding the Great-Power Competition

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The maritime powers led by the United States and its allies in Europe and the Indo-Pacific see global order through a different lens. For them, the seas are not barriers but bridges. Control of maritime routes enables economic interdependence, international cooperation and access to distant markets. The power of the maritime world rests not on conquering territory but on maintaining open and secure sea lanes, stable institutions and technological leadership

GREAT-POWER rivalry has once again become the defining feature of global politics. The 21st century, much like the 20th, is witnessing a struggle among powerful states to shape the world order according to their interests and visions. Yet, unlike the Cold War which was framed largely as a clash between capitalism and communism the current competition cannot be understood solely through ideology. It is a deeper contest over geography, economic influence and control of the global commons. The divide today is between two enduring worldviews: the continental and the maritime. This conflict over how the world should be organized through control of land or dominance at sea has existed for centuries. Historically, great empires have risen and fallen according to how well they adapted to one of these models. The continental powers, traditionally land-based, emphasize control over territory, resources and regional security zones. In contrast, maritime powers focus on global trade, open sea routes and flexible alliances that allow them to project power across the world. This geographic divide has once again come to shape international relations. The post-Cold War period was marked by a brief illusion of consensus. The collapse of the Soviet Union led many in the West to believe that the liberal, market-oriented and maritime vision of global order had triumphed permanently. The United States stood unchallenged as the dominant naval power, commanding the world’s sea lanes and promoting a system of globalization centered on open trade and financial flows. However, the early decades of the 21st century have shown that history never ends. As new powers rise and old ones recover, the underlying geographic logic of international politics has returned. China and Russia, the two main continental powers of the modern era, have challenged the Western maritime order. Their cooperation, though often uneasy, is rooted in a shared perception that the U.S.-led system limits their sovereignty and strategic freedom. Both countries seek to secure their continental peripheries Russia in Eurasia and China across East Asia and to reduce the influence of maritime powers along their borders. For them, the international system is not merely about rules or norms but about the physical control of space and the ability to shape trade, energy and security routes. For continental powers, geography dictates a worldview built around defense and depth. Their primary concern is the security of borders and the stability of their neighboring regions. Russia, for example, sees the plains of

Eastern Europe as both a potential invasion route and a buffer zone essential to its survival. Its interventions in Ukraine, Georgia and Central Asia are rooted not only in politics but in geography a desire to prevent the expansion of hostile forces into its near abroad. Similarly, China’s Belt and Road Initiative represents an effort to anchor its economic and strategic influence across the vast expanse of Eurasia, connecting its industrial heartlands to markets and resources through railways, pipelines and highways that cannot be blocked by foreign navies. In this continental logic, power is derived from territorial control, resource security and regional integration. The land becomes both a source of wealth and a defensive shield. The modern expression of this worldview can be seen in Russia’s energy diplomacy, China’s infrastructure-led expansion and their mutual preference for multipolarity over Western-dominated globalization. Both states are trying to build a world in which no single maritime power can dictate the flow of goods, technology, or ideas.

The maritime powers led by the United States and its allies in Europe and the Indo-Pacific see global order through a different lens. For them, the seas are not barriers but bridges. Control of maritime routes enables economic interdependence, international cooperation and access to distant markets. The power of the maritime world rests not on conquering territory but on maintaining open and secure sea lanes, stable institutions and technological leadership. Historically, maritime powers have thrived on trade and innovation. From the British Empire’s control of the oceans to America’s postwar dominance of the Pacific and Atlantic, their prosperity depended on the ability to move goods, capital and information freely. The U.S.-led alliances NATO in Europe and the network of partnerships across the Indo-Pacific reflect this maritime tradition. They are not empires of occupation but systems of coordination, where mutual defense ensures freedom of navigation and the protection of shared interests. In today’s context, the maritime order faces growing challenges. China’s naval expansion, Russia’s renewed submarine activity and Iran’s influence over the Strait of Hormuz all test the stability of global sea routes. The competition is not only military but also technological and economic. Disputes over undersea cables, maritime surveillance and freedom of movement in the South China Sea illustrate how the contest between continental and maritime powers now extends into new domains, including cyberspace and outer space.

Unlike the rigid bipolarity of the Cold War, the present great-power competition is more fluid and complex. The dividing line between land and sea power is blurred by technology and interdependence. China, for instance, though primarily continental in its origins, has developed a formidable navy and invested heavily in port infrastructure across Africa, the Middle East and South Asia through the “Maritime Silk Road.” Meanwhile, the United States and its allies have expanded their influence inland, building defense partnerships in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and even parts of Africa. The result is a global tug-of-war over the architecture of power. On one side stands the vision of a connected, rules-based maritime world led by the United States and supported by partners like Japan, Australia and the United Kingdom. On the other stands a continental vision led by China and Russia, which prioritizes sovereignty, security and control over internal regions and trade corridors. The tension between these two visions defines the strategic dilemmas facing many middle powers, from India and Turkey to Iran and Pakistan. Each must balance access to global markets with the need for regional security.

The central question for the future of international order is whether these two worldviews can coexist. Some analysts argue that interdependence will force a compromise, as both systems depend on each other’s resources and markets. Others believe the divide is deepening, with military build-ups, sanctions and regional conflicts creating a self-reinforcing cycle of suspicion. What is certain is that geography continues to shape destiny. The physical layout of continents and oceans still defines how states perceive their threats, opportunities and ambitions. In this emerging era, power is no longer measured solely by nuclear arsenals or GDP figures but by control over supply chains, digital infrastructure and the movement of energy and data. Whether it is China building railways across Central Asia, the United States forging alliances in the Indo-Pacific, or Russia asserting its dominance in the Arctic, all major powers are adapting old geographic principles to new technological realities. The contest between continental and maritime powers is thus not merely a matter of ideology or military might. It is a struggle over how the world’s wealth, security and influence should be organized. The outcome will determine whether the 21st century is shaped by networks of open connectivity or by blocs of territorial control. Geography, once again, is destiny but in this era, it is being redrawn through both land and sea.

Briefs

AC, 2 cops
among four
martyred

FROM PAGE 01

The incident comes a day after one cop was martyred and six others injured in a suicide blast targeting a police mobile in Lakki Marwat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday. Terrorist attacks have seen a sharp increase in Pakistan, particularly in the bordering provinces of KP and Balochistan, since 2021, when the Afghan Taliban regime came into power. A police report noted that KP alone recorded over 600 terror incidents, in which at least 79 police personnel were martyred alongside 138 civilians, during the first eight months of 2025. Pakistan has time and again called on the Afghan Taliban regime in Kabul to prevent its soil from being used by terrorists against Pakistan, and the issue recently resulted in heightened tensions featuring cross-border attacks by the Afghan side, resulting in retaliation from Pakistani forces as well.

President,
PM express
deep grief...

FROM PAGE 01

personnel and directed the relevant authorities to ensure immediate arrest of the attackers, President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister directed for a probe into the incident and brining the culprits to book, besides instructing immediate treatment to the injured, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. He resolved to foil the nefarious designs of terrorists, the enemies of humanity, and reiterated that government was determined to completely eradicate the scourge of terrorism from the country.

Imran
'perfectly
fine', says
Uzma
Khanum...

FROM PAGE 01

She added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi has Imran's full support, alleging that "the entire Constitution and law are applied only to PTI." For her part, Aleema said that the family's stance is that six family members should be allowed to meet the PTI founder every Tuesday, while six party leaders should be permitted to meet him every Thursday. She added that court orders regarding these meetings were "already in place." Ahead of the protest, which was scheduled for today, the Islamabad and Rawalpindi administrations announced that Section 144 — barring public gatherings and protests — had been imposed in the twin cities. As the repeated refusals for meetings continued, tensions escalated when Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi was denied access to Khan for the eighth time late last month — even after holding a 16-hour sit-in — prompting the announcement of protests. The PTI founder has been in jail since August 2023, following his removal from office through a no-confidence vote in April 2022. Ahead of her meeting, Uzma said she was "happy to receive permission for the meeting finally" and added that she would speak to the media after returning from jail. Speaking to journalists at Factory Naka, Aleema claimed that the incarcerated PTI founder had been kept in solitary confinement for a month.

Pakistan,
Turkiye
to cement
partnership

FROM PAGE 01

Turkiye and appreciated Turkiye's steadfast support to Pakistan at different international fora. Turkish Minister Bayraktar acknowledged Pakistan's efforts for regional peace, stability and sustainable development and conveyed his country's desire to deepen cooperation across the energy dom.

PFF Officials Join FIFA
U-17 WC as Observers

The initiative is widely credited to the efforts of PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani, who has prioritised staff development and capacity-building since taking office. The participation of Pakistani officials in FIFA's observer program is being viewed as a significant milestone in this ongoing reform agenda

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: A three-member delegation from the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) attended the FIFA U-17 World Cup in Qatar as official observers, receiving specialised training in the operational and managerial aspects of a major FIFA tournament. The delegation — comprising Assaam Sany (Director Operations), Aziz Malik (Director HR & Admin), and Ahmed Hashmat (Manager Marketing) — took

part in an intensive three-day program designed to provide hands-on exposure to the workings of a global football event. This marks the first time in Pakistan's history that PFF officials have received formal FIFA training during a World Cup. During the program, the officials engaged with the FIFA Competition Director and various departmental teams to study the full operational framework of the tournament. This year's FIFA U-17 World Cup is historic as well, being the first edition to feature 48 teams, significantly expanding the event's scale and

organisational demands. The PFF delegation received briefings from multiple FIFA and Local Organizing Committee (LOC) departments, including team services, commercial rights delivery, broadcast operations, transport, security, venue management, safeguarding, training logistics, and volunteer management. They also carried out detailed venue inspections to understand match-day resource allocation, crowd management, and operational zoning in large stadiums. Sharing their experience, Assaam Sany, Aziz Malik, and Ahmed Hashmat said the visit offered invaluable insights into best

practices and real-time problem-solving. "It was remarkable to see Qatar successfully host four international matches on the same day. Observing their workflow allowed us to understand how large-scale football operations can be managed efficiently," they noted. The initiative is widely credited to the efforts of PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani, who has prioritised staff development and capacity-building since taking office. The participation of Pakistani officials in FIFA's observer program is being viewed as a significant milestone in this ongoing reform agenda.

Farhan Yousaf to lead
ACC U 19 Asia Cup

Farhan Yousaf also featured in last year's ACC U19 Asia Cup. The 50-over event will feature eight teams

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has appointed Farhan Yousaf captain of the Pakistan U 19 team which is due to take part in Asian Cricket Council (ACC) U 19 Asia Cup from December 12 to December 21 in Dubai. Farhan Yousaf also featured in last year's ACC U19 Asia Cup. The 50-over event will feature eight teams. Pakistan, who were beaten by Bangladesh in last year's semi-final, are placed in Group 'A' alongside India, Qualifier 1 and Qualifier 3. Group 'B' comprises Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Qualifier 2 and Sri Lanka. The eight-team tournament will provide Pakistan side with preparations ahead of the ICC U19 World Cup, which is set to be co-hosted by Zimbabwe and Namibia from 15 Jan-

uary to 6 February 2026. Pakistan will open their campaign on Friday, 12 December against Qualifier 3 at The Sevens Stadium in Dubai. Their second group match is against India on Sunday, 14 December at the ICC Academy Ground in Dubai, while their final group fixture is against Qualifier 1 on Tuesday, 16 December at the same venue. The semi-finals will be played on 19 December at The Sevens Stadium and ICC Academy Ground, while the final will take place on Sunday, 21 December. 18-year-old Farhan recently led Lahore Region Whites in the National Men's U19 Cup, scoring 369 runs from seven matches, including a century and two half-centuries. Usman Khan, who scored a century in the last

edition of the ACC U19 Asia Cup, will be Farhan's deputy in the event. Playing for FATA in the National Men's U19 Cup, left-handed Usman scored 429 runs from seven matches, which included two centuries and a half-century. Pakistan team will undergo a camp in Karachi from later today until the team's departure for Dubai, which will be confirmed in due course. 15-member squad: Farhan Yousaf (captain), Usman Khan (vice-captain), Abdul Subhan, Ahmed Husain, Ali Hassan Baloch, Ali Raza, Daniyal Ali Khan, Hamza Zahoor (wk), Huzaifa Ahsan, Momin Qamar, Mohammad Huzaiifa, Mohammad Sayyama, Mohammad Shayyan (wk), Niqab Shafiq and Sameer Minhas. — APP

How deforestation
turbocharged
Indonesia's deadly floods

JAKARTA: The deadly flooding that has killed hundreds in Indonesia was largely the result of monsoon rains and a rare tropical storm. But something else may have played a role: deforestation. Environmentalists, experts and even Indonesia's government have pointed to the role forest loss played in flash flooding and landslides that washed torrents of mud into villages and stranded residents on roofs. Forests help absorb rainfall and stabilise the ground held by their roots, and their absence makes areas more prone to flash flooding and landslides. Indonesia is regularly among the countries in the world with the largest annual forest loss. Mining, plantations and fires have caused the clearance of large tracts of the country's lush rainforest over recent decades. In 2024, over 240,000 hectares of primary forest was lost, and that was less than the year before, according to analysis by conservation start-up The TreeMap's Nusantara Atlas project. "Forests upstream act as a protective barrier, a bit like a sponge," explained David Gaveau, founder of The TreeMap. "The canopy captures some of the rain before it reaches the ground. The roots also help stabilise the soil. When the forest is cleared upstream, rainwater runs off rapidly into rivers creating flash floods." Environmentalists have long urged the government to better protect the country's forests, which are a key carbon sink, absorbing planet-warming carbon dioxide. Indonesia's forests are also home to enormous biodiversity and some of the world's most threatened species, including orangutans. And in the wake of the flooding, even the country's president urged action. "We must truly prevent deforestation and forest destruction," President Prabowo Subianto said Friday as the scale of the disaster began to emerge. "Protecting our forests is crucial." The floods carried not only collapsed hillsides and torrents of mud, but also timber that fuelled speculation about the

link between deforestation and the disaster. On one beach in Padang, AFP saw workers dressed in orange using chainsaws to break up massive logs strewn along the sand. The forestry ministry is reportedly investigating claims of illegal logging in affected areas, and Forestry Minister Raja Juli Antoni called the disaster a chance to "evaluate our policies". "The pendulum between the economy and ecology seems to have swung too far towards the economy and needs to be pulled back to the centre," he said over the weekend. That is a message environmentalists in Indonesia have long delivered. In one of the worst-affected areas, Batang Toru, "there are seven companies operating along the upstream region," said Uli Arta Siagian, forest and plantation campaign manager for conservation group Walhi. "There is a gold mine that has already cleared around 300 hectares of forest cover... the Batang Toru Hydropower Plant has caused the loss of 350 hectares of forest," she told AFP. Large tracts of forest have also been converted into palm oil plantations. "All of this contributes to increasing our vulnerability." Sumatra, where the flood damage was concentrated, is particularly vulnerable because its river basins are relatively small, explained Kiki Taufik, head of Greenpeace Indonesia's forest campaign. "The massive change in forest cover is the main factor in the occurrence of flash floods," he told AFP, accusing the government of "recklessly and carelessly" granting permits for mines and plantations. Deforestation rates in Sumatra are among the highest in Indonesia, according to Herri Purnomo, country director at the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF). Losing forest also raises flooding risks because soil washes into rivers, raising the riverbed and reducing the capacity of waterways to absorb sudden torrential downpours, he said. — Agencies

National
games: sports
board flags
dubious
bodies

KARACHI: Days ahead of the country's biggest sports event, questions have been raised on the participation of unauthorized sports associations. The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) has formally communicated its serious reservations to the Government of Sindh regarding the organization of the 35th National Games, scheduled to begin in Karachi on December 6. In a letter penned by the PSB Assistant Director for National Federations to the Sindh Sports Secretary, the board urged the provincial government to ensure that only legitimate and recognized sports organizations and officials are involved. The PSB highlighted concerns that several competitions are allegedly being managed by unapproved bodies or individuals. The board noted that the weightlifting federation, which is banned by both the PSB and its international counterpart due to doping violations, has been included in the games. The PSB has requested the Sindh government to immediately review these matters, revise the arrangements, and grant participation opportunities exclusively to legal federations and their authorized officials in the National Games. — Agencies

China's first world
snooker champion
says his life has
changed forever

Zhao Xintong Reflects on Life-Changing World Snooker Triumph, New Pressures, and Journey from Early Struggles to Global Fame After Historic Championship Victory and Continued Pursuit of Balance and Improvement

BEIJING: China's first-ever world snooker champion, Zhao Xintong, said on Monday that his life changed irreversibly when he made history in May. Zhao completed an incredible nine-match winning run from the opening qualifying round all the way to the final, beating Mark Williams 18-12 at the Crucible in Sheffield to achieve snooker's ultimate glory. Reflecting on his rise, Zhao explained that becoming a world champion has brought significant changes to his life. After defeating compatriot Long Zehuang 6-1 in the opening round of the UK Championship, he admitted that the role comes with new responsibilities and added pressure, which he is still learning to manage. "I'm trying to learn and now being world champion is very different — you need to do more things," Zhao said. "There's a lot of pressure, and that's a big problem for me, so I'm learning how to enjoy the table. When I win any match, I'm just very happy. "This is my first time being famous, and I'm very busy. I don't have time to practise, but now I'm trying to find a balance and improve. I'm not sure this is all real!" — Agencies

After Faf du Plessis, Moeen
Ali, Australia's Maxwell
withdraws from IPL 2026

"The IPL has helped shape me as a cricketer and as a person. I've been lucky to play with world-class teammates, represent incredible franchises, and perform in front of fans whose passion is unmatched

MUMBAI: Australian all-rounder batter Glenn Maxwell pulled out of the auction of the Indian Premier League's (IPL) 19th edition, terming it a "big call", after "having many unforgettable seasons." Maxwell made the announcement on his Instagram account; however, he did not reveal the reason for opting not to play the IPL 2026. "After many unforgettable seasons in the IPL, I've decided not to put my name in the auction this year. It's a big call, and one I make with a lot of gratitude for everything this league has given me," the 37-year-old wrote. "The IPL has helped shape me as a cricketer and as a person. I've been lucky to play with world-class teammates, represent incredible franchises, and perform in front of fans whose passion is unmatched. Maxwell added, "The memories, the challenges, and the energy of India will stay with me forever. Thank you for all your support over the years. Hopefully see you soon." The explosive batter, who also

bowls off-spin, has represented four franchises — Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Delhi Daredevils, and Punjab Kings in his IPL journey. Maxwell's announcement came days after Faf du Plessis, the former South African captain, and Moeen Ali, the ex-England cricketer, opted Pakistan Super League over the Indian Premier League. Sharing his excitement to feature in the PSL, Ali posted, "I'm really excited to be joining PSL in its New Era. The league has earned a reputation for top-level T20 cricket, with high-quality competition and world-class talent across every team." Du Plessi, on the other hand, said that this time he chose to take on a new challenge and will be playing in the upcoming PSL season. "It's an exciting step for me — a chance to experience something new, to grow as a player, and to embrace a league filled with incredible talent and energy." — Agencies

JCP
nominates
BHC,
SHC chief
justices

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High Court Justice currently serving as an acting judge of the Supreme Court — as a permanent judge of the SC, with the decision approved by a majority of the JCP's total membership. The JCP, by a majority of its total membership, constituted a committee comprising the FCC's Justice Aamer Farooq, Attorney-General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan, Senator Farooq Hamid Naek, Senator Syed Ali Zafar, and Muhammad Ahsan Bhoon, for making draft rules under clause (20) of Article 175A of the Constitution.

PM for
extending
full support
to Lanka's...

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan Navy ship "Saif" is engaged in relief operations for flood victims during its deployment in Sri Lanka. A helicopter on board the Pakistan Navy ship rescued a family that had been stranded for five days. The meeting expressed its resolve to continue providing relief and rescue assistance in Sri Lanka.

JCP
meeting
elevates
Justice...

FROM PAGE 01

Those considered for the office included Justice Rajput, Justice Muhammad Iqbal Kalohoro and Justice Mahmood A. Khan. Similarly, the JCP had also considered the appointment of the BHC chief justice from among the three senior-most judges of the high court. Those considered for the office included Justice Mullahkhalil, Justice Iqbal Ahmed Kasi and Justice Shaukat Ali Rakhshani. With the establishment of the FCC, where four judges from the SC — Justices Aminuddin Khan, Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Aamer Farooq and Ali Baqar Najafi — have been appointed, as well as the resignation of Justices Syed Mansoor Ali Shah and Athar Minallah, the total strength of the SC has reduced to 18 judges from 24. The JCP meeting was also attended by FCC Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Aamer Farooq, Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, Pakistan Bar Council representative Ahsan Bhoon, Senator Farooq Hamid Naek, Senator Syed Ali Zafar, and MNAs Sheikh Aftab Ahmad and Gohar Ali Khan. After the passage of the 27th Constitutional Amendment, changes were made to key constitutional and statutory judicial bodies. Following these changes, SC's Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail was included in the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) and the Practice and Procedure Committee, while the FCC's Justice Farooq was made a member of the JCP.

Parliament
gives nod to
minorities...

FROM PAGE 01

Speaking in the House, the minister said that "No clause in the bill contradicts Quran and Sunnah." The minister stressed that the legislation contained nothing contrary to the Quran and Sunnah and reaffirmed that neither the government nor the Constitution would ever allow any contradiction. He informed the House that all four amendments submitted by religious scholars had already been incorporated into the final draft. "Nothing in this law overrides existing laws or court judgments. This commission is strictly for non-Muslim citizens as defined in the Constitution," he said, adding that any group not accepting its constitutional status "automatically falls outside the ambit of this commission," he added. The Minister said the bill had undergone thorough scrutiny—first by the National Assembly Standing Committee.

New Zealand 231-9 as West Indies exploit
bowler-friendly wicket on day one of first Test

The green wicket and heavy cloud cover ensured West Indies skipper Roston Chase gave his pace attack first use of the new ball when he won the toss

CHRISTCHURCH: New Zealand reached 231-9 at stumps on a rain-shortened day one of the first Test against the West Indies Tuesday after Justin Greaves triggered a middle-order collapse with the wicket of Kane Williamson. New Zealand tumbled from 94-1 to 148-6 on a bowler-friendly wicket after Williamson was dismissed for 52, his 38th Test half-century. Michael Bracewell and Nathan Smith arrested the slide with a 52-run stand for the seventh wicket. Smith eventually fell for 23 and Bracewell for 47. After Matt Henry went for eight, Zak Foulkes and Jacob Duffy were both on four

when bad light stopped play after 70 overs of a truncated day. Bracewell and Smith's partnership was the second face-saving stand for New Zealand after Williamson and Tom Latham put on 93 following the dismissal of Devon Conway on the third ball of the Test. The green wicket and heavy cloud cover ensured West Indies skipper Roston Chase gave his pace attack first use of the new ball when he won the toss. But after the immediate success of Kemar Roach, who removed Conway, the West Indies were made to wait 29 overs before again tasting success.

In the first session, extended by a 90-minute rain break, Williamson and Latham cautiously inched New Zealand to 17-1 in the 10.3 overs available before a second shower brought lunch. When play resumed, the New Zealand pair batted with more freedom until Williamson celebrated his first Test innings in a year by passing the half-century mark. On 52, a lapse in his normal diligence saw a full delivery from Greaves edged to Alick Athanaze at second slip to ignite the collapse. In his next over, Greaves removed Latham for a patient 24 off 85 deliveries and Rachin Ravindra was then bowled for

three by Jayden Seales. In the space of 21 deliveries the West Indies took three wickets for nine runs as New Zealand slumped from 94-1 to 103-4. Will Young and Tom Blundell added 17 for the fifth wicket before Young, on 14, gave Johann Layne his maiden Test wicket. Blundell progressed to 29 before he went early in the final session as debutant Ojay Shields claimed his first Test wicket. Shields, who earlier believed he had the prized wicket of Williamson for 33 only for it to be declared a no ball, also removed Bracewell to finish with 2-34. Greaves took 2-35 and Roach has 2-47. — Agencies

Briefs

Gold price drops by Rs2,700 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of per tola 24-karat gold in Pakistan decreased by Rs2,700 on Tuesday, falling to Rs444,162 compared to Rs446,862 on the previous day, according to the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold declined by Rs2,315, reaching Rs380,797 from Rs383,112 a day earlier. The price of 10 grams of 22-karat gold also fell by Rs2,122, closing at Rs349,076. In the international market, gold was priced at \$4,218, registering a decrease of \$27. Meanwhile, the price of per tola silver increased by Rs41, rising to Rs6,004 from Rs5,963 on Monday. The price of 10 grams of silver also went up by Rs35, reaching Rs5,147. International silver was recorded at \$57.32, an increase of \$0.41. —APP

PSX loses 419 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Tuesday closed on a negative note, falling by 419.92 points, a decline of 0.25 percent, to settle at 167,642.28 points compared to 168,062.19 points on the previous trading day, according to PSX data. During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 775.53 million shares with a traded value of Rs37.49 billion, down from 735.52 million shares valuing Rs46.18 billion in the previous session. Market capitalization slightly decreased to Rs19.031 trillion from Rs19.032 trillion Out of 479 active companies in the ready market, 182 closed higher, 254 declined, while 43 remained unchanged. WorldCall Telecom led the volume chart with 169.05 million shares, followed by K-Electric Limited with 40.60 million shares, and F. National Equities with 37.15 million shares. The top gainers were Hoechst Pakistan Limited, rising by Rs47.09 to close at Rs4,304.11, and Ismail Industries Limited, which gained Rs40.05 to close at Rs1,981.43. Major losers included PIA Holding Company Limited-B, which fell by Rs256.00 to close at Rs24,100.00, and Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited, declining by Rs86.69 to close at Rs9,303.31. —APP

Palestinians evacuated from Gaza face tough adjustment in Greece

ATHENS: Raghad Al-Fara is struggling to rebuild her teenage life in Athens, not least because she now moves around with crutches because of injuries suffered in the Gaza war. Evacuated from the besieged Palestinian territory in February she now lives in a shelter for refugee women. "I never thought I would survive, let alone set foot on European soil," the 15-year-old said. Raghad is one of 10 Gazan minors suffering from "complex" orthopaedic and psychological injuries, according to Heracles Moskoff, secretary general for vulnerable persons at the migration ministry. —APP

UAE President receives credentials of Pakistan's new ambassador

UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Receives Credentials of New Ambassadors, Including Pakistan's Shafqat Ali Khan, Reaffirming Commitment to Strong Bilateral Ties, Global Cooperation, Peace, Stability and Mutual Prosperity

Abu Dhabi: His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE received the credentials of several newly appointed ambassadors to the UAE including H.E. Shafqat Ali Khan, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The ceremony took place at Qasr Al Watan in Abu Dhabi, in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Presidential Court. Welcoming the new ambassadors, His Highness reaffirmed the UAE's enduring commitment to building bridges of cooperation that foster growth and prosperity, support peace and stability, and promote dialogue and understanding among the peoples and cultures of the world. He wished the ambassadors success in their new roles and in strengthening ties between their respective countries and the UAE, noting that they would be fully supported in carrying out their duties effectively. H.E. Shafqat Ali Khan conveyed to His Highness the message of brotherhood, respect and goodwill from the Pakistani leadership and their best wishes for the continued progress and prosperity of the UAE and its people. His



Highness warmly reciprocated these sentiments and wished the ambassador success in his new role and in strengthening ties between Pakistan and the UAE. The ceremony was

also attended by H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs; H.H. Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy

Chairman of the Presidential Court for Development and Fallen Heroes' Affairs; H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Chairman of the Presidential

Court for Special Affairs; and Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, Adviser to the UAE President along with a number of sheikhs, ministers and senior officials. —Agencies

White House confirms admiral ordered second strike on alleged drug boat

WASHINGTON: A US admiral acting under the authority of Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth ordered a second strike that targeted survivors of an initial attack on an alleged drug smuggling boat, the White House said Monday. The legality of the Trump administration's deadly strikes against suspected drug traffickers in the Caribbean and Pacific has been questioned, and reports of the follow-up attack on survivors triggered further accusations of a possible war crime. Venezuela's leftist leader Nicolas Maduro has accused Washington of using drug trafficking as a pretext for "imposing regime change" in Caracas and rejected a "slave's peace" for the region, amid mounting fears of US military action. A total of 11 people were killed in the two strikes in early September, the first in a months-long military campaign that has so far left more than 80 dead. Trump's administration insists it is effectively at war with alleged "narco-terrorists," and the White House said Admiral Frank Bradley, who currently leads US Special Operations Command, had acted legally and properly in ordering a second strike. Bradley "worked well within his authority and the law directing the engagement to ensure the boat was destroyed and the threat to the United States of America was eliminated," White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told journalists. Hegseth "authorized Admiral Bradley to conduct these kinetic strikes," she said. With pressure on the Pentagon chief, Hegseth appeared to stress the decision was Bradley's. "I stand by him and the combat decisions he has made — on the September 2 mission and all others since," he posted Monday evening on X, calling Bradley "an American hero." Some military personnel under the condition of anonymity told the Washington Post that this is "protect Pete bulls—." Another military official told the publication that Leavitt's statement "left it up to interpretation" who was responsible for the second strike and implored the White House to provide more clarity.

Somali migrants in Yemen long to return home

ADEN: In makeshift homes lacking even the most basic necessities surrounded by piles of rubbish and flanked by dirt roads, thousands of Somalis in Yemen live in squalor-crushing poverty in Aden's "Little Mogadishu." Yemen, the Arabian Peninsula's poorest country, is not a destination in itself for migrants but a way station for those leaving East Africa in the hopes of reaching the oil-rich Gulf states and working in construction or as domestic staff. But with security along its borders tight, many struggle to make it out of Yemen. During the day, the men fan out across the city and line the roads looking for work in the de facto capital of government-controlled Yemen, where more than a decade of war has led to mass unemployment and food insecurity. To make ends meet, many search for odd jobs or scavenge rubbish heaps, looking for any food that can be salvaged to feed themselves and their families. "Some days we eat, some days it's up to God. That's life," said Abdullah Omar, a 29-year-old Somali father of four in Aden. Over a year ago, Omar decided to take his chances, shelling out \$500 to traffickers to board a boat with his family in hopes of escaping Somalia's instability and finding a better life abroad. But in Yemen, it has only been misery. To survive, Omar washed cars, making the equivalent of just a few dollars a day. After years working in construction in Mogadishu, Omar had hoped to find better conditions and pay in Yemen — where he had passed through as a teenager en route to Saudi Arabia. But that was before years of civil war killed hundreds of thousands of civilians, destroyed vast amounts of infrastructure and left the country effectively partitioned between the Houthi rebels and Yemen's internationally recognized government. "Here I have nothing," he tol, while explaining his decision to enrol in a UN program that paved the way for his repatriation to Somalia. —APP

Business community to stage sit-in in front of CDA On Dec 11: Tahir

Says will continue till the transfer of CDA Chairman

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The business community of the federal capital has unanimously announced to stage a peaceful protest in front of Capital Development Authority (CDA) on Thursday, December 11, 2025 at 2:00 pm against what it termed anti-business measures by the Authority that are severely damaging economic activity in the region. The announcement was made by Sardar Tahir Mehmood, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) during a largely attended joint press conference at the Munawar Mughal Hall on Tuesday. The press conference was attended by a large number of industrialists, traders, market presidents, the President Ali Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajran, and other business leaders, who strongly condemned the CDA's high-handed measures



being carried out by its officials under the directives of Chairman Mohammad Ali Randhawa. The participants stated that these measures have created an atmosphere of fear and instability for businesses. Speaking on the occasion, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood made a fervent appeal to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to take immediate notice of the unilateral and anti-business decisions

of the CDA Chairman. He declared that the business community, along with 10,000 participants, will march towards the CDA headquarters and stage a sit-in that will continue until the Chairman CDA is transferred. He demanded the immediate de-sealing of all industries and business establishments shut down by the CDA on various pretexts. He warned that if any further attempt is made to seal another business entity, the community will be

compelled to announce a shutter-down strike across the city. Highlighting the gravity of the situation, the ICCI President pointed out that the CDA's enforcement teams have been carrying out raids without notice, and even factories producing life-saving drugs have not been spared. He lamented that the concentration of multiple portfolios in the hands of the CDA Chairman reflects a deeper shortage of competent officers in the administrative system.

Apple to resist India order to preload state-run app

NEW DELHI: Apple does not plan to comply with a mandate to preload its smartphones with a state-owned cyber safety app and will convey its concerns to New Delhi, three sources familiar with the matter said, after the government's move sparked surveillance concerns. The Indian government has confidentially ordered companies including Apple, Samsung and Xiaomi to preload their phones with an app called Sanchar Saathi, or Communication Partner, within 90 days. The app is intended to track stolen phones, block them and prevent them from being misused. The government also wants manufacturers to ensure that the app is not disabled. And for devices already in the supply chain, manufacturers should push the app to phones via software updates, Reuters was first to report on Monday. India's telecom ministry confirmed the move later, describing it as a security measure to combat "serious endangerment" of cybersecurity. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi's political opponents and privacy advocates criticized the move, saying it is a way for the government to gain access to India's 730 million smartphones. —APP

Starmer warns China poses security threats but urges deeper business ties

LONDON: Prime Minister Keir Starmer warned on Monday that China posed "national security threats" to Britain, but defended his government's decision to step up engagement with the country, saying closer business ties were in the national interest. Starmer's Labour government has made improved relations with China one of its foreign policy priorities, but relations between the two countries have been strained by British accusations of spying by Beijing. In one of his clearest attempts to explain his approach to China, Starmer said in a speech to business leaders in London's historic financial district that Britain's relationship with China had for too long "blown hot and cold." Britain has made major shifts in its approach toward China in the past decade, moving from saying it wanted to be China's greatest supporter in Europe in the so-called "golden era" of relations to then being one of its fiercest critics. —APP

'US peace plan 'looks better' with revisions but work continues'

PARIS: Ukraine's president spoke optimistically Monday about the progress of revising the Trump administration's peace plan, saying "it looks better" and the work will continue during talks on how to end Russia's nearly four-year war. President Volodymyr Zelensky spoke after meeting with France's president, the latest in discussions aimed at brokering the terms for a potential ceasefire in the largest armed conflict in Europe since World War II. —APP

How Marka-e-Haq redefined airpower and reaffirmed Pakistan's strategic maturity

IZMI HERLANI
At Pakistan Air Force Academy Asghar Khan graduation parade, a moment of national significance unfolded, blending tradition and transformation into a single event. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu's remarks to the graduating Officers were charged with purpose, offering a clear vision of a Force that not only safeguards Pakistan's skies, but now redefines airpower and MultiDomain Warfare across South Asia. His address distilled an eradicating conflict, endorsed the nation's evolving strategic posture and boldly charted the course of PAF's modernization. From the outset, the Air Chief made clear that the graduates were stepping into a very different Air Force from the one their predecessors inherited. He reminded them that they were entering a Force "on the rise—battle-tested, technologically resurgent and globally acknowledged" a de-

scription grounded in operational experience rather than aspiration. He underlined that "the trust Pakistan places in its Armed Forces is earned through decades of sacrifice, professionalism and devotion to duty," assuring the nation that PAF will remain "Second to None and a symbol of pride for the nation." At the core of this reality lies Marka-e-Haq (Bunyanum Marsous), the conflict that has become a defining reference point for air warfare in the region. The events of 06-07 May, when a numerically superior adversary attempted to impose its will across Pakistan's airspace, continue to be dissected in professional circles. That attempt met an Air Force operating with a rare combination of speed, precision and doctrinal clarity. In what many analysts have described as one of the longest and most intense BeyondVisual-Range air battles of the 21st century, PAF engaged, outmanoeuvred and, in several decisive cases, shot down some of the adversary's

most advanced aircraft, including Rafale, Su-30MKI, MiG-29 and Mirage-2000 fighters. This was not a fortunate anomaly; it was the visible outcome of years of quiet, focused modernization. ACM Sidhu highlighted how, for the first time in its history, PAF executed FullSpectrum MultiDomain warfare, fusing Kinetic operations in the air with NonKinetic effects in the Electromagnetic Spectrum, Cyberspace and space-enabled situational awareness. Among the most consequential outcomes was the effective neutralisation of a highly publicised S400 Air Defence System, long promoted as a regional "game-changer." Its paralysis underscored two stark truths: technological arrogance is no substitute for operational mastery and the intelligent, indigenous integration of Electronic Warfare, Cyber Tools and Low-Observable Platforms can defeat even the most acclaimed air defence architectures. Behind this performance lay a

deliberate reorientation of priorities. Confronted with fiscal



constraints and an increasingly complex threat environment, PAF moved away from a narrow, platform-centric approach towards a capability-centric modernization framework. Through a carefully sequenced Smart Induction Program, the service shifted investment towards Drones and Loitering Munitions, indigenous Electronic Warfare Suites, space-based ISR nodes, A-enabled decisionsupport tools,

longrange precision strike capabilities, integrated C2 networks & resilient Cyber Warfare infrastructure. Rather than waiting for perfect, imported solutions, PAF chose to build, adapt and integrate what it needed at a pace unmatched in the region, turning necessity into a driver of innovation. Within this broader transformation, National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTIP) serves as a concise emblem of the new mindset: a nationallevel initiative designed to energise Pakistan's aerospace innovation ecosystem and accelerate the development & integration of indigenous KillChain components. NASTIP marks the shift from being a conventional importer of aerospace technology to becoming a serious developer of Next-Generation solutions tailored to national needs. Strategic maturity formed another central pillar of both PAF's conduct and ACM Sidhu's narrative. Despite achieving decisive superiority in the air and demonstrat-

ing reach across hostile territory, from northern approaches to southern industrial corridors, PAF calibrated its responses with deliberate restraint. In his speech, ACM Sidhu stressed that Strength does not equate to escalation and real power does not require the humiliation of an adversary. Pakistan could have extended the confrontation; instead, it chose to restore deterrence, demonstrate capability and then stabilise the environment in line with national leadership's objectives. The balance between aggression in battle and composure in victory is the hallmark of a professional Air Force and has reinforced Pakistan's standing as a net stabiliser in a volatile region. Within this strategic envelope, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's role was acknowledged as pivotal. ACM Sidhu implicitly outlined his contribution in four dimensions: providing strategic clarity when the adversary sought to exploit misperceptions, ensuring rapid

and synchronised politicalmilitary decision-making, forging Triservice synergy at a level rarely seen in the subcontinent's history & projecting calm resolve at moments of national uncertainty. This combination of clarity, speed, unity and steadiness created the strategic conditions under which PAF's modernization could translate into operational success. Air Chief Marshal Sidhu's tribute to the Field Marshal was a professional acknowledgement that leadership at the highest level of ten determines whether a nation experiences strategic paralysis or strategic poise. He also drew a clear line between professional militaries that operate on evidence and adversaries that rely on post-conflict narratives. Every PAF claim, he affirmed, is backed by data, every engagement recorded and every operational announcement rigorously validated. In an age defined by information warfare, this insistence on verifiable fact has itself become a form

of strategic capital. ACM Sidhu linked PAF's modernization and performance in Marka-e-Haq to Pakistan's broader international profile. As a responsible nuclear power, Pakistan's posture is increasingly viewed as central to regional stability and key partners have taken careful note of PAF's professionalism in crisis, the effectiveness of its indigenous systems, the discipline with which Force was applied and the maturity shown in deescalation. For the graduating Officers on the parade square, the implications were clear: they are joining a force whose modernization journey is far from over, but whose conduct in Marka-e-Haq has already compelled the region to recalibrate its understanding of airpower. Pakistan Air Force is no longer merely guarding the nation's airspace; it is actively shaping the strategic environment in which that airspace will be contested in the decades to come.

Briefs

India continues to delay Pakistan's Sri Lanka aid flight

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday said that India continued to block its humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka, where floods and landslides had badly hit several districts, causing the loss of lives and properties. "The special aircraft carrying Pakistan's humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka continues to face delay for over 60 hours now awaiting flight clearance from India," the Foreign Office spokesperson said in a statement. He said that the partial flight clearance issued by India last night, after 48 hours, was operationally impractical: time-bound for just a few hours and without validity for the return flight. The spokesperson said that the delay by India was severely hindering this urgent relief Mission for the brotherly people of Sri Lanka. — APP

Ukraine says still fighting in Pokrovsk

KYIV: Ukrainian forces said Tuesday that fighting was ongoing in Pokrovsk, an important logistics hub in the eastern Donetsk region that Moscow claimed to have captured after months of intensive fighting. The Russian defence ministry, one day earlier, posted a video purportedly showing Russian soldiers raising their country's flag over a central square in Pokrovsk. "Search and assault operations and the elimination of the enemy in urban areas continue in Pokrovsk," the Ukrainian military's eastern command wrote on social media. It also said — without explicitly denying Moscow's claim — that Russian troops that planted a flag in the town's centre had been beaten back. It added that Russian forces had taken advantage of poor weather conditions to move into the centre of the road and rail hub that had around 60,000 residents before Moscow invaded Ukraine in February 2022. — APP

ECP notifies PML-N's Muhammad Bilal Badar victory

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday notified the victory of Muhammad Bilal Badar, candidate of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), from NA-96 Faisalabad-II. The announcement follows the by-election held on 23 November 2025. According to the notification, Badar has been returned to the National Assembly after the completion of the legal scrutiny process, formally securing his seat in the lower house of parliament. —APP

Tarar stresses strategy to curb population explosion

Highlighting maternal health as a pressing concern, Tarar described the high number of maternal deaths as "criminal negligence," stressing collective responsibility to protect mothers' lives



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Tuesday urged a comprehensive, multi-pronged strategy to address Pakistan's surging population, calling for coordinated cross-sector efforts and intensified public awareness campaigns to curb the explosion in growth. Speaking at the Population Summit 2025, Tarar underscored the importance of engaging Ulama and parliamentarians in shap-

ing the discourse, stressing that religious leaders can play a crucial role in affirming that faith is not a barrier to addressing unchecked population growth. He underscored the importance of promoting family harmony and safeguarding the rights of mothers, fathers, and children. Tarar proposed the formation of a joint working group focused on education and awareness, while urging summit organizers to issue a charter that highlights Parliament's pivotal role. Inside the House, he noted that lawmakers—particularly the women's caucus—can be engaged to spur debate in Parliament, guiding discussions toward plausible solutions and steering them toward concrete outcomes. Highlighting maternal health as a pressing concern, Tarar described the high number of maternal deaths as "criminal negligence," stressing collective responsibility to protect mothers' lives. He warned that infant mortality—now at 50 deaths per 1,000 live births according to UNICEF—must be addressed to resolve broader maternal health challenges.

Pak-China Armies' joint military exercise Warrior-IX commences

Pakistan and China Launch Warrior-IX Joint Counterterrorism Exercise Showcasing Deepening Strategic Ties, Enhanced Interoperability, and Shared Commitment to Regional Peace, Stability, Security, and Professional Military Cooperation between the two nations



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Army and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China have commenced Warrior-IX, the ninth edition of their annual bilateral counter terrorism ex-

ercise between the two Iron-Clad Brothers. "The exercise focuses on counter terrorism operations with the aim of enhancing interoperability, refining professional skills, and exchanging best practices in modern warfare," said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

Mangla Corps Commander, Major General Bian Xiaoming, Deputy Chief of Staff, Western Theatre Command, PLA, and other senior military officials from both Pakistan and China attended the opening ceremony of the exercise that was held at the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC), Pabbi, Pakistan and China

enjoy a longstanding, time-tested defence co-operation rooted in mutual trust and strategic partnership. Exercise Warrior-IX stands as a testament to the robust military-to-military relations between the two countries and reaffirms their shared commitment to regional peace, stability, and security, it further said.

Passengers with complete documents not being stopped

The minister reasserted that there could be some negligence on part of the FIA, but travellers having all necessary documents were not being barred from travelling abroad

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Lahore airport on Tuesday, where he again asserted that passengers with "complete documents" were not being barred from travelling, state-run PTV News reported. "No passenger with complete travel documents is being stopped from travelling, and they will not be stopped," he said, adding that, however, passengers in possession of "incomplete or bogus documents will definitely not be allowed to travel". Naqvi's assurance and warning follow recent reports of arbitrary offloading at airports of passengers travelling abroad. The reports prompted clarifications by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) that only passengers without complete and correct documents were being stopped from travelling. The interior minister has also issued similar statements, saying that only those lacking genuine and complete documents were not being allowed to travel abroad. During his visit to the Lahore airport today, he reiterated the same. "No passenger who brings disrepute to the country can be allowed to travel," he further stated, according to PTV News. Moreover, he visited the immigration counters designated for Pakistanis returning from abroad and enquired from passengers how long the immigration process took. Passengers expressed satisfaction with the immigration process, the report said, further quoting them as saying that the process was "completed in just two minutes". Recently, several incidents have been reported of travellers being offloaded from flights at various airports, despite possessing valid travel documents. The actions came after a crackdown on migrant smuggling following last year's Greece boat tragedy that claimed several Pakistani lives. Addressing the matter during a press conference in Lahore yesterday, Naqvi claimed that just 50-70 people were being offloaded daily across the country.

Govt considers scrapping personal baggage used cars import scheme

Different proposals also under consideration to tighten Gift and Transfer of Residence schemes

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The federal government is considering abolishing one scheme for importing used cars while tightening regulations for the two remaining schemes. The Ministry of Commerce has forwarded a summary to the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet, proposing the abolition of the Personal Baggage Scheme. The other two schemes — Transfer of Residence and Gift Scheme — are proposed to be made more stringent, with the ministry suggesting measures to curb their misuse. "Different proposals are under consideration to tighten the Gift and Transfer of Residence schemes for importing used cars, while the Baggage Scheme is expected to be abolished. The ECC will take the final decision in this regard," top official sources confirmed to the publication. The auto sector is strongly opposing used car imports, but the government is seeking a balanced approach.

KP police warned against taking part in political activities

PESHAWAR: Police officials in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been directed to perform their duties within their legal and geographical jurisdictions amid concerns expressed by the Centre over use of state machinery by the PTI-led provincial government for political demonstration. In an official circular sent to senior officers across the province, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Security Division Shakir Hussain Dawar reminded police personnel that they are duty-bound to maintain neutrality and must not take part in any form of political activity.

The auto sector argued that data compiled from December 2024 to October 2025 indicates a sharp resurgence in used-vehicle imports. In comparison, the share of used cars remains negligible in regional peers: India maintains virtually zero used-car inflows, Vietnam stands at 0.3% and Thailand at 1.2%. The auto sector has informed the government that regional economies restrict used-car imports to safeguard their automotive value chains. Pakistan has charted the opposite course — particularly after Notification 1895 issued by the Ministry of Commerce on September 30, 2025, which allowed imports of vehicles up to five years old. After June 2026, this limit may reportedly be removed entirely, potentially opening the floodgates for large-scale inflows of aged vehicles. Pakistan's auto sector currently comprises roughly 1,200 factories, provides 2.5 million jobs, generates an estimated Rs500 billion annually in government revenue, and holds approximately \$5 billion in foreign investment.

The directive reinforces existing rules that prohibit members of the law-enforcement force from aligning with a political group or joining their demonstrations and rallies. PTI's KP chapter spokesperson Adeel Iqbal said the party had decided to hold the demonstration on December 2 (today). Speaking to Geo News on Saturday, he claimed: "This time, there will be a well-defined strategy for meeting the PTI founder." He warned that the party would respond to "any unlawful actions taken against them", adding that the days of "those violating the Constitution were numbered". Chief Minister KP Sohail Afridi has repeatedly been denied permission to meet the incarcerated PTI founder in Adiala Jail — the latest refusal being the eighth since he took office. After the most recent denial last week, he spent the night outside the Adiala jail. He was later joined by Mahmood Khan Achakzai, head of the Tehreek Tahaffuz Ayeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP), Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM) chief Allama Raja Nasir Abbas, Mishaal Yousafzai, Senator Gurdeep Singh, Senator Rubina Naz, MNA Zulfiqar Ahmed and KP's Information Minister Shafi Jan.

PM extends warm felicitations to UAE on National Day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday extended heartfelt felicitations to the leadership and people of the United Arab Emirates on the occasion of their National Day. The prime minister, in a message posted on his X timeline, said, "On behalf of the people and Government of Pakistan, I extend my heartfelt felicitations to the leadership and brotherly people of the United Arab Emirates on the joyous occasion of their National Day." He said that Pakistan deeply valued its historic and time-tested partnership with the UAE — a relationship built on mutual respect, shared aspirations, and an unbreakable bond between our peoples. The prime minister said that the vibrant Pakistani community in the UAE remained a proud bridge between the two nations, contributing to the UAE's remarkable success story. He said that under the visionary leadership of the UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the UAE continued to inspire the world with its remarkable progress, innovation and global leadership. "We remain committed to further strengthening our multifaceted cooperation and elevating our partnership for a brighter, more prosperous future for our two nations. Long live Pakistan-UAE friendship," he commented.

UN Security Council to discuss women's rights in Afghanistan

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations Security Council has scheduled a meeting on women's rights in Afghanistan on December 10, which is International Human Rights Day, according to the 15-member body's President for the current month, Slovenia's UN Ambassador Samuel Zbogar.

Slovenian Foreign Minister Tanja Fajon will chair the meeting, which will be a signature event of Slovenia's December presidency of the Security Council, Zbogar told reporters at a news briefing on Monday.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is also expected to address the session. The focus of the meeting will be the dire situation of women and girls in Afghanistan under Taliban rule, who face systematic discrimination and are largely excluded from public life, education, and work, the Slovenian envoy said.

This discussion is part of ongoing international efforts to address and reverse the human rights abuses against Afghan women and girls. He also said that the Council members will visit Syria and Lebanon during the month, while continuing their focus on Palestine and Ukraine. — APP

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