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Pakistan, UAE relations from cordial to excellent, says Shehbaz Sharif

Detailed News On Page-08

Japanese envoy extends wishes to students

Detailed News On Page-03



Arshad Nadeem figures at the national games

Detailed News On Page-06



Major operation

Punjab CTD says 12 terrorists 'linked to RAW' arrested

The arrests were made in collaboration with sensitive agencies

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Punjab Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on Monday said it had arrested 12 suspected terrorists allegedly working for the Indian intelligence agency Research Analysis Wing (RAW) in intelligence-based operations conducted in Lahore, Faisalabad, and Bahawalpur. According to a statement issued by the CTD spokesperson, the arrests were made in collaboration with sensitive agencies. He said security personnel recovered photos, videos, weapons, and explosives from the suspects, preventing large-scale terrorism activities in the aforementioned cities. He said the recovered material reportedly also included images and video recordings of sensitive locations, including a religious seminary. He said the terrorists were planning to incite "fear and religious hatred" in the province and had plans to target "places of worship and other important sites". The CTD spokesperson said suspects identified as Sukhdeep Singh, Azmat, Faizan, Nabil, Abrar, Usman, and Sarfaraz were arrested in Lahore. Another suspect, Danish, was arrested in Faisalabad, while four others – identified as Rajab, Hashim, Saqib, and Arif – were arrested in Bahawalpur. He said that arrests came after the CTD investigated a Facebook account allegedly being operated from India to coordinate terrorist activities. All of these terrorists were being funded by the Indian agency RAW, the CTD spokesperson said. "Seven improvised explosive devices, two detonators, 102 feet of safety fuse wire, explosives, weapons, mobile phones, and cash were recovered from the possession of the terrorists," he added. "Cases have been registered against the terrorists and further investigation is underway," he said. The CTD regularly carries out operations across Pakistan to prevent and investigate terrorism-related activities and gather intelligence.

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Punjab IG places province on high alert

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Inspector General of Police Dr Usman Anwar on Monday ordered a high alert across the province, directing police officials to immediately carry out sweep and combing operations. Chairing a high-level security meeting in Lahore, IG Anwar directed officials to ensure heightened security across the province, including Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, and other major cities. He ordered the sub-divisional police officers (SDPOs) and station house officers (SHOs) to coordinate with the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and other security agencies for the operations. The Punjab IG also said that the CTD and SDPOs, in coordination with other security agencies, should conduct mock drills in educational institutions to test preparedness. IG Anwar ordered the installation of CCTV cameras at all entry and exit points of educational institutions, deployment of security guards, and implementation of emergency evacuation plans. Further, directives were issued for the immediate profiling and data checks of individuals coming from outside the province. He ordered continuous monitoring of all banned organisations, including the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP). He also called for

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ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari, along with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, warmly received President Prabowo Subianto of the Republic of Indonesia upon his arrival at Nur Khan Airbase. – DNA

Asia lifts 2.7bn people from water insecurity

The region's steady improvement over the past 12 years is starkly demonstrated in rural India: ADB

DNA

ISLAMABAD: More than 60% of the population in Asia and the Pacific, approximately 2.7 billion people, has been lifted out of extreme water insecurity over the past 12 years, but these hard-won gains are threatened by accelerating environmental decline and a major financing gap, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in its latest report. The Asian Water Development Outlook (AWDO) 2025, published on Monday, found that renewed political commitment, targeted investments and governance

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Police recover body of doctor

DNA

ABBOTTABAD: Police on Monday recovered the body of a doctor who had been missing since Thursday in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's Abbottabad from a nearby forest. The body of Dr Warda Mushtaq was recovered from the nearby forests of Thandiyan. Her body has now been shifted to the hospital for an autopsy. Police also arrested a friend of the deceased and her husband in relation to the case. Mushtaq – a doctor at the Benazir Bhutto Shaheed hospital – had been missing since Thursday, prompting her colleagues and the

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Brotherly bonds cemented

Indonesia's President Prabowo arrives on landmark visit

This also marks the first Indonesian presidential visit to Pakistan since President Joko Widodo's trip in 2018

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Prabowo Subianto, arrived in Islamabad today for a two-day official visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. He is accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising key ministers and senior officials, marking his first trip to Pakistan since assuming office. President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif received the guest at the airport. The visit carries special importance as it comes during the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Indonesia—an important milestone that reflects decades of friendship, shared values, and longstanding cooperation between the two Muslim-majority nations. This also marks the first Indonesian presidential visit to Pakistan since President Joko Widodo's trip in 2018. During his stay, he will hold delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sha-

rif. The discussions are expected to cover a comprehensive agenda focused on deepening cooperation across multiple sectors, including trade, investment, defence, health, information technology, climate action, education and cultural exchange. Both sides will also review ways to enhance coordination at regional and global forums. The Indonesian President will also call on President Asif Ali Zardari. In a significant engagement underscoring defence and security ties, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, will meet President Prabowo as well. Several Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) are expected to be signed during the visit, opening new avenues for institutional collaboration and broadening bilateral cooperation. Officials in Islamabad describe the visit as a major diplomatic event that will expand the scope of Pakistan-Indonesia relations. Both sides expect that the

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Pak steps up support for Sri Lanka with fresh aid

NDMA has coordinated with airlines to ensure that all available cargo space on commercial flights is fully utilized for the rapid transport of relief items

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan has intensified humanitarian aid to Sri Lanka, dispatching an additional 7.5 tons of relief supplies following Cyclone Ditwa's devastation and Colombo's appeal for global support. Acting on the directives of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Monday dispatched the aid aboard a commercial flight from Lahore bound for Colombo. The consignment includes tents, tarpaulins, and powdered milk, meant to support displaced families in the cyclone-hit regions. NDMA has coordinated with airlines to

ensure that all available cargo space on commercial flights is fully utilized for the rapid transport of relief items. This mechanism will continue in the coming days to dispatch further assistance as required. Since the onset of the cyclone emergency, Pakistan has remained actively engaged in providing essential relief supplies and technical support to Sri Lanka. A dedicated Pakistan Army Search and Rescue team is already operating in the affected areas, conducting life-saving missions and assisting local authorities in rescue efforts. Likewise, Pakistan Navy ships and helicopters are also contributing to relief and

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Briefs

EU chief says Europe cannot accept US 'threat'

BRUSSELS: European Council president Antonio Costa on Monday rejected any attempt by the United States to meddle in Europe's politics, after Washington published a new security strategy sharply criticising the continent's policies. "What we cannot accept is the threat to interfere in European politics," Costa told a conference in Brussels. The new US National Security Strategy, released last week, saw President Donald Trump lambast Europe as an over-regulated, censorious continent lacking in "self-confidence" and facing "civilizational erasure" due to immigration. The strategy made clear that the United States under Trump would aggressively pursue similar objectives in Europe, in line with the agendas of far-right parties. – APP

Bugti seeks postponement of LG polls

DNA

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti on Monday filed a petition with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), seeking the postponement of the local government elections in Quetta that were scheduled to be held on December 28. Informed sources told Dawn that in the petition, Bugti cited the precarious law and order situation in the provincial capital and the suspension of internet services as the reasons for postponing the Quetta Metropolitan Corporation (QMC) elections. He also said people have migrated due to winters, affecting voter participation. Earlier, the Balochistan government had requested the election commission to postpone the polls, citing similar reasons stated in today's petition.

'Think about democracy'

Gohar dismisses 'minus-Imran' notion

PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar says "positive things" will emerge once Imran Khan's meeting is arranged

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said the PTI founder "can never be minus", insisting he remains the leader of a major political force backed by a significant portion of the population. "The PTI founder is not the kind of leader you can even think of minus-ing," he told Geo News outside Parliament House in Islamabad, urging political actors to "think democratically and think positively." Gohar then called on the authorities to facilitate a meeting between the PTI founder, Bushra Bibi, and their families. "Arrange the meeting and you will see good things emerging instead of negative talk," he said, asking whether Bushra Bibi's family had ever spoken publicly after any meeting. He criticised the political commentary and press conferences taking place, saying: "The talks happening right now will only make Pakistan's enemies happy. Anyone who believes in democracy would not be able to sleep in this situation." He added that the public was looking towards leadership, but

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NA Secretariat seeks details of cases against Omar Ayub

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Amid mounting criticism over the delay in the opposition leader's appointment, the National Assembly (NA) Secretariat has sent a letter to PTI's Chief Whip Malik Aamir Dogar and sought details about the status of cases registered against party leader Omar Ayub. Two key parliamentary offices, the leader of the opposition in the NA and the leader of the opposition in the Senate, have been lying vacant since August after the disqualification of PTI's Ayub and Shibli Faraz by the Election Commission of

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Pakistan's response will be 'more severe' next time, CDF warns India

Taliban regime has no option but to choose between khawarij or Pakistan, says Field Marshal Asim Munir

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir has warned India of a more "severe response" if it resorts to any aggression against Pakistan in the future. "India should not be in any delusion [as] Pakistan's response [in case of any aggression] will be even more swift and intense," CDF Munir said while speaking to the officers of the armed forces following a guard of honour ceremony held at the GHQ to honour him on being appointed as the country's first CDF. Pakistan, under the leadership of CDF and COAS Munir, had given a befitting response to India in May. Speaking on Pakistan-Afghanistan tensions, the Field Marshal said that a clear message had been given to the Afghan Taliban regime in Kabul. "The [Afghan] Taliban have no option but to choose between Fitna al-Khawarij [TTP] or Pakistan," he remarked. Reiterating that Pakistan is a peace-loving country, the CDF warned that no one will be allowed to threaten the country's sovereignty, territorial integrity, or test its resolve. Speaking on the newly-established Defence Forces Headquarters (DHQ), Field Marshal Munir termed the fundamental change "historic", saying that it was necessary to further improve multi-domain operations under the unified system of the three

forces – the army, the air force and the navy. "In view of the growing and changing threats, it is necessary to do so. The establishment of Defence Forces Headquarters is a necessary step towards this change," the CDF highlighted while stressing that each service will maintain its individuality for its operational preparedness.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Asim Munir received guard of honour from all three forces upon assuming the charge. – DNA

"The Defence Forces' Headquarters will integrate the operations of the [three] services and will make them compatible. With the synergy of the high command, the three services will maintain their [individual] autonomy and organisational structure," he added. Meanwhile, earlier, the CDF was presented a guard of honour by contingents of all three

services – the Pakistan Army, Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Air Force. The event was attended by the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Chief Air Chief Marshal (ACM) Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf and senior officers from all three armed forces. The Ministry of Defence on Friday issued an official notification for the appointment of Field Marshal Munir as the CDF. COAS Munir was elevated to the rank of field marshal – Pakistan's second and the first in more than six decades – following the country's resounding victory over India in the May war. The establishment of the new military title, i.e., the CDF, follows President Zardari's assent on November 15 to the Pakistan Army, Air Force, and Navy (Amendment) Bills 2025, after their approval by parliament. Under the amended provisions, Article 243, which governs the powers and responsibilities of a Field Marshal, will also apply to any General promoted to the rank. CDF's brief profile: Field Marshal and CDF Munir was commissioned in the 23rd Frontier Force Regiment in 1986. He passed out with the 17th Officers Training Course at Mangla. He has held several key military positions, including directing staff at Command and Staff College, Quetta; brigade major of a deployed infantry brigade in Kel;

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KP govt presents Endowment Fund Kalash Community Bill

This tradition involves significant expenses, including the slaughtering of up to one thousand goats. The fund is being established to help them with this burden. The Speaker sent the Bill to the Standing Committee and directed that the report be completed within ten days

PESHAWAR: The provincial government here on Monday introduced the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Endowment Fund (Kalash Community) Bill, 2025 in the Assembly.

The Bill was presented by the Minister for Law, Aftab Alam. According to the Bill, the provincial government will establish a special fund with an initial capital of 100 million rupees, which will be increased from time to time through contributions received under various heads, donations from philanthropists, grants from non-governmental organizations, and income generated through legal means.

The profit earned from the fund will be used for the social and cultural development of the Kalash community, welfare activities, and assistance in funeral rituals. According to the Bill, a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Kalash Community Endowment Fund Committee will be formed to manage and control the fund. The fund will be kept in a bank, and investments will be made with the

approval of the committee.

A separate Endowment Fund Assessment Committee will also be established for this purpose.

The committee will be chaired by the Deputy Commissioner of Lower Chitral, while the Additional Deputy Commissioner (Finance & Planning), a representative of the Department of Auqaf and Minority Affairs, the District Health Officer, the Assistant Director of Local Government, the Tehsil Municipal Officer of Drosh and the Additional Assistant Commissioner of Drosh (member and secretary) will be part of the committee.

Furthermore, four Qazis from the Kalash community including the Chief Qazi and one female Qazi will also be included to ensure direct community participation and transparency in the utilization of the fund.

When the Speaker Babar Salim Swati according to the rules, intended to send the Bill to the Standing Committee, Minister for Law, Aftab Alam re-

quested that it should not be referred to the committee, as it would cause delays. Opposition member Ahmed Kundi opposed this and insisted that the rules must be followed. He said that committees exist so members can properly examine matters, and under the new rules the committee will submit its report within three months and all recommendations will have to be implemented.

Fateh-ul-Mulk, while explaining the Bill, said that when someone in the Kalash community dies, it is their religious custom that around 4,500 people from the community visit the House of the deceased, and they must be fed. This tradition involves significant expenses, including the slaughtering of up to one thousand goats. The fund is being established to help them with this burden.

The Speaker sent the Bill to the Standing Committee and directed that the report be completed within ten days.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq along with Federal Minister/Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon inaugurating the KASHMIR corner established in the library to highlight the Kashmir Cause at Parliament House.

EPD penalizes brick kiln two units

KHANEWAL: The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) intensified its anti-smog enforcement drive across the district, demolishing a brick kiln and imposing heavy fines on another besides a rice mill for degrading air quality here on Monday. Under the supervision of deputy director engineer Sarfaraz Anjum, EPD inspector Muhammad Amjad led the anti-smog squad in targeted operations against pollution-causing brick kilns and industrial units in Tehsil Mian Channu and Tullamba. During the crackdown, a brick kiln in Mian Channu was demolished for violating the mandatory Zig-Zag technology requirements. Another kiln was fined Rs100,000 while a rice mill was penalized Rs200,000 for contributing to air pollution. Deputy Commissioner Maliha Rasheed reaffirmed commitment to curbing smog, stating that strict action without discrimination would continue against all units involved in environmental violations. She stressed that there would be "zero tolerance" for non-compliance with smog-related SOPs and urged all brick kiln owners and industrial operators to fully adhere to environmental regulations to protect public health and improve air quality.—APP

Pak remains committed to SAARC Charter's objectives: Iftikhar

LAHORE, Dec 08 (APP): Pakistan remained firmly committed to the principles and objectives of the SAARC Charter, emphasizing that genuine regional cooperation based on sovereign equality, mutual respect, and constructive engagement was essential for unlocking South Asia's vast socio-economic potential. SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former president Iftikhar Ali Malik stated this, while talking to reporters here Monday on the occasion of 40th anniversary of SAARC Charter Day, observed on December 8. He called upon SAARC member states to reaffirm their commitment to build a peaceful, stable, and prosperous South Asia defined by collaboration, connectivity, and a shared vision for the well-being of its peoples. The day, he added, served as a reminder of the region's shared aspirations for peace, progress, and prosperity. "As we commemorate the 40th anniversary of SAARC Charter Day, this auspicious occasion reminds us of our common goals and the collective future we seek to build," he remarked.—APP

CM stresses aviation's role in economy

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that the role of the aviation industry cannot be underestimated in promoting the economy, tourism, and public relations.

In her message on International Civil Aviation Day, she added that the Punjab government is committed to providing modern air travel facilities to the public, and a proposal to establish a Punjab Airline is under consideration. She noted that aviation has truly transformed the world into a global village by bridging distances. The chief minister also paid tribute to the Prime Minister for restoring the lost stature of the aviation sector and Pakistan International Airlines, highlighting that Pakistan International Airlines has been allowed to operate flights in Europe due to his dedicated and thoughtful efforts.—APP

Call for transparency in fight against HIV, TB, Malaria

ISLAMABAD: In a significant development aimed at ensuring transparency and efficiency in Pakistan's public health sector, Prof. Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor of the Health Services Academy (HSA), has been elected as the Chairman of the Global Fund Pakistan Oversight Committee. The election took place during a high-level meeting held at the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) Secretariat within the National Institute of Health (NIH). Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan secured a landslide victory, reflecting the overwhelming confidence of the members in his professional expertise and leadership capabilities. He will serve in this pivotal role for a tenure of two years. The Oversight Committee holds a critical mandate to monitor billions of rupees in grants dedicated to the eradication of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB), and Malaria in Pakistan. According to experts, the committee's primary objective is to ensure that Global Fund resources are utilized with strict transparency and strategic effectiveness. The body is responsible for the continuous monitoring of program performance, financial management, and procurement processes.—APP

No place for anti-state propaganda, says Danyal

RAWALPINDI: Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry on Monday reaffirmed the nation's solidarity with the Pakistan Armed Forces, the Chief of Defence Forces and Army Chief, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and the DG ISPR, and said that the propaganda against the military in fact strengthens the enemy's narrative.

"Pakistan Army stands as a strong wall between Pakistan and its enemies, there is no place in the country for those who mock the sacrifices of our armed forces," Danyal said. Talking to media reps following a rally in support of the armed forces, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry said that attempts to discredit the sacrifices of Pakistan's forces fighting terrorism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. "Baseless narratives and efforts to spread unrest in the country are detrimental to

national security," he said, adding that there cannot be two armies in one country. He alleged that such elements who are running negative propaganda against the Pakistan Army are promoting the agenda of hostile forces.

The Parliamentary Secretary categorically ruled out negotiations with terrorists at any level, highlighting that the state can never permit such talks. He criticized that a particular political party was proposing talks with terrorists, describing the idea as contrary to national interest and security. Barrister Danyal also pointed out that Indian media gives extraordinary coverage to anti-Pakistan narratives with the sole aim of damaging Pakistan's improving global image. "Pakistan has emerged from isolation and is now earning respect on the foreign front, which is out of acceptance for the enemies," he added.

He said the people, through recent by-elections, have completely rejected extremist and anti-state narratives. Referencing to the province governed by PTI for the past 14 years, he claimed peace has not been established there, yet the same elements continued criticism against the armed forces. He warned that attempts to mislead the young generation led to enmity against the state. The Parliamentary Secretary reiterated that the nation stands united behind its armed forces and would foil every negative narrative posed against Pakistan.

Earlier, he led the rally which marched from his residence on the main road. The participants, including local PML-N leadership, women wing and general public chanted slogans in support of the armed forces. They were holding banners written with slogans of solidarity and support for the armed forces.—APP

Police foil grenade attack

KOHAT: District Police Officer (DPO) Kohat, Shehbaz Elahi Monday vowed that no one would be allowed to sabotage peace and security in the region after the police successfully traced and arrested suspects involved in a grenade attack and firing incident at a mosque. On November 30, the unidentified assailants hurled a grenade at Abdullah bin Fahad Mosque in Nusrat Khail and opened fire at a nearby residence. The Cantonment police responded immediately, registering a case on the complaint of the affected homeowner namely Mir Taking strict notice of the incident, DPO Shehbaz Elahi ordered the immediate arrest of the culprits and formed a special investigation team comprising DSP City, Ejaz Ali, SHO Cantonment, Khizar Fareed, and SHO City Jabar Khan. Using modern investigative techniques, data analysis, and ground intelligence, the team worked tirelessly to trace the suspects. The police later conducted raids at multiple locations and arrested three men including Latif, Umar, and Abdul Muaz, all residents of Nusrat Khail. The weapons used in the attack were also recovered, while further investigation is underway. Addressing a press conference, DSP City Ejaz Ali said that the police had solved a highly complex case in a short time, bringing dangerous suspects into the grip of law. DPO Shehbaz Elahi reiterated that protecting citizens' lives and property remained the top priority, and strict action would continue against those involved in such incidents without discrimination. In a separate operation, the Jarma Police foiled an attempt to smuggle narcotics. Acting on the directives of the DPO, SHO Jarma, Umar Khaliq Khan and his team intercepted a suspect during a checkpoint operation. The accused, Obaid from Mardan, was found carrying 12 kilograms of hashish. A case has been registered against him.—APP

FFC shareholders approve FPCL share swap



RAWALPINDI: Shareholders of Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) on Monday approved the acquisition of the remaining 25 per cent shareholding in FFB Power Company Limited (FPCL) and amendments to the Articles of Association at the company's Extraordinary General Meeting (EOGM). The meeting was held with a quorum of 57.38 per cent, with participation in person, via video link and through proxies. It was attended by major shareholders, including the Government of Pakistan, Fauji Foundation, State Life Insurance, Citi Bank, Deutsche Bank, Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), NAFA, UBL Funds and other corporate and institutional investors. Company Secretary Brigadier (Retired) Khurram Shahzada presented the special business before the shareholders.—APP

Company of experienced people vital for personal growth

RAWALPINDI: "The company of experienced and refined individuals is a valuable asset for a person," said Allama Syed Riaz Hussain Shah, Patron-in-Chief of Idara Taleemat-e-Islamia Pakistan. Addressing a special Quranic lecture, he said, "The psychology of knowledge is such that the lesser a person's greed, the more knowledge enlightens the inner self. Greed turns the treasure of knowledge into ashes." He said frequent recitation of the Holy Quran was a source of salvation for the Muslim Ummah and stressed the need to seek knowledge at every stage of life. The session held on Sunday was attended by noted scholars and hosted by Deputy Director Sheikh Muhammad Qasim. Allama Riaz said benefiting from the experiences of elders, keeping the company of pious people and remaining steadfast on

the path of knowledge till the last breath were the foundations of a successful life. He said respecting elders and showing kindness to the young were among the manners taught by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and described this as the true spirit of Sufism. He said time spent in the company of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was pivotal in the training of the Companions, citing Hazrat Salman al-Farsi (may Allah be pleased with him) as an example of spiritual enrichment through the Prophet's blessed companionship. He warned that in the age of social media, believing information without verification was dangerous and said history bore witness that after the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphate, the Ummah gradually lost the softness of character taught by the Prophet (PBUH). He

said freedom of expression held an important place in Islam, yet people hesitated to call an oppressor an oppressor and the oppressed an oppressed, adding that when the system of knowledge became weak, society lost its values. He said the company of elders was a treasure of knowledge and that the character of those trained by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) shone brightly, adding that society could only be illuminated when knowledge and experience were valued. Concluding his address, he said "knowledge is charity," therefore learning and conveying knowledge was the responsibility of every Muslim. He stressed choosing good company, as it influenced character. The gathering concluded with special prayers for the prosperity of the country and the Muslim Ummah.—APP

 PAKISTAN AGRICULTURAL STORAGE AND SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED (PASSCO) 	
FINANCE WING	
Subject: INVITATION OF OFFERS FOR OBTAINING COMMODITY OPERATION FINANCING FOR WHEAT (OUTSTANDING / FRESH) ALONG WITH MARKUP RATES FOR THE QUARTER JANUARY TO MARCH, 2026 FOR PASSCO.	
i. Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation Limited (PASSCO) intends to borrow up to PKR.549 billion for wheat from Bank(s) under Commodity Operation Financing of wheat for the quarter January - March, 2026. ii. Offers are invited on PPRA's EPAD System for the lowest markup rates under Commodity Operation Financing of wheat for the quarter January - March, 2026 . iii. Following terms & conditions shall govern the bid submitted by interested banks. Max. Loan Amount: PKR. 549.00 billion	
a) Eligibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All commercial banks, including conventional as well as Islamic banks, regulated by State Bank of Pakistan are eligible to bid for this financing facility on the bidding format provided by PASSCO. Compliance with bidding format is mandatory; otherwise, bid may be rejected. 	
b) Borrowing Type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The loan will be in the nature of Commodity Financing. The borrowing spread for this facility shall be locked for 03 months i.e. January-26 to March-26 which may also be fixed for next quarter subject to the willingness of PASSCO and bid winning banks. 	
c) Bidding Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each bank shall quote Three (03) Month KIBOR ± fixed Spread (% p.a) If previous quarter's COF facility is fully settled any time after previous quarter end, the accepted pricing of previous quarter or pricing of current quarter, whichever is lower shall be applicable. PASSCO shall rank the bids from lowest to highest - lowest being the bid quoting lowest spread against relevant benchmark KIBOR rate and highest being the bid quoting highest spread against relevant benchmark KIBOR rate. Any bid offering conditional markup rates or slab markup rates will not be accepted. Bids / offers shall be valid for 03 months i.e. January-26 to March-26, therefore, any condition regarding time limit shall not be accepted. If any bank backs out from its given offer, then PASSCO may black list that bank for future borrowings. Purpose of this financing is to regularize the outstanding loan of PASSCO for Commodity Operations for the quarter January-26 to March-26. 	
d) Collateral/Security: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No other collateral / security shall be offered except the hypothecation of wheat stock & receivables and the Guarantee of Federal Government. The amount of Cash Credit Financing is subject to approval of Federal Government and may be reduced / enhanced / revised / continued without any claim of the bidder. 	
e) Draw Down: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PASSCO may withdraw or repay the loan to any bank in one or more installments at any time during the borrowing period 	
f) Profit on Debt/ Markup-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markup for a repayment period shall be computed at the end of period on the basis of lowest applied rate and the amount outstanding on each date during the repayment period. Ask side KIBOR available on SBP's website on last day of the previous quarter shall be used for mark-up / profit calculation i.e. Three month KIBOR as of 31.12.2025 shall be used. 	
g) Other Terms & Conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No bid shall be considered if received manually or after the deadline for bid submission. Bid validity shall start from the last date of bid submission deadline. PASSCO may reduce / increase / revise the amount of financing subject to the approval of relevant competent authority without any claim of the bidder / financier. No commitment, advisory, arrangement, legal or any other fees or charges in connection with this transaction shall be borne by the PASSCO. No bank commission shall be paid in lieu of disbursement services to be rendered by the banks as paying agents. 	
h) Non-Obstante Clause: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notwithstanding anything to the contrary PASSCO reserves the right to reject / accept all offers under rule 33(1) of PPRA. Furthermore, acceptance / rejection of any other explicit or implicit condition by the banks shall be the sole discretion of the PASSCO which may reject any or all conditions of the bank according to the provision of PPRA Rules. Bidding documents containing the prescribed bidding format are available on PPRA's EPAD System from the date of publication and have also been uploaded on Company's website. (www.passco.gov.pk) & PPRA website (www.ppra.org.pk). In case your bank is interested to lend to the PASSCO, it is requested to submit your Bid in the prescribed Bidding format only. Any bid submitted other than the format specified by the PASSCO may be declared non responsive In term of Regulation 4 of the Declaration of Beneficial Owners' information of Public Procurement Contract Awarded Regulations, all procuring agencies while engaging in public procurement contracts worth Rs. 50 Million and above shall make a mandatory provision of beneficial ownership information of the company in the said contract as prescribed in the given Formship in accordance with annexures to the Regulation. In light of E-Pak procurement regulations 2023, Bids must be submitted through E-Pak Acquisition & Disposal System (EPADS) upto Wednesday 24th December, 2025 till 02:00 PM sharp and will be opened on the same day at 02:30 PM in the presence of interested parties or their representatives. Further, bids received only through EPADS will be entertained. 	
General Manager (F&A) PASSCO, HEAD OFFICE 11- KASHMIR ROAD, LAHORE	
PID/L1552/25	

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
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Pakistani students to participate in JENESYS exchange program in Japan

Akamatsu Shuichi, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, while interacting with the students, conveyed his best wishes, and expressed his hopes that the student’s visit would be enriching and encouraged them to maximize this unique learning opportunity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the invitation by the Government of Japan, five Pakistani university students will travel to Japan to participate in the JENESYS (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths) program. The students are scheduled to visit Japan from December 16 to 23, joining a delegation of 35 high school and university students from SAARC countries. This year’s program centers on the theme “Environmental Sustainability and Disaster Resilience.” Established by the Japanese Government, the JENESYS program is a youth exchange program between Japan and the Asia Pacific region that seeks to enhance mutual understanding and respect between Japan and the Asia-Pacific region. During their visit, participants will engage in activities designed to deepen their knowledge of Japan’s economy, history, politics, and diplomatic relations. They will also experience Japanese culture through lectures, discussions, and site visits aligned with the program’s theme. The Embassy of Japan in Islamabad held a pre-departure orientation session for the visiting students from Pakistan to give them useful information before their departure for Japan. Akamatsu Shuichi, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, while interacting with the students, conveyed his best wishes,



and expressed his hopes that the student’s visit would be enriching and encouraged them to maximize this unique learning opportunity. He highlighted the value of the homestay experience, offering both the students and their Japanese hosts a chance to share and appreciate their respective cultural heritages. Ambassador Akamatsu emphasized the student’s role as cultural ambassadors, fostering stronger ties and greater mutual understanding between Japan and Pakistan. The JENESYS program is held annually and is designed to foster capacity building but also to nurture mutual understanding and collaboration between the youth of Japan and SAARC countries.

SECP introduces Life Insurance Policy Finder service

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), in collaboration with the Central Depository Company of Pakistan Limited (CDC) and the Insurance Association of Pakistan (IAP), has introduced the Life Insurance Policy Finder Service. This initiative is designed to facilitate the general public in locating life insurance policies of deceased loved ones. The service addresses a long-standing challenge faced by families who remain unaware of life insurance policies held by their deceased relatives, said a release issued here on Monday. This lack of awareness often results in legitimate claims and benefits remaining unclaimed for years. Through this initiative, the SECP aims to strengthen consumer protection, promote transparency, and provide structured and secure access to insurance benefits for rightful heirs and beneficiaries. To ensure uniform participation, the SECP has issued a circular for the implementation of the Life Insurance Policy Finder Service, mandating the involvement of all life insurance companies and family takaful operators. The circular requires participating insurers to promptly respond to public queries routed through the system within the agreed turnaround time (TAT) and to continue submitting required policy data. The Life Insurance Policy Finder Service will be available to the public starting December 15 2025. The circular is available on the SECP’s website.—APP

3 POs held involved in murder case

RAWALPINDI :The Rawalpindi police on Monday arrested three proclaimed offenders (POs) wanted in a murder case that took place in the Rawat area four months ago. The suspects had allegedly shot and killed a citizen over a petty dispute and later went into hiding to avoid arrest. According to the police spokesperson, the case had remained under investigation for more than four months as the accused continuously changed locations to escape law enforcement. Special police teams were formed to trace the suspects, who used both technical surveillance and human intelligence sources to track their movements. After weeks of monitoring, the teams successfully raided their hideouts and apprehended all three fugitives. SP Saddam Anum Sher praised the efforts of the investigating officers and the police team involved in the operation. She said the arrests reflect the department’s determination to bring hardened criminals to justice without delay.—APP

ICT admin expands M-Tag network to 13 points

ISLAMABAD :The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration’s M-Tag drive has gained pace as the city issued 62,329 tags since 14 November, including 1,883 in the last 24 hours, with authorities now operating 13 service points to support motorists. According to the spokesman of ICT administration, three new M-Tag points have been activated to improve access for motorists, bringing the total number of operational points to 13. According to the daily performance report released by the administration, the city’s M-Tag campaign has shown steady growth. Since 14 November, authorities have installed 62,329 M-Tags on vehicles passing through different service points. The report further states that 1,883 additional tags were issued during the past 24 hours, reflecting the increasing pace of registrations. The

initiative aims to ensure smooth traffic flow on major roads and promote automated toll and entry systems in the federal capital. By expanding the number of service points, the administration intends to reduce waiting time for users and make the process more accessible throughout the city. District officials said the automated scanning setup will help streamline enforcement without manual checks. The readers are designed to identify vehicles in real time, allowing the system to flag those without valid tags. The administration has advised residents to obtain their M-Tag at the earliest to avoid any legal issues once full enforcement begins. Motorists have been encouraged to visit any of the 13 designated points operating across Islamabad and complete the tagging process. The city’s ongoing expansion of the M-Tag network indicates a shift

toward a more efficient traffic management framework. With the rapid increase in the number of issued tags and the consistent rollout of roadside readers, officials aim to transition to a fully automated monitoring system in the coming weeks. Residents who have not yet registered are expected to complete the process as enforcement steps continue to tighten. Authorities maintain that timely registration will help citizens avoid fines and ensure smooth passage through monitored routes. Islamabad’s administration has reiterated its commitment to improving mobility services, stating that the M-Tag system is a key part of their traffic management plan. The expansion to 13 operational points, coupled with continued installation of automated readers, marks a significant step in the ongoing effort to modernise the city’s transport system.—DNA

Drive kicked off to cover open manholes

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has started a citywide effort to locate and cover open manholes, following a special survey ordered to identify unsafe spots in multiple areas. According to officials, the campaign began with a special survey directed by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad. Survey teams were deployed to different neighbourhoods to identify locations where manhole covers were missing. The teams marked dozens of such points and shared the details with relevant departments for immediate action. Following the survey, work has started in several areas where new covers are being installed. The administration has instructed field staff to complete the process as quickly as possible to avoid incidents that may occur due to open manholes, especially in areas with heavy foot traffic. DC Islamabad stated that responsibility will be fixed in each case where a manhole cover is found missing. The concerned officer of that area will be questioned about the lapse and required to ensure timely replacement. Officials say this accountability step is meant to prevent recurring negligence in the maintenance of public infrastructure. The district administration also appealed to residents to cooperate by reporting any uncovered manholes they see in their neighbourhoods. Citizens can share such information through official communication channels so teams can reach the location promptly. Authorities believe that public participation will help speed up the campaign, as residents often spot issues earlier than field teams. The administration maintains that keeping manholes covered is essential for public safety and smooth pedestrian movement. The ongoing drive will continue until all identified points are secured, and routine monitoring will follow to ensure that no manhole remains open in the future. Officials added that additional checks may be introduced to strengthen oversight across all sectors of the city.—DNA

CDA receives water rescue kits from Chinese BSRF

ISLAMABAD: In line with the direction of Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, a meeting was held between Member Administration CDA, Talat Mahmood, and a team from the Chinese Blue Sky Rescue Foundation at the CDA Headquarters. On this occasion, the Chinese Blue Sky Rescue Foundation (BSRF) handed over special water rescue kits to the CDA. The Director General of Islamabad Emergency Services, along with officers from relevant formation of the CDA, were also present. These special kits will not only prove helpful in rescue operations during water-related emergencies but will also further

strengthen the city’s emergency response capabilities. Member Administration CDA, Talat Mahmood, thanked the team from the Chinese Blue Sky Foundation for their cooperation and said that Pakistan holds the cooperation and supp from its brotherly country, China, in high regard. He said this valuable gift is a significant addition to the safety of the Federal Capital, Islamabad and for better emergency services. Member Administration CDA, Talat Mahmood, said that the CDA is taking all possible measures to ensure the safety of the citizens of the Federal Capital, Islamabad. He further added that the modern rescue kits will make our teams more effective in dealing with water emergencies.

Chinese Blue Sky Rescue Foundation said that they will continue cooperation under the shared objective of saving human lives. In this regard, specialized training on the use of these kits will also be provided to the relevant CDA staff. It is noteworthy that in July of this year, the Chinese Blue Sky Rescue Foundation had also provided specialized training to CDA staff for dealing with water accidents. The foundation had given specialized training on saving lives in fast-flowing water and on boat operations. The Chinese Blue Sky Rescue Foundation had already gifted modern water rescue equipment to the CDA in July of this year.—DNA

Geopolitical shifts offer Pak to advance Kashmir cause

ISLAMABAD: The geopolitical climate after the May 2025 Pakistan-India conflict has created a more conducive environment for Islamabad to advance the Kashmir cause through constructive diplomacy. In this regard, Pakistan’s enhanced regional stature and its strengthening relationship with the US should be leveraged to reinvigorate international attention toward Kashmir in line with UN resolutions. At the same time, Pakistan should exercise caution regarding India’s hegemonic ambitions and shifting strategic alignments in the region. Such diplomatic openings matter because Kashmir is not a territorial dispute; it is an issue rooted in the denial of the right to self-determination. Despite decades of Indian repression, the Kashmiri people continue to demonstrate unwavering resolve in their pursuit of a just and dignified solution. This was observed by speakers representing a diverse set of the Kashmiri diaspora during a session titled “Kashmir: Current

Situation and a Possible Future Scenario,” held at the Institute of Policy Studies. The participants included Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice-chairman IPS, Dr Waleed Rasool, senior research fellow IPS, Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai, secretary general of the World Kashmir Awareness Forum, and representatives of different Kashmiri-led global awareness forums. Participants said that before May 2025, Kashmir was a forgotten issue. Despite the efforts of the Kashmiri diaspora across the world, scant attention was paid to the severity of human rights abuses in IIOJ&K. However, following Pakistan’s sweeping victory over India, the Kashmir resistance movement has been internationalized, and its unresolved status as a threat to regional security re-realized. Speakers suggested that moving forward, building on its political, diplomatic, and military proficiency, Pakistan should leverage its close ties with the incumbent American leader-

ship to resolve the Kashmir issue. To do so, Pakistan’s political leadership should engage with and convince the American leadership to make India abide by the UN resolutions on Kashmir. As part of this engagement, pressure on India should also be created to answer for human rights violations in IIOJ&K and the release of Kashmiri prisoners. Furthermore, the international community also needs to be sensitized about a nuclear threat in South Asia that would keep looming until India abides by the UN resolutions on Kashmir. Participants emphasized that the effectiveness of Pakistan’s Kashmir policy would depend on a coherent national position, backed by political consensus and articulated through a comprehensive document for international forums, including the UN and OIC. They called for the formation of a specialized professional team within the Foreign Ministry, both legal and political, to present Pakistan’s case globally with clarity and factual grounding.—DNA

ITA issues 2,331 emission clearance stickers

ISLAMABAD :The Islamabad Transport Authority (ITA) has issued 2,331 emission clearance stickers in six days, including 401 in the last 24 hours, as the city strengthens its campaign against smoke-emitting vehicles. According to the six-day performance report, the ITA completed emission testing for 2,331 vehicles, all of which were issued clearance stickers after meeting required standards. The report also notes that 401 additional vehicles received emission stickers during the last 24 hours, reflecting the ongoing pace of inspections. The crackdown, aimed at reducing harmful emissions, involves strict checks across various locations. ITA teams stationed at each inspection point are monitoring vehicles throughout the day. These teams are tasked with verifying compliance and ensuring that only vehicles passing the emission test are cleared for road use. As part of enforcement measures, authorities have taken action against vehicles found violating emission limits. Over the six-day period, 14 smoke-emitting vehicles were impounded and shifted to police stations for further legal action. Officials say such steps are essential to address the rising pollution levels recorded during the winter season. Transport Authority Chairman Irfan Memon stated that teams are working at full capacity to conduct testing at designated points. He added that authorities plan to increase the number of inspection points to provide citizens with timely and easier access to testing services. This expansion is expected to ease congestion at existing points and support a wider coverage of vehicle inspections. The ITA is also working to maintain consistent monitoring of vehicles on major routes. Mobile squads are deployed to identify non-compliant vehicles, which are immediately stopped and assessed. Vehicles producing visible smoke are subject to penalties in line with environmental and traffic regulations. Officials said the coordinated effort is part of a broader strategy to limit air pollution and improve respiratory health for residents. While the current focus is on emission testing, authorities plan to link these efforts with long-term measures such as awareness campaigns and stricter enforcement during high-pollution days. The transport authority has advised vehicle owners to ensure timely maintenance of their cars to pass emission tests. Motorists have been encouraged to keep vehicles roadworthy and avoid delays in visiting testing points, especially as inspections continue citywide. In the coming days, the ITA will continue issuing daily performance updates, tracking the number of vehicles tested, stickers issued and actions taken against violators. Authorities expect the number of inspected vehicles to rise as more inspection points become operational and enforcement becomes more comprehensive.—APP

Briefs

Shamaila slams PTI's attacks on institutions

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-N's Shamaila Rana Monday criticized PTI for promoting a narrative that targets national institutions and aligns with foreign enemies, warning that PTI must respect public mandates, as there can be no compromise on national security under any circumstances.

While speaking at PTV news, Shamaila Rana said that PTI wants to govern the country but refuses to accept its institutions.

She criticized the party for attacking the armed forces, calling such behaviour intolerable and emphasized that the sacrifices of the military must be respected.

PML-N leader added that PTI's narrative appears to support foreign enemies, raising serious concerns about national security.

Talking about Imran Khan's jail meetings, she said that such meetings are allowed within SOPs and the punishments were not imposed by the government or armed institutions, but granted by the courts.

She stressed that all court decisions are respected, recalling that even during previous tenures when PML-N leaders faced jail, they adhered to legal processes and democratic norms.

In response to the last question, she stressed that the KPK government must uphold law and order and work to control terrorism with the support of the federal government, rather than spreading propaganda. She warned that failure to do so would have consequences, emphasizing the need for responsibility and adherence to the law. APP

ANF recovers over 200 kg drugs

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting various operations across the country rounded up six suspects and recovered over 200 kg drugs, valued at more than Rs 217 million. According to an ANF spokesman, in an operation near a college in District Attock, 1.2 kg hashish was recovered from a motorcyclist. The arrested suspect confessed selling drugs to the students of different educational institutions. In another operation near Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad, 15.6 kg hashish was seized from a truck and two accused were arrested during the operation. In third operation near a restaurant on GT Road Burhan, District Attock, 2.4 kg hashish was seized from a vehicle and two drug dealers were arrested. On Haji Shah Road, Attock, 1.2 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of a motorcyclist. In 5th operation conducted near Western Bypass, Hazarganj District Quetta, 180 kg heroin was recovered. Separate cases have been registered under the CNSA-1997. —APP

AIOU secures first position flower exhibition

ISLAMABAD :Two day Annual Autumn Flower Exhibition held here at the CDA Model Nursery "Gardenia Hub," in which Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) secured first place in the educational institutions category. The exhibition was organized by the National Horticulture Society with the support of the Capital Development Authority (CDA). In the competitions for various categories of chrysanthemums, many institutions from across the country participated including Arid Agriculture University, Islamabad Club, Pakistan Air Force Islamabad, CDA, Attock Refinery, the Floriculture Department and Allama Iqbal Open University, said a press release on Monday. It is noteworthy that the university participated in competitions across three different categories and secured first place in each. The University's Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood congratulated the gardeners for their hard work and success, stating that the university is proud of its gardeners. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Doctors delegation from America calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. DNA

Pak, Sudan to strengthen coop in health sector

The Sudanese delegation briefed the Federal Minister on the current challenges being faced by Sudan's health sector and shared details of a comprehensive five-year strategic framework developed by Sudan, encompassing approximately 45 health-related projects

DNA

ISLAMABAD:The Federal Minister for Health, Mustafa Kamal, held a high-level meeting with a Sudanese delegation led by the Federal Secretary of Health of Sudan. The meeting was also attended by Pakistan's Federal Secretary Health, Hamid Yaqoob, along with senior officials from the Ministry of National Health Services. According to ministry of health on Monday, during the meeting, the Minister reaffirmed that Pakistan attaches great importance to its brotherly relations with Sudan and highly values Sudan's interest in strengthening cooperation with Pakistan

in the health sector. He appreciated the constructive engagement of the Sudanese delegation and underscored Pakistan's commitment to expand collaboration across multiple areas of healthcare. The Sudanese delegation briefed the Federal Minister on the current challenges being faced by Sudan's health sector and shared details of a comprehensive five-year strategic framework developed by Sudan, encompassing approximately 45 health-related projects. The delegation sought Pakistan's cooperation in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the health sector, provision of medical equipment and technologies, restoration of solar energy solutions for health facilities, and enhancement of institutional collabora-

tion. The Sudanese delegation also expressed appreciation for Pakistan's continued support and conveyed confidence that the visit would pave the way for improved coordination and a more effective partnership between the two countries. Reiterating Pakistan's resolve, the Federal Minister emphasized that Pakistan remains fully committed to further strengthening health-sector cooperation with Sudan. He stated that Pakistan is ready to support the training of Sudanese medical personnel, facilitate the exchange of experts, and promote knowledge and experience sharing. The Minister highlighted that pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and regulatory matters fall within the mandate of the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), and

noted Pakistan's ongoing progress towards achieving WHO Regulatory Maturity Level 3. He also reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to promoting medical tourism, stating that matters related to visa facilitation would be advanced through consultations with Pakistani diplomatic missions. To ensure effective and timely progress, it was shared that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would expedite the process of finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) through close coordination. Concluding the meeting, the Federal Minister assured that Pakistan will continue to extend comprehensive support to Sudan in emergency response, recovery, capacity building, and the development of long-term partnerships in the health sector.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday described China as Pakistan's "second home," stressing that Pakistan holds the same place for China. Speaking as chief guest at an event organized by the China Chamber of Commerce, Tarar highlighted the growing strength of bilateral ties, noting that the bond between the two nations continues to deepen with time. He reaffirmed that Pakistan values its enduring friendship with China and pledged continued efforts to expand cooperation across all sectors. Tarar said China has supported Pakistan through every challenging moment, describing the friendship between the two countries as unmatched. He expressed gratitude to the Chinese leadership for its consistent backing and noted that people-to-people exchanges have enabled Chinese culture to flourish in Pakistan, further reinforcing bilateral relations. He remarked that China has consistently stood by Pakistan during difficult times, adding that the passage of time has affirmed the two nations as true "iron brothers," with a partnership that continues to grow in strength and trust.

Tarar also pointed out that Pakistan contributes less than one percent to global carbon emissions yet faces some of the most severe consequences of climate change. He stressed that the country ranks among the top ten most vulnerable nations despite its minimal role in the crisis, underscoring the urgent need for greater international support to help Pakistan address climate-related challenges.

Balochistan named frontline region in Pakistan's climate agenda

ISLAMABAD: Balochistan must be recognized as a frontline region in Pakistan's climate resilience agenda, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam said on Monday, urging international partners to scale up investment in the province's adaptation and sustainability initiatives. Speaking at the Conference on Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience in Balochistan, organized by the Government of Balochistan in Islamabad, Romina underscored Pakistan's acute exposure to climate shocks despite contributing less than one percent to global greenhouse gas emissions. Balochistan, comprising 44 per cent of Pakistan's territory and hosting the country's longest coastline, sits at the "intersection of climate risk and climate opportunity," she noted. "Climate change is no longer a distant threat for us — it is a present-day emergency. Pakistan is paying the price for emissions it did not produce. Yet the resolve of Balochistan to lead with vision

and innovation is remarkable," she said. Romina commended Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti for integrating climate action into provincial governance and praised Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan for aligning the province with modern climate-finance frameworks amid security and development challenges. She emphasized that grant-based and concessional climate finance remains vital for resilient infrastructure, water security, and sustainable livelihoods. The coordinator also called for stronger public-private partnerships to ease fiscal pressure and accelerate the province's transition toward clean energy and green development. Special attention, she said, must be directed toward coastal and marine ecosystems where mangrove restoration and biodiversity protection can serve as scalable nature-based solutions, supporting blue carbon markets and eco-tourism. "Political will is an undervalued asset, but it is central to effective climate governance," she added, stressing that cooperation

across federal and provincial institutions, international donors, and local communities is essential to translate policy into action. Reaffirming the federal government's commitment under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Romina said Pakistan will continue to push for enhanced climate diplomacy, equitable access to global financing, and targeted support for vulnerable regions such as Balochistan. The conference was attended by senior government officials, diplomats, representatives from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, United Nations agencies, the European Union, GIZ, and private-sector stakeholders. Discussions centered on carbon markets, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, climate-resilient infrastructure, and ecosystem restoration. Calling Balochistan a "priority destination for climate investment," Romina urged global institutions and investors to recognize the long-term dividends of resilience-focused financing. "This is not just an environmental agenda," she said. —DNA

Pak experts trained by Chinese company set up VitaGene farms

ISLAMABAD: In connection with Pakistan-China livestock genetics initiative, local Pakistani experts have established VitaGene farms under the training of Royal Cell Biotechnology (Pakistan)— one of the pioneers of buffalo IVF technology in Pakistan. With a moto of shaping the future of livestock genetics, the VitaGene farms, a state-of-the-art embryo production and research facility, have been established in various part of country including Lahore, according to a Gwadar Pro's report. Cutting-edge technology, machinery and equipment are being brought in the VitaGene Farms. Buffalo and cattle embryo will be produced in the world class IVF lab. Royal Cell Biotechnology (Pakistan) Project Directo Dr. Qaisar told Gwadar Pro that VitaGene Farms will produce elite cattle and buffalo embryos, accelerating genetic improvement and supporting the development of high-performance livestock across Pakistan. This milestone reflects the growing strength of Pakistan's biotechnology ecosystem and the long-term impact of modern reproductive technologies on our livestock sector.—DNA

Escalating drought threatens Balochistan's water, agri

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Director at the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) Balochistan Muhammad Afzal warned on Monday that the province is facing an unusual year of severe drought, suggesting a climate emergency as prolonged lack of precipitation raises fears of agricultural losses, water shortages and wider environmental impacts. While speaking on a local media programme, he explained escalating drought conditions are putting severe pressure on Balochistan's water resources and agricultural systems, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) cautioned, warning that the prolonged dry spell has heightened risks of crop failures, worsening shortages and broader environmental stress across the province. He described several districts as

being at high risk, including Chagai, Gwadar, Kech, Khuran, Mastung, Noshki, Pishin, Panjgur, Qila Abdullah, Quetta, and Washuk. Residents in these areas have been advised to adopt strict water conservation measures and remain alert to further advisories as authorities monitor the worsening drought situation, he mentioned. The Meteorological Department has urged local administrations to prepare contingency plans as drought conditions continue to intensify across Balochistan. Officials stressed the need for ensuring adequate water supply in vulnerable districts to reduce the impact on communities already facing shortages. Authorities are also monitoring the situation closely and may issue additional advisories if conditions worsen.—APP

PM Coordinator warns against politics fueling national polarization

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan on Monday criticized PTI leadership for deliberately fueling hatred and pushing the country toward chaos, warning that their politics of confrontation, division and dangerous polarization will not be allowed to destabilize the state. Talking in a Morning news show, Ihsan Afzal Khan said

the PTI had "stepped out far outside its political domain" and was now "fixed on hate-driven, polarizing and anarchy-oriented politics" instead of contributing to national issues. He remarked that, rather than addressing matters of public health, terrorism, governance and constructive policy, the party had sidelined real public interests in favour of confrontation. Ihsan Afzal further stated that PTI was destabiliz-

ing the country through a relentless negative narrative which he said was deepening divisions and harming institutional stability. He cautioned that "politics rooted in chaos and disruption" would not be allowed to dictate the national atmosphere, stressing that the country required responsible, forward-looking politics to maintain stability. Responding to a query about PTI founder, Ihsan

said that "a convicted individual cannot be allowed to drive such negative politics."

To another question regarding the possibility of Governor's rule in KP, he clarified that the matter is currently before the court in the case of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister and the government's legal teams are examining all relevant aspects and will proceed strictly in accordance with the law and constitutional requirements.

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Why Palestinians face the same fate

DR. RAMZY BAROUD

US President Donald Trump's so-called Board of Peace is reportedly set to be announced before the year's end. This news coincides with increasing reports that the American administration is serious about pushing ahead with the second phase of the Gaza ceasefire. However, many critical questions remain unanswered. How can a governing council be imposed on Gaza when Palestinians are unified in their rejection of any new form of Western mandate over their lives? Furthermore, how can the proposed International Stabilization Force operate in Gaza without total clarity regarding its mission? If it ends up serving primarily as an Israeli line of defense, the entire project will collapse before it begins. Neither Arab nor Muslim countries will seriously engage in subduing Palestinians on behalf of Israel. Any other participating troops will inevitably be treated by Palestinians as an occupation force. The main obstacle, however, is the fact that Israel has never truly respected the first phase of the ceasefire, which began, in theory, on Oct. 10. Since that date, Israeli forces have killed more than 360 Palestinians and wounded hundreds more, while demolishing thousands of residential structures, according to satellite images verified by the BBC. Worse, Israel has habitually bombed targets beyond the "Yellow Line," which was designated as the Palestinian area where humanitarian aid would be allowed to flow and people were meant to return to some kind of normalcy, despite Gaza's near-total destruction. Netanyahu will make disarmament the main sticking point, knowing that Hamas will not surrender its weapons Israel is hoping to make the first phase of the agreement permanent. This intent is evident in the continued bombings, the prevention of access to lifesaving supplies and aid, and the constant, unsubstantiated accusations that Palestinians are the ones violating the ceasefire. It is expected that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will make the disarmament of Gaza the main sticking point, knowing in advance that Hamas will not surrender its weapons. He has repeatedly made this clear, including on Nov. 15, when he stated that "Hamas will be disarmed – either the easy way or the hard way." But what if the groups in Gaza agree to surrender their weapons? Will Israel leave the Palestinians alone? Will the prospects of a just peace and Palestinian freedom increase exponentially? To address these questions, let us delve into three experiences, two from history. Palestinian and even some Israeli historians have argued that, during the ethnic cleansing of historic Palestine, the Nakba, Israel had the intention of depopulating the country regardless of whether Palestinians resisted or not. The implementation of Plan Dalet, the operation aimed at expelling the Palestinian population, was in no way related to the method or intensity of

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Palestinian resistance to Zionist militia violence. In fact, the framework of that expulsion was predicated on the use of war as a pretext, as opposed to war as a response to Palestinian resistance. "The Arabs will have to go, but one needs an opportune moment for making it happen, such as a war," wrote Zionist leader and Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion. Though some mukhtars (village leaders) assumed that no resistance meant they would be spared the same fate as those who resisted, they were wrong. In "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine," Israeli historian Ilan Pappé wrote: "Whereas the official Plan Dalet gave the villages the option to surrender, the operational orders did not exempt any village for any reason."

The same pattern was repeated throughout history. In 1982, after a US-brokered agreement to evacuate Palestine Liberation Organization forces out of Lebanon, the assumption was that their departure would keep the Israeli army from attacking Palestinian civilians. So, on Aug. 21, 1982, PLO factions began leaving the country, leaving the camps undefended and their Lebanese allies vulnerable. However, Israeli violence in West Beirut had grown, not subsided, leading to the September 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacre, which killed up to 3,500 Palestinian refugees and Lebanese civilians. Those who continue to entertain the Israeli narrative regarding Gaza must acknowledge two crucial realities All the promises by Washington, the supposed "guarantees" and the diplomatic language of US envoy Philip Habib, who acted as the president's special envoy, meant absolutely nothing, as Israel helped facilitate one of history's most brutal massacres. And, of course, there is the ongoing saga of the West Bank itself, which, unlike Gaza, lacks armed resistance infrastructure and is administered by the Palestinian Authority, which operates based on an Israeli-US-Western mandate. Yet, even before the Gaza genocide, the West Bank's suffering had grown, its land confiscated, entire communities ethnically cleansed, whole refugee camps destroyed and hundreds of residents killed.

In the two years following Oct. 7, 2023, reports indicate that Israeli forces and settlers killed more than 1,000 Palestinians, about 200 of them children, in the West Bank including East Jerusalem. Thousands more were injured, while Israeli authorities destroyed or confiscated thousands of Palestinian-owned structures, displacing many. Additionally, an estimated 10,000 Palestinians from the West Bank were arrested between October 2023 and August 2024. If Israel's genocide in Gaza is entirely motivated by the desire to crush the armed groups, then why the continued crushing of the West Bank? Those who continue to entertain the Israeli narrative regarding Gaza must confront this historical record and acknowledge two crucial, enduring realities. First, Israel's violence is fundamentally driven by its settler-colonial ambitions, not merely by Palestinian resistance. Second, Palestinian resistance is a deeply rooted historical imperative – the native population's determined struggle for liberation from foreign occupation. Only by abandoning the reductionist language that frames Israeli wars as simple responses to armed groups can we arrive at a profound understanding of events in Palestine, Israel's true motives and the legitimacy of the Palestinian struggle.

A New Horizon for Pakistan–Indonesia Relations

Qamar Bashir



Pakistan's broader industrial and agricultural capabilities also align well with Indonesia's needs. Pakistani textiles, sports goods, surgical instruments, leather products, halal food and pharmaceuticals all have competitive space in the Indonesian market. The IT sector, with Pakistan's rapidly expanding pool of software developers and engineers, could capture a significant share of Indonesia's growing demand for digital services. With supportive policies, Pakistani exports to Indonesia could realistically double to US\$1–1.2 billion within five years. For Indonesia, the opportunities in Pakistan are equally promising

THE Indonesian president's two-day visit to Pakistan comes at a defining moment in the regional landscape, and for two nations whose histories, identities and ambitions intersect more deeply than often acknowledged. Pakistan and Indonesia are bound by shared faith, parallel post-colonial struggles, and a mutual desire for economic stability and strategic autonomy. This visit provides the most meaningful opportunity in decades to transform cordial ties into a structured, forward-looking partnership. The roots of the relationship run back to the early years of independence. Both countries forged a natural bond during the anti-colonial wave of the 1950s and stood side by side at the Bandung Conference of 1955, shaping principles that later influenced the Non-Aligned Movement. Over the decades, Indonesia supported Pakistan during moments of regional tension, while Pakistan backed Indonesia internationally as it consolidated its post-independence identity. Yet despite this warmth, economic cooperation lagged behind political sentiment. Today the environment is far more conducive. During my tenure as Press Attaché to Malaysia, I witnessed Indonesia evolve from a crisis-strained economy into a disciplined, steadily rising middle-income power. Its reforms in governance, social protection and industrial policy helped it become Southeast Asia's largest economy and a strong voice in the G20 and Global South. Pakistan, despite recent economic strain, retains undeniable strengths: a vast population of 240 million, an established industrial base, globally competitive export sectors, strategic geography linking multiple economic corridors, and a respected defence industry. In economic terms, the relationship has already expanded significantly. Bilateral trade, which was under half a billion dollars two decades ago, crossed US\$4.2 billion in 2022, rose to approximately US\$3.3–3.8 billion in 2023, and has now reached a historic US\$4.7 billion in FY 2024–25. The imbalance, however, is stark. Indonesian exports—primarily palm oil, coal, rubber, spices, chemicals and consumer goods—make up nearly US\$3.5–4 billion, while Pakistan's exports hover around US\$500–600 million, dominated by textiles, seafood, processed food, sports goods, pharmaceuticals and IT services. The forthcoming negotiations to upgrade the existing Preferential Trade Agreement into a full Free Trade Agreement offer space to correct this imbalance and unlock an estimated US\$8–10 billion trade potential over the next five to seven years.

Pakistan's defence and industrial strengths give substance to this partnership. Its position as a nuclear state with a professional, battle-tested military and a growing defence-industrial base makes Pakistan an attractive partner for Indonesia, which is modernising its forces and diversifying its procurement sources. The JF-17 Thunder, cost-effective and combat-proven, remains a strong candidate for Indonesian interest. If converted into structured cooperation—joint production, maintenance facilities, training programmes and technology transfer—the defence relationship alone could evolve into a US\$1–1.5 billion annual ecosystem over the next decade.

Pakistan's broader industrial and agricultural capabilities also align well with Indonesia's needs. Pakistani textiles, sports goods, surgical instruments, leather products, halal food and pharmaceuticals all have competitive space in the Indonesian market. The IT sector, with Pakistan's rapidly expanding pool of software developers and engineers, could capture a significant share of Indonesia's growing demand for digital services. With supportive policies, Pakistani exports to Indonesia could realistically double to US\$1–1.2 billion within five years. For Indonesia, the opportunities in Pakistan are equally promising. With a large consumer market and strategic access to Central Asia, western China, the Middle East and Africa, Pakistan offers Indonesian investors a broad regional gateway. Indonesia's strength in palm oil, nickel, copper, coal, rubber and downstream manufacturing aligns with Pakistan's industrial and energy needs. Indonesia's mineral wealth—especially nickel, essential for electric-vehicle batteries—could support Pakistan's emerging automotive and renewable-energy ambitions. Long-term palm oil supply agreements and joint ventures in refining and food processing could solidify a US\$2–3 billion supply chain anchored in stability and value addition.

Energy cooperation is another high-value domain. Indonesia's substantial coal exports already support Pakistan's power sector, but opportunities now extend to renewable technologies, sustainable agriculture, and climate adaptation. Both nations face frequent natural disasters, rising temperatures and food-security pressures. Joint initiatives in disaster management, coastal protection, agricultural resilience and social-protection systems would translate shared vulnerabilities into shared solutions. Indonesia's successful nutrition and social-welfare frameworks can be harmonised with Pakistan's experience in large-scale cash-transfer programmes to create replicable models across

the Muslim world. Maritime and logistics cooperation represents an under-utilised frontier. Indonesia's control over key shipping lanes in the Malacca and Sunda Straits complements Pakistan's Arabian Sea ports—Karachi, Port Qasim and Gwadar. Better port-to-port coordination, enhanced shipping routes and integrated logistics corridors could turn the two nations into a bridge connecting ASEAN with the Middle East and Central Asia. Such cooperation could expand bilateral maritime trade by US\$1–2 billion and improve security collaboration against piracy and other transnational threats.

Cultural, educational and people-to-people exchanges also hold significant promise. Despite being the world's first and second largest Muslim-majority nations, Indonesia and Pakistan still know surprisingly little about each other's societies. Joint academic programmes, Islamic cultural exchanges, student mobility, tourism promotion and co-produced media content could build a deeper social foundation for long-term cooperation. As both nations navigate questions of identity, governance and modernity, intellectual exchanges between their scholars, ulama and policymakers could generate meaningful dialogue.

The Indonesian president's visit should therefore focus on more than symbolic gestures. It must articulate a roadmap built around strategic defence cooperation, balanced trade, maritime connectivity, industrial partnership and cultural exchange. A clear timeline for concluding the FTA, practical measures to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers, and sector-specific investment frameworks could anchor economic ties at a realistic US\$8–10 billion trajectory. Defence collaboration could be formalised through joint committees and production agreements. Maritime security, food security, digital cooperation and energy transition should be placed at the centre of the agenda.

If Islamabad and Jakarta seize this moment with clarity and ambition, Pakistan–Indonesia relations could enter their strongest phase since the Bandung Conference—one defined not by nostalgia, but by shared vision, balanced opportunity and mutual strategic benefit. In a world reshaped by shifting alliances and economic competition, the partnership between these two Muslim nations has the potential not only to uplift their own populations but to contribute to a more stable and empowered Global South.

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The Invisible Networks Targeting Pakistan's Stability

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The anonymity offered by illegal VPNs has further fueled cyberbullying, identity theft, hacking attempts, ransomware attacks, and online fraud. Law-enforcement agencies face unprecedented challenges, as these crimes carry no physical boundaries and leave little trace. Political manipulation has also proliferated through VPN-masked accounts...

PAKISTAN has always been a nation guided by the timeless principle of peace, coexistence, and mutual respect. The Qur'an reminds us, "And if they incline to peace, then incline to it also and rely upon Allah" (Qur'an 8:61). Our national character has long reflected this divine instruction. Pakistan does not seek conflict, nor does it believe in aggression. Yet, when its sovereignty is threatened, it rises with unwavering resolve, for the Qur'an also commands, "And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war to terrify thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy" (Qur'an 8:60). This balance between peace and preparedness is not merely a policy; it is a moral and spiritual obligation. The Holy Prophet said: "Tie your camel first, and then trust in Allah," reminding believers that reliance on God must be accompanied by vigilance and readiness. History bears witness that Pakistan has adhered to these principles with dignity. In May 2025, the world saw once again that Pakistan is capable of defending itself not only in conventional warfare, but also in the advanced realms of technology and engineering. The excellence demonstrated by our scientists, cyber experts, and defence institutions established beyond doubt that Pakistan is neither weak nor unprepared. Yet the threats confronting the country are evolving, and our adversaries have now shifted their battleground to cyberspace, where silent wars wage behind screens, seeking to destabilize the very foundations of our society. In recent years, the rise of illegal and unregistered VPNs has created a parallel, invisible network that has become a sanctuary for terrorism, extremism, and digital crime. Terrorist outfits and their splinter groups have mastered the use of these clandestine tools to hide their tracks, manipulate social media platforms, and broadcast propaganda designed to incite unrest in Pakistan. Intelligence reports reveal that many such accounts, once assumed to operate from within the country, were actually con-

trolled from India and Afghanistan. The moment X introduced its location-reveal feature, the truth surfaced; a significant number of anti-Pakistan accounts were being run through illegal VPNs supported by RAW and other hostile intelligence networks. These channels allowed terrorists and their sympathizers to target Pakistani audiences, coordinate attacks, and spread falsehoods while remaining hidden from law enforcement. At the same time, unregistered VPNs expose Pakistani youth to violent media, adult material, gambling platforms, fake-news hubs, and unregulated communities. This does not only damage psychological well-being but also erodes family structures, social safeguards, and educational integrity. It is in moments like these that the Qur'anic warning resonates with renewed urgency: "O you who believe, protect yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is people and stones" (Qur'an 66:6). Digital protection has now become an extension of this divine command.

The anonymity offered by illegal VPNs has further fueled cyberbullying, identity theft, hacking attempts, ransomware attacks, and online fraud. Law-enforcement agencies face unprecedented challenges, as these crimes carry no physical boundaries and leave little trace. Political manipulation has also proliferated through VPN-masked accounts, enabling anonymous actors to distort public narratives, spread misinformation, and disrupt Pakistan's social cohesion. Unrestricted access to harmful content undermines regulatory systems and exposes society to materials designed to weaken our moral and cultural foundations. In this regard, the Prophet said: "A believer is not stung from the same hole twice," urging Muslims to learn from threats and prevent their recurrence—a principle that must guide Pakistan's cyber policy today. The economic repercussions are equally severe. Illegal VPN use enables tax evasion, digital piracy, unfair access to international marketplaces, and exploitation

of geo-restricted platforms, harming local industries and Pakistan's digital economy. Moreover, VPN traffic creates cyber blind spots, allowing malware, phishing networks, and foreign cyber intrusions to bypass the country's digital firewalls and infiltrate sensitive governmental and corporate systems. The cumulative impact of this misuse forms an interconnected threat; national security, economic integrity, youth protection, political stability, and cyber resilience are all placed at risk.

The urgency to act has never been greater. What Pakistan needs is not a blanket ban on technology, but intelligent regulation, robust monitoring, and uncompromising enforcement. The way forward must begin with mandatory registration of all VPNs operating in the country. Only authorized and traceable VPNs should be allowed for corporate, institutional, and legitimate personal use. A national cyber-monitoring authority equipped with state-of-the-art systems should operate around the clock to detect and dismantle illegal VPN networks. Strong coordination between intelligence agencies, FIA, PTA, and financial regulators is essential to cut off the digital supply chains that sustain terrorism. Public awareness campaigns, especially for youth, must be launched to promote responsible digital behaviour and warn against illegal VPN use. Meanwhile, Pakistan must invest further in indigenous cyber-security expertise, nurturing teams capable of defending the country's digital frontiers with the same strength our armed forces show on land.

Pakistan is a nation that desires peace but never hesitates to safeguard its dignity and sovereignty. As the Qur'an declares, "Allah loves those who fight in His cause in ranks as though they are a solid structure" (Qur'an 61:4). In this new age, where wars are fought in coded shadows rather than conventional fields, cyber security has become a cornerstone of national defence. With vigilance, unity, and unwavering resolve, Pakistan can secure its digital realm, protect its citizens, and ensure that its sovereignty remains unshaken.

Briefs

Arshad Nadeem figures...

FROM PAGE 01
general staff officer, grade-2 at the CGS secretariat; and chief of staff of Mangla Corps. He also served as Quartermaster General at the General Headquarters. Field Marshal Munir has commanded the 23rd Frontier Force Regiment and an infantry brigade, and has served as force commander in the Northern Areas, Gilgit. He has held top intelligence positions, including Director General of Military Intelligence (MI) and head of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). After heading ISI, he was posted as Corps Commander Gujranwala and then as Quartermaster General — his last assignment before becoming army chief. He graduated from Fuji School, Japan; Command and Staff College, Quetta; Malaysian Armed Forces College, Kuala Lumpur; and National Defence University, Islamabad. He also holds an MPhil in Public Policy and Strategic Security Management from the National Defence University. CDF Field Marshal Munir is the first army chief to be awarded the Sword of Honour.

Punjab IG places province...

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extensive door-to-door knocking to counter potential terrorism and extremist elements. During the meeting, the Punjab IG also highlighted the recent successes of the traffic police, saying the department's efforts led to a 930% increase in traffic licensing. He lauded the DIG Operations for a 46% reduction in crime rate in Lahore and praised the Crime Control Department (CCD) for its outstanding performance in tackling crime and drug trafficking. The Punjab IG also commended the DIG Traffic for the enforcement of traffic laws, resulting in a significant decline in road accidents. IG Anwar announced that Punjab police will see an additional 3,500 promotions in the coming days. The Punjab IG's directives about security arrangements come soon after the CTD announced that it had arrested 12 suspected terrorists allegedly linked to the Indian intelligence agency, Research and Analysis Wing (Raw) in separate operations in major cities of the province.

Gohar dismisses 'minus...

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"we have become so entangled that people are losing hope." Turning to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gohar expressed surprise that KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi was "thinking about governor's rule." He added: "God willing, the governor's rule will never be imposed in KP. We want stability and improvement in the province." Gohar said certain political voices were "provoking people to take the law into their own hands" and asked those advocating governor's rule when they had ever advised the chief minister to correct any issue. "Everyone sits and says governor's rule is coming — is this how you mock the people's mandate?" he said.

Asia lifts 2.7bn people...

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reforms since 2013 had driven this progress. But ecosystem decline, climate risks, and funding shortfalls for water investments threatened to plunge billions back into water insecurity. Wetlands, rivers, aquifers, and forests that sustain long-term water security are deteriorating fast. Extreme weather events such as storm surges, rising sea levels, and saltwater intrusion threaten a region which already accounts for 41% of the world's floods. In recent weeks, parts of Southeast and South Asia have been hit by devastating floods.

Palestine, Syria celebrate reaching Arab Cup quarter-finals

Palestine and Syria Celebrate Emotional Progress to Arab Cup Quarter-Finals After Draw Amid Ongoing Recovery From Conflict and Powerful Displays of Unity by Fans and Players in Doha

DOHA: Celebrations erupted on the pitch and in the stands in Doha on Sunday when both Palestine and Syria made it through to the Arab Cup quarter-finals following a 0-0 draw. For both sides, reaching the knockout stage in the regional tournament hosted by Qatar was magnified by the all-too recent memory of conflict in their homelands. Only weeks ago in Gaza, the war sparked by Hamas' attack on Israel came to a halt under a fragile ceasefire plan brokered by the United States. For the Syrian side, the game came on the eve of the anniversary of the ousting of Bashar Assad, who unleashed years of war with his crack down on pro-democracy protests. Both nations knew a draw in their final Group A match would secure Palestine top spot with Syria progressing in second place. Even ahead of the final whistle, around 40,000 fans packing the Education City Stadium began dancing and chanting to celebrate the two sides' entry into the last eight. And at the end of the game, players on the pitch swapped jerseys and posed for photographs together, as the squads' coaches embraced each other.

"We are very happy to top the group, which included two great teams like Qatar and Tunisia, and we congratulate all Palestinian fans," said Palestine striker Oday Dabbagh. "We played to win, especially after learning about Tunisia's lead over Qatar, but we lacked the final touch in front of the goal... The most important thing is that we qualified." Palestine coach Ehab Abu Jazar paid tribute to his mother, who along with his broth-



er and other loved ones had to flee her home and now lives in a tent in Gaza. "She has a lot of experience with sports, and she told me to play carefully," he told AFP. Syrian striker Mahmoud Al-Mawas said

the result "means a lot to Syrians because it coincides with the Liberation Day celebrations..." "Now, all our focus will be on the quarter-final." At a cafe in the Syrian capital, Damascus, 30-year-old Wafa Durri watched

the game, with her country's flag adorning her right cheek. "I had never supported the national team, but after the liberation everything changed, and now I support it with all my heart," she said. — Agencies

Real Madrid handed shock home loss as Celta Vigo spring surprise

Real Madrid stunned 2-0 by Celta Vigo as Swedberg's brace and two red cards end their perfect home run and raise concerns ahead of Champions League clash against Manchester City

MADRID: Real Madrid suffered a shock 2-0 loss and finished with nine men against Celta Vigo in LaLiga on Sunday after Williot Swedberg scored an audacious goal with his heel and a second in stoppage time to leave the hosts four points off leaders Barcelona. Swedish substitute Swedberg cleverly diverted a cross from Bryan Zaragoza past Thibaut Courtois in the 53rd minute to put Celta ahead and had an easy finish three minutes into added time, going around the goalkeeper



to wrap up the points. Real's cause was not helped by the 64th minute dismissal of Fran Garcia, who picked up two yellow cards in 60 seconds, but they laid siege to the visitors' goal for the last 20 minutes as Celta went into a defensive shell to hold onto their advantage.

Real defender Alvaro Carreras was also dismissed for two cautions, his second coming in stoppage time at the end of the game as the home side's frustrations boiled over. It was a second clean sheet in 15 league games this season for Celta, whose keeper Ionut Radu made a first-half save from Jude Bellingham's header and stopped a second-half free-kick whipped in by Kylian Mbappe. Real stay on 36 points from 16 games as Celta celebrated a first win at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu in 19 years, leaving the Galician club with 19 points. "With the team they have and their quality, it's difficult to match them, but we read the game well," said Celta striker Borja Iglesias. "We had possession, we played in their half, we played a fantastic match." Celta jumped from 14th to 10th while the defeat ended Real's 100 percent home league record this season after six successive wins. Xabi Alonso's stuttering Real team have now won only one of their last five league games as they await the midweek arrival of Manchester City in the Champions League. — Agencies

Ciprian Ciucu wins Bucharest Mayor's race

BUCHAREST: Ciprian Ciucu of the National Liberal Party has won the Bucharest mayoral election with 36.17% of the vote, according to nearly complete results released by the Permanent Electoral Authority. The tally includes 1,288 of the city's 1,289 polling stations, representing 99.92% of total votes. Ciucu finished more than 14 percentage points ahead of Anca Alexandrescu, the candidate supported by the "Justice for Bucharest" Electoral Alliance. Daniel Baluta of the Social Democratic Party came in third, about 15.6 percentage points behind Ciucu. The mayor's office became vacant in May after former mayor Nicușor Dan was elected President of Romania. Since then, Liberal politician Stelian Bujduveanu has served as acting mayor. Ciucu's plans for the city focus on urban renewal, especially along Magheru Boulevard in central Bucharest. He aims to make the area greener and more pedestrian-friendly with wider sidewalks. He also plans to attract investors to renovate buildings at seismic risk and reintegrate them into the city's economic life. — APP

Rohit Sharma joins Virat Kohli, Sachin Tendulkar in elite list

That run, his 27th of the innings, pushed him into an elite club alongside Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli and Rahul Dravid

VISAKHAPATNAM: Rohit Sharma has added another glittering chapter to his storied career as he joined teammate Virat Kohli, as well as legendary Sachin Tendulkar, in an elite list of Indian batters. During the third ODI against South Africa at the Dr Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium, Sharma became the fourth Indian batter in history to cross 20,000 runs in international cricket. He reached the landmark while nudging a length delivery from Keshav Maharaj into the leg side for a single in the 14th over. That run, his 27th of the innings, pushed him into an elite club alongside Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli and Rahul Dravid. Rohit has now amassed 20,048 runs across formats in 538 innings, continuing a career defined by longevity, elegance, and big-match temperament. Only Tendulkar (34,357), Kohli (27,910) and Dravid (24,208) have scored more for India at the international level.

Most international runs for India
Sachin Tendulkar – 34357 runs in 782 innings
Virat Kohli – 27975 runs in 622 innings
Rahul Dravid – 24208 runs in 605 innings
Rohit Sharma – 20048 runs in 538 innings
Sourav Ganguly – 18575 runs in 488 innings
Once the milestone was out of the way, Rohit shifted gears, crafting a fluent 75 off 73 balls, decorated with seven fours and three booming sixes, before Maharaj returned to remove him in the 26th over. His innings laid the perfect platform for India in the series decider. From there, the hosts barely broke a sweat. Yashasvi Jaiswal turned the chase into a one-man exhibition, smashing an unbeaten 116, while Virat Kohli chipped in with a controlled 65* as India cruised to a nine-wicket win with overs to spare. South Africa, earlier put into bat, were lifted to 270 courtesy of a vintage Quinton de Kock hundred. The left-hander hammered 106 off 89 balls, striking eight fours and six sixes in a typically authoritative knock. Captain Temba Bavuma offered support with 48 off 67, but the visitors ultimately fell short as India's bowlers tightened the screws in the final phase of the innings, bundling them out in 47.5 overs. — APP

Javelin star Arshad Nadeem rouses crowd, wins gold at National Games

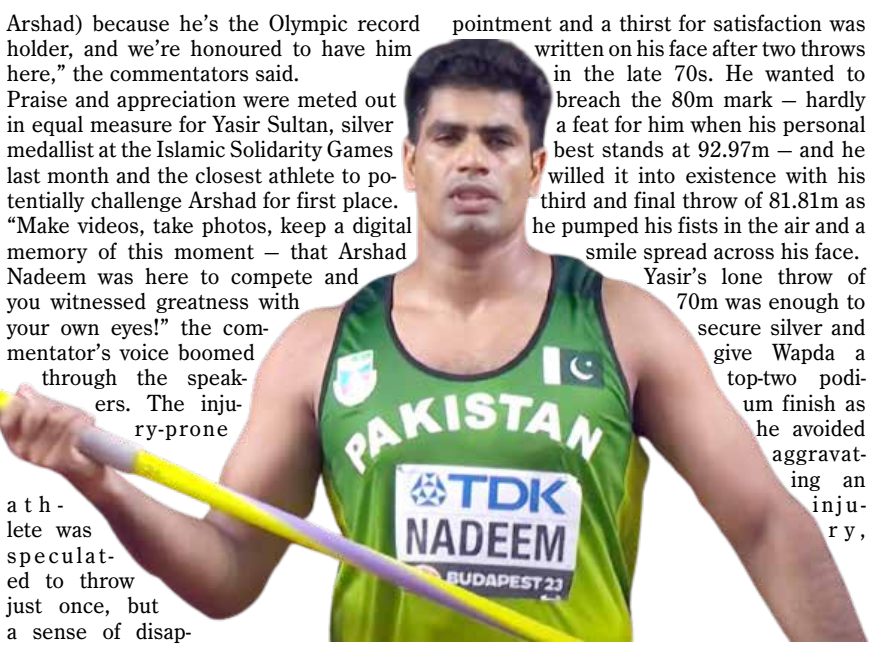
"Yeh din Arshad ka hai (this day belongs to Arshad) because he's the Olympic record holder, and we're honoured to have him here," the commentators said

KARACHI: Arshad Nadeem was the man of the hour on Monday morning when he allowed the audience to be part of history as they witnessed him launch his javelin to claim gold at the National Games. It was not lost on the 28-year-old that the crowd of a few hundred was delighted by his very presence at the PNS Karsaz ground, his throws the cherry on the top as they got to see an Olympic champion in action before their very own eyes. A robust lineup of track and field events crescendoed with the start of the men's javelin, headlined by Arshad. A dozen cameramen lined the javelin sector's periphery to get the perfect shot of Arshad in action as the heat bore down on the synthetic rubber track, the sun climbing higher in the sky to signal the advent of afternoon. The track reverberated with the soft thud of spikes and echoes of the commentators' effusive praise for Pakistan's sporting hero ahead of his first throw of 78.74m that, unsurprisingly, guaranteed him the lead. "Yeh din Arshad ka hai (this day belongs to

Arshad) because he's the Olympic record holder, and we're honoured to have him here," the commentators said. Praise and appreciation were meted out in equal measure for Yasir Sultan, silver medalist at the Islamic Solidarity Games last month and the closest athlete to potentially challenge Arshad for first place. "Make videos, take photos, keep a digital memory of this moment — that Arshad Nadeem was here to compete and you witnessed greatness with your own eyes!" the commentator's voice boomed through the speakers. The injury-prone athlete was speculated to throw just once, but a sense of disap-

pointment and a thirst for satisfaction written on his face after two throws in the late 70s. He wanted to breach the 80m mark — hardly a feat for him when his personal best stands at 92.97m — and he willed it into existence with his third and final throw of 81.81m as he pumped his fists in the air and a smile spread across his face. Yasir's lone throw of 70m was enough to secure silver and give Wapda a top-two podium finish as he avoided aggravating an injury,

while Army's Abrar Ali won bronze with a 67.68m throw. Finishing in sixth place was Arshad's younger brother Aleem, not quite the replica of the family jewel but perhaps a work in progress to reach that level of sporting excellence. Arshad's coach Salman Butt was giving him advice in between throws before pivoting back to Arshad with technical advice and motivation. Arshad was showered with well-wishes and selfies and handshakes from the end of the event till the medal ceremony. The international superstar looked just as pleased with the local stardom he radiates everywhere he goes, his very presence at an event marking it as historic. "If this event were happening in any other South Asian country, people would be leaning out the windows to get a glimpse of his throw," one of the commentators said. "We're thankful that the Olympic record holder is here competing among the younger players and inspiring the next generation. This day will be remembered for ages to come." — APP



Indonesia's President Prabowo Arrives...

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engagements will help diversify the partnership and promote shared economic and strategic interests. President Prabowo's arrival is widely viewed as an opportunity to inject fresh momentum into bilateral ties as the two nations commemorate 75 years of diplomatic relations.

Punjab CTD says 12 terrorists 'linked...

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In August, Sindh's CTD had found the involvement of RAW in the target killing of a man in Badin district and arrested six suspects in the case, who were allegedly funded by RAW. In June, four suspected Indian agents were arrested in a raid carried out in Karachi's Quidabad area.

Pak steps up support for Sri Lanka with fresh...

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evacuation operations in coordination with Sri Lankan counterparts. NDMA reaffirmed that Pakistan stands firmly with the people of Sri Lanka in this difficult hour and will continue to extend all possible assistance to support ongoing rescue and relief efforts.

Police recover body of doctor

FROM PAGE 01
leaders of the Provincial Doctors Association and Grand Health Alliance to stage a demonstration and boycott hospital duties. They had announced that if she was not found by Monday, protests would be extended to hospitals across the province. Following the news of the death, the hospital staff staged a protest and blocked the main Karakoram Highway (KKH) road from Fawara Chowk, assailing the police for "delayed action." As per the first information report (FIR), filed by her father under Section 365 (kidnapping or abducting) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), Mushtaq left the hospital with the wife of a well-known Abbottabad businessman and went to Jadoon Plaza, Mandian, within the jurisdiction of Mirpur Police Station, after which all contacts with her were lost. The FIR further detailed that Mushtaq had given her friend 67 tolas of gold for safekeeping in 2023 and went to Dubai. However, due to a lack of accommodation, she returned and demanded the return of the gold from her; however, the suspect kept evading it.

NA Secretariat seeks...

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Pakistan (ECP) in connection with their conviction in the May 9 cases. The PTI has nominated Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) chief Mehmoond Khan Achakzai and Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen (MWM) leader Allama Raja Nasir Abbas for the opposition leader slots in the NA and Senate, respectively. However, they have not yet been notified. In a statement issued today, a spokesperson for the NA Secretariat said that in the letter, the chief whip of the opposition had been asked to provide a written clarification regarding the status of the cases of Ayub and "whether they are pending in any court or not". According to the spokesperson, the letter sought the latest updates on the court proceedings against Ayub. The spokesperson further said that the opposition had informed the NA Secretariat earlier that Ayub's cases were not pending, but no written confirmation was submitted. According to the spokesperson, written information is essential to complete the process of nominating the opposition leader.

Briefs

KCCI hails historic appointment of Pak's first CDF

KARACHI: Businessmen Group (BMG) and Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) the leading representative bodies of the traders community, extending felicitations to Field Marshal Asim Munir on his historic appointment as Pakistan's first Chief of Defense Forces (CDF), on Monday reaffirmed their full support for sovereignty, economic progress, prosperity, and long-term national stability of the country. Chairman BMG, Zubair Motiwala and President KCCI, Rehan Hanif, in a joint statement issued here, observed that the landmark development, creating a unified command structure for all branches of the Armed Forces, reflected a forward-looking national vision aimed at strengthening Pakistan's security framework, enhancing strategic cohesion, and improving operational readiness in an increasingly complex global and regional environment.—APP

Rupee gains 01 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Monday appreciated by 01 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs280.41 compared to the previous day's closing at Rs280.42. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 281.35 and Rs 283.2, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 08 paisa to close at Rs 326.99, from the previous day's close of Rs 327.07, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen came down by 01 paisa to close at Rs 1.80, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed a decrease of Rs0.60 and closed at Rs 373.79 compared to the previous day's Rs 374.39. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 01 and 02 paisa to close at Rs76.34 and Rs74.70.—APP

Gold price rises by Rs1,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of per tola 24-karat gold on Monday increased by Rs 1,600 to Rs 443,762 compared to Rs442,162 on the previous day, according to the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. The price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold also rose by Rs 1,372 to Rs 380,454 from Rs379,082, while 10 grams of 22-karat gold increased by Rs 1,258 to Rs 348,762. In the international market, gold gained \$ 16, setting at \$4,214 per ounce. Meanwhile, per tola silver also went up by Rs 30 to Rs 6,102, and the price of 10 grams of silver increased by Rs 26 to Rs 5,231. International silver prices rose by \$0.30 to \$58.30 per ounce.—APP

China unveils top 10 trending media terms of 2025

BEIJING: The National Language Resources Monitoring and Research Center announced the top 10 trending terms featured in Chinese media throughout 2025, including "15th Five-Year Plan," "Sept. 3 parade" and "Global Governance Initiative." At a key Party plenum in October, the Communist Party of China leadership adopted its recommendations for the formulation of the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030), which became a key media term and drew both domestic and international spotlight. The Party leadership's recommendations set the overall direction and priorities of the 15th Five-Year Plan, and the final plan will be submitted for review and approval at the annual meeting of China's top legislature in March next year. On Sept. 3, China held a massive military parade in central Beijing to mark the 80th anniversary of victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. The popular term of "Sept. 3 parade" has spread China's commitment to peaceful development in a world still fraught with turbulence and uncertainty.—APP

Export growth not possible without global HRs compliance

The IOE Secretary General emphasized that Human Rights Due Diligence is no longer a technical concept but a core expectation of global buyers, investors, and consumers

ISLAMABAD: At the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI), Roberto Suarez Santos, Secretary General of the International Organization of Employers (IOE), delivered a powerful address as the Chief Guest at the Awareness Raising Session for Employers on Business and Human Rights Due Diligence held here on Monday. He underscored the rising global importance of Business and Human Rights, noting that in today's era of instant information and interconnected markets, a country's global perception is shaped not only by economic indicators but also by how responsibly its businesses operate. Nations that prioritize ethical practices, transparency, and fairness, he said, attract greater investment, stronger partnerships, and deeper trust from international markets. The IOE Secretary General emphasized that Human Rights Due Diligence is no longer a technical concept but a core expectation of global buyers, investors, and consumers. For businesses to remain competitive, he stressed, they must demonstrate credibility and engage meaningfully with workers, communities, and supply chains. He highlighted that addressing the systemic root causes of human rights challenges requires a holistic approach that includes improved labor practices,



greater access to remedies, safe workplaces, and a culture of respect across industries.

He further noted that sustainability can no longer be separated from human rights, as climate pressures, economic instability, and social vulnerabilities directly shape the long-term viability of enterprises. He urged Pakistani businesses to prepare for global shifts by embracing sustainability, integrating climate considerations into business planning, and strengthening resilience across their value chains.

Speaking on the occasion, President ICCI, Sardar Tahir Mehmood, said that the future belongs to economies

that are ethical, responsible, sustainable, people-centric, and aligned with international norms. He announced that ICCI will establish a dedicated Business and Human Rights Working Group in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP). This initiative, he added, will help bring Pakistan closer to meeting global expectations and building a transparent, sustainable, and competitive economic landscape. "Together, we can shape a future where responsible business conduct becomes the cornerstone of national progress," he concluded. Country Head International Labor Organization (ILO), Geir

Tonstol, highlighted the significance of compliance with international standards and showcased the major steps Pakistan has taken toward achieving these objectives. Malik Tahir Jawaid, President Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP), offered full technical support to ICCI members in improving compliance with international labor standards, responsible business practices, and strengthening the global credibility of Pakistani enterprises. Chairman Founder Group ICCI, Sheikh Tariq Sadiq, reaffirmed that economic progress and human dignity must advance together. "No business can truly grow if its workforce feels insecure, unheard, or unsup-

ported. Let us commit to a future where business success strengthens human rights," he said. Patron-in-Chief EFP, Mian Akram Farid, in his welcome remarks, emphasized that compliance with human rights conditions is now a mandatory requirement for international trade, including the European Union. He stressed that Pakistan's GSP+ status is tied to compliance with 27 international conventions relating to human rights and labor rights. Senior Vice President ICCI, Tahir Ayub conducted the program. Ministry of Human Rights, Government of Pakistan representative elaborated the National Action Plan and highlighted government initiatives and penalties for violations. Former EFP President Majid Aziz spoke about the importance of Human Rights Due Diligence for the sustainability and long-term growth of businesses. Prominent participants included ICCI Council Members Zubair Ahmed Malik, Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi, Chaudhry Waheed ul Din, Khalid Javaid, former Presidents Zahid Maqbool, Mohammad Ahmad, Nasir Khan, SVP Islamabad Industrial Association Mirza Mohammad Ali, Feroz Alam VP, EFP, Directors Humayun Nazir, Mohsin Tabani. Ms Sadef Hatif, Dr. Yousuf, Nazir Ali, Secretary General, market Presidents trade leaders, and executive members. —DNA

New Constitution of Uzbekistan foundation for favorable business

TASHKENT : On 8 December, the Republic of Uzbekistan celebrates Constitution Day. This important date symbolizes not only profound respect for the Basic Law but also serves as a starting point for implementing the country's new development strategy. As President Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized, "under the new constitutional conditions, we will continue our reforms even more decisively to ensure human interests and protect human honor and dignity" The implementation of these tasks has been given concrete legal substance in the new Constitution, adopted two years ago. It has created a modern legal framework for economic modernization and ensured reliable protection of the rights of entrepreneurs and investors. Furthermore, more than 30 laws and subordinate acts have been brought into conformity with the Basic Law, marking an essential stage in the implementation of the state's renewal strategy. Particular importance in achieving these goals is assigned to the entrepreneurial sector, which drives economic growth. For this reason, the Basic Law fully reflects the state's guarantees aimed at developing free-market mechanisms, ensuring fair competition, protecting private property, and supporting entrepreneurial initiative. Within these constitutional guarantees, a vital role is played by provisions that shape a favorable business environment, including those related to taxation. Thus, Article 63 introduces a vital addition stating that taxes and fees must be fair and should not impede citizens in exercising their constitutional rights. This enables the population, primarily entrepreneurs in Uzbekistan, to invest their savings in investment projects and obtain substantial returns. Support for entrepreneurs from public administration and oversight bodies is also of primary importance for the development of the private sector, as it should promote the growth of market relations, business initiatives, and a competitive environment. For this reason, Article 65 emphasizes that the state creates conditions for the development of market relations and fair competition and guarantees freedom of economic activity and entrepreneurship. By proclaiming constitutional support for ensuring a favorable business and investment climate, the legislator provides the business community and investors with state guarantees. The renewed Constitution also enshrines a provision stating that the foundation of the country's economy is property in its various forms. Unlike the previous edition, it guarantees the inviolability of private property. An owner may not be deprived of property except in cases and in the manner provided by law and based on a court decision. Thus, the Constitution, the law, and the courts become the sole protectors of property. —DNA

Sudan paramilitary seizes key oil field: engineer

PORT SUDAN, Sudan: An engineer at Sudan's largest oil field said Monday that the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces had seized the facility along the country's southern border, forcing the evacuation of its staff Sudan's energy and petroleum ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the reported capture of the Heglig field, located in the resource-rich Kordofan region. "This morning the RSF took control of the field. Our technical teams shut it down and halted production, and the workers were evacuated to South Sudan," the engineer said by phone from across the border. Since April of 2023, the RSF has been waging a war with the regular army that has killed tens of thousands of people, displaced 12 million more and decimated the country's already fragile infrastructure. The Heglig field is the country's largest, and is also the main processing facility for South Sudan's oil exports, which make up nearly all of Juba's government revenue. "The processing plant near the field through which South Sudanese oil passes was also shut down," the engineer said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media. The army has repeatedly accused the RSF of launching drone strikes on Heglig, prompting authorities to temporarily suspend operations there in August. Heglig lies in the far south of Sudan's Kordofan region, which has seen fierce fighting in recent weeks as the two sides wrestle for territory. A drone attack in South Kordofan state blamed on the RSF hit a kindergarten and a hospital last week, killing dozens of civilians, including children, according to a local official and army-aligned foreign ministry. In October, the RSF pushed army troops out of their last position in the western Darfur region, putting the military on the defensive as it tries to halt the paramilitary advance through Kordofan and back toward the capital Khartoum.—APP

Jordan, Germany committed to two-state solution

The king reiterated the need to adhere to the terms of the agreement to end the war in Gaza and ensure the flow of relief aid, as well

AMMAN: Jordan's King Abdullah has warned of "the danger of continued Israeli escalations in the West Bank," which Israel has occupied since 1967. King Abdullah received German Chancellor Friedrich Merz during his brief stopover in Jordan on Saturday. Their discussions in Aqaba focused mainly on the peace process in Israel and the Palestinian territories, AFP reported. Merz called for more humanitarian aid to flow into the Gaza Strip and for Hamas fighters to lay down their weapons, adding that both Jordan and Germany are committed to a negotiated two-state solution. "There can be no place for terrorism and antisemitism in this shared future," Merz said. Jordan's royal palace said in a statement that King Abdullah had underlined "the need to commit to implementing all stages of the agreement to end the war and deliver humanitarian aid to all areas of the strip." The meeting discussed ways to strengthen the partnership between Jordan and Germany, focusing on the deep-rooted ties between the two countries, Jordanian news agency Petra reported. King Abdullah emphasized the importance of expanding cooperation in various domains, including the economic and defense sectors, and continuing to coordinate in support of efforts to achieve stability in the region, according to Petra. The leaders highlighted the need to pursue a "political horizon to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region." Chancellor Merz expressed Germany's readiness to strengthen cooperation with Jordan in various sectors. The Syrian Arab Republic's Sana news agency reported that the two leaders discussed ways to support Syria and Lebanon in maintaining their security, stability, and sovereignty. They stressed the importance of respecting the sovereignty of regional countries and reviewed key developments in the Middle East. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi had previously affirmed that Jordan continues to support Syria after years of war and destruction, expressing hope for a stable and secure future that ensures Syria's territorial unity, Sana added. King Abdullah separately met with Kaja Kallas, EU high representative for foreign affairs and security policy and European Commission vice president on Sunday to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation within the framework of the strategic and comprehensive partnership between Jordan and the EU. The meeting at Basman Palace covered the importance of building on available economic opportunities, particularly through the Jordan-EU Summit, scheduled to be held in Amman in January 2026, as well as the joint economic forum scheduled for next year, with participation from investors on both sides. The meeting also touched on regional developments and the need to achieve comprehensive calm and preserve the sovereignty of states. The two sides emphasized that the two-state solution is the only way to achieve just and comprehensive peace. The king reiterated the need to adhere to the terms of the agreement to end the war in Gaza and ensure the flow of relief aid, as well as to stop unilateral measures against Palestinians in the West Bank. For her part, Kallas emphasized the importance of the EU's partnership with Jordan and the shared commitment to deepen cooperation in various fields, noting Jordan's pivotal role in the region.—APP

Islamic community warns of systematic islamophobic campaign

SARAJEVO: The Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina has sounded the alarm over what it describes as a coordinated and intensifying Islamophobic campaign aimed at Bosniaks and the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In a strongly worded statement, the Riyasat's Public Relations Office warned the domestic and international public that radical political actors are attempting to manufacture an "Islamic threat" narrative targeting the country's Muslim population. According to the statement, right-wing politicians from within Bosnia, the region and beyond have recently amplified hateful rhetoric, while pseudo-academic narratives seek to portray Bosniak identity and Islamic traditions as a danger. The Islamic Community stressed that Islam's role in Bosniak cultural, social, and political life mirrors the role Christianity plays for other peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in secular European societies. The statement condemned as "shameful" recent accusations of "demographic opportunism" directed at Bosniaks—particularly given that Bosniaks were victims of

genocide and systematic extermination during the 1990s, leaving lasting demographic and social scars across regions where they had lived for centuries. The Islamic Community expressed deep concern that individuals who openly promote anti-Muslim hatred are being given platforms within state institutions, and that their views are being disseminated through public broadcasters without any official condemnation. It warned that such legitimization of extremist narratives risks further polarizing an already fragile society. While affirming the importance of open political debate, the Community stressed that this must not serve as a justification for exclusionary or racist ideologies that undermine long-term peacebuilding. "Sowing hatred and distrust, and blaming genocide victims for having survived and for seeking an inclusive and democratic Bosnia and Herzegovina, does not lead to a better future," the statement noted. The Islamic Community emphasized that Bosniaks, through their political representatives, do not demand any rights or

guarantees for themselves that they are not prepared to ensure for all other peoples and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The statement cautioned those attempting to mobilize international opinion against Bosniaks by stoking Islamophobic fears. Such tactics, it said, will only complicate efforts to reach durable political solutions and damage interethnic trust. "The key to peace lies in building confidence and respecting all components of society," it stressed. Calling on responsible political leaders, media outlets, academics, and international partners to counter this "malicious campaign," the Islamic Community underscored the urgent need to protect societal cohesion and mutual trust. Despite the escalation of anti-Muslim rhetoric, the Islamic Community affirmed that it remains steadfast. Together with its imams, educators, members, and believers, it will continue advocating interreligious dialogue, mutual understanding, and an inclusive vision of religiosity that strengthens unity in diversity.—DNA

Rawlapindi traders raise concern over FBR raids

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has expressed serious concern over recent raids conducted at business centres in the city under the pretext of under-invoicing and low tax payments RCCI President Usman Shaukat, while strongly condemning the actions, said that such raids create an atmosphere of fear and send a negative message across the business community. "These actions amount to harassment. Instead of broadening the tax net, the FBR is targeting existing taxpayers, which is counterproductive," he said in a statement issued here on Monday. He urged the FBR and all relevant departments to adopt a fair and transparent process, stressing that a formal notice should be issued to traders before any action is taken. He further said that RCCI has always supported documentation and lawful tax practices, but arbitrary raids damage trust between businesses and regulatory bodies.—APP

Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan to boost grain transportation

ASTANA : Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have agreed on measures to expand train exchanges and increase the reception of grain and food cargo through the Saryagash interstate junction point, Qazinform News Agency reports citing the press service of Kazakhstan Temir Zholy. As part of the visit of the Kazakh delegation, a multilateral meeting was held at the Saryagash junction and in Tashkent involving the authorized bodies of Uzbekistan. The parties agreed on joint decisions to ensure the uninterrupted transportation of grain cargo through Saryagash to Central Asia and Afghanistan. Following the meeting, it was decided to increase train exchanges to 35 pairs per day, and to ensure that the Uzbek side receives at least 10 trains with grain and 5 trains with food products daily. Special attention was paid to unloading wagons, the functioning of access roads, and the operation of authorized services on a 24/7 basis, including weekends and holidays. In addition, the parties agreed to plan export shipments taking into account the free capacities of grain cargo recipients in Uzbekistan and the coordinated turnover of empty wagons.—APP

Lee stresses balanced regional uplift as key to sustainable growth

SEOUL: President Lee Jae Myung said Monday that balanced regional development is essential to South Korea's sustainable growth, pledging to pursue customized strategies that foster new growth engines across the nation Lee made the remarks during a policy briefing by the Presidential Committee for Decentralization and Balanced Development at the presidential office. "Strengthening decentralization, balanced development and local autonomy has become an unavoidable national survival strategy for the Republic of Korea's sustainable growth," he said. He noted that the government's past practice of channeling resources into the Seoul metropolitan area has reached its limit, underscoring the need for region-specific strategies to cultivate new growth engines. "The growth strategy centered on the metropolitan area delivered significant achievements in the past, but the excessive concentration in the capital region has reached a point where it is undermining the nation's growth potential," he said. During the briefing, the committee outlined plans to implement a customized development strategy for five regional hubs—the Seoul metropolitan, southeast, northeast, central and western regions—as well as three special self-governing provinces: Jeju, Gangwon and North Jeolla. Monday's session comes ahead of a series of policy briefings Lee is scheduled to receive from ministries and public institutions, beginning with the Ministry of Economy and Finance on Thursday.—APP

Briefs

China's trade surplus tops \$1tr despite plunge in US-bound exports

Exports climb 5.9% year-on-year in November, reversing the slight decline recorded in October

DNA

BEIJING: China's towering annual trade surplus surpassed \$1 trillion for the first time last month, data showed on Monday, as a sharp drop in shipments to the United States was offset by surging exports to other major markets. Presidents Xi Jinping and Donald Trump reached a tentative truce to their fierce trade war when they met in late October, agreeing a pause to painful measures that included lofty tit-for-tat tariffs. Exports have served as a key economic lifeline for China as trade and relations with the United States and others have fluctuated in recent years. That has helped temper a prolonged debt crisis in the country's vast property sector and sluggish domestic spending, which have weighed on growth and are among the most pressing issues facing Beijing. Exports climbed 5.9% year-on-year in November, reversing the slight decline recorded in October, the General Administration of Customs said.

Israel, Qatar and US hold trilateral meeting in New York

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States, Israel and Qatar held a trilateral meeting in New York on Sunday, a senior White House official told AFP, months after Israeli jets conducted an airstrike in Doha, unsuccessfully targeting Hamas leadership. The White House official confirmed that the meeting had taken place but did not provide any further details. Two sources told US news outlet Axios it was "the highest level meeting between the countries since the deal to end the war in Gaza, for which Qatar served as a key mediator." Axios also reported White House envoy Steve Witkoff hosted the meeting, with Mossad spy chief David Barnea representing Israel and an unnamed senior Qatari official in attendance. Qatar, along with Egypt and the United States, helped broker a comprehensive ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, which remains delicate as both Israel and Hamas accuse each other of breaching its terms. Israeli settlers attacked Palestinians' vehicles near the town of Mukhamas in the northeast of occupied East Jerusalem, according to the Wafa news agency, citing a statement by the Jerusalem Governorate.

Tallal Chaudhry says PTI's rhetoric pushed army to respond

DNA

ISLAMABAD: DMinister of State for Interior Tallal Chaudhry said on Monday that the PTI's "unjustified" criticism of the army had pushed the institution to respond. In remarks aired on the media, he also accused the opposition party of repeatedly criticising the army and its leadership for its own political gains. Referring to arguments by the PTI that the army should not interfere in politics, Chaudhry said, "The army is not intervening in politics. You, in order to further your own politics or to come into power by riding on someone else's shoulders, repeatedly try to drag the army and its head into politics. "You direct unjustified and unnecessary criticism [at them]. You level allegations without any reason," he said.

54th Eid Al-EtiHAD Day

PM Shehbaz Sharif hails Pak-UAE ties as excellent

Turning to bilateral ties, Ambassador Alzaabi spoke of the deep-rooted and historic friendship between the UAE and Pakistan, built on mutual respect and a shared vision for regional peace and development



ISLAMABAD: Chief guest Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Ambassador of United Arab Emirates Salem Mohammed Alzaabi, UAE Defence Attache cutting cake to celebrate the 54th Eid Al EtiHAD Day, at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. – DNA

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has praised the strong and enduring partnership between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates, describing bilateral relations as having grown from "cordial to excellent" over the years. Speaking at an event marking the 54th Eid Al-EtiHAD Day of the UAE, the Prime Minister said the relationship between the two brotherly nations is "poised to grow even further," supported by shared values, mutual respect, and a deep history of cooperation. The Prime Minister extended warm greetings to the leadership and people of the UAE on the national occasion, noting that the UAE has always stood by Pakistan in times of need. He highlighted the UAE's consistent support during economic challenges, natural disasters, and regional crises, expressing profound gratitude on behalf of the Pakistani nation. The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, H.E. Salem Alzaabi, hosted a grand reception in the capital on Monday evening to celebrate the 54th Union Day of the UAE.

The event was graced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as the Guest of Honour, alongside federal ministers, diplomats, senior officials, and notable figures from Pakistani society. In his address Ambassador Alzaabi said they commemorated the historic unification of the Emirates in 1971 under the founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. He emphasized that this year's theme, "United," reflects the core values of unity, cohesion, and tolerance that have propelled the UAE's remarkable development over five decades. "This year's celebrations coincide with the declaration of 2025 as the 'Year of the Community' in the UAE, reaffirming our leadership's belief in the vital role played by all citizens and residents," the Ambassador stated. He highlighted the UAE's strategic national visions, including "We the UAE 2031" and the "UAE Centennial 2071," which guide the nation's advancement in clean energy, knowledge-based growth, and future-ready sectors. Turning to bilateral ties, Ambassador Alzaabi spoke of the deep-rooted and historic friendship between the UAE and Pakistan, built on mutual respect and a shared

vision for regional peace and development. "As we gather here in Islamabad, we are reminded of the strong bonds that unite our two nations," he said. Looking forward, the Ambassador outlined a robust commitment to strengthening the partnership. "We see tremendous potential for collaboration in various sectors, including renewable energy, artificial intelligence, sustainability, economic diversification, and agricultural innovation," he announced. He expressed confidence that such cooperation would create new opportunities for the youth of both nations and drive innovation beneficial to the wider region. In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Alzaabi extended heartfelt gratitude to the government and people of Pakistan for their consistent warmth, hospitality, and support. "May the bond between the UAE and Pakistan continue to grow stronger for generations to come," he said. The reception served as a vibrant testament to the enduring diplomatic and people-to-people ties between the two brotherly nations, with attendees celebrating the UAE's national day amidst a spirit of camaraderie and shared future aspirations.

Transporters 'end strike' as Punjab govt 'halts' of heavy fines

Transporters have reached understanding with Transport Minister Bilal Akbar Khan, say sources

NEWS DESK

LAHORE/RAWALPINDI: The transporters have called off their strike against heavy fines after reaching an agreement with the Punjab government, sources told Geo News on Monday. The sources said that the transporters had reached an understanding with Transport Minister Bilal Akbar Khan, following which it was agreed that implementation of the new traffic rules would be halted and the wheel-jam strike would be called off. This was the second round of talks after the first round had failed. Punjab's transporters had announced a wheel-jam strike for today to protest heavy fines, calling on the provincial gov-

ernment to immediately withdraw the Traffic Ordinance 2025. Addressing a joint press conference in Lahore, Pakistan Transport United Action Committee leaders categorically rejected the ordinance, saying that heavy fines were being collected through the ordinance. They described it as "unfair" to transporters. "Public transport will remain suspended until the ordinance is withdrawn," warned the transporters. Goods transport, mini buses, loaders, and rickshaws had joined the strike, while intra-city, inter-district, and inter-provincial transport services were to remain suspended, they added. Reacting to the transporters' strike, Punjab Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Usman Anwar had said that they would not bow down to any "blackmailing" or pressure. "Driving without a license is tantamount to inviting death and accidents," he added. The Punjab IG said that in civilised countries, the law is upheld rather than challenged through strikes. He added that driving without a licence is a "licence to kill," a practice that exists nowhere else in the world. The Punjab police last week issued at least 63,970 challans worth over Rs80 million in 24 hours as part of an ongoing crackdown on traffic violators. A police spokesperson said the challans had been issued to vehicles and motorcycles across the province. At least 28,000 challans were issued in a single day for helmet violations, and 4,312 for other traffic rule breaches, the spokesperson had added. Furthermore, the police confiscated 23,904 vehicles, the official had said.

Aurangzeb affirms policy reforms and formalization push

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, has reaffirmed the Government's commitment to strengthening Pakistan's formal economy and encouraging responsible, long-term investment during a meeting held today at the Finance Division with a delegation from Nestlé Pakistan. Emphasizing the Government's resolve to clamp down on the informal sector, an effort that has already begun yielding visible results in multiple industries, the Finance Minister noted that improved compliance, transparency, and a strengthened tax ecosystem are central to Pakistan's economic recovery. He highlighted the establishment of the Tax Policy Office within the Finance Division as a major structural reform that will allow continuous, year-round engagement with the private sector, enabling policy refinement and effective implementation ahead of the next budget cycle. The delegation from Nestlé Pakistan, led by Chief Executive Officer Jason Avancena, accompanied by Chief Financial Officer Maqsood Ahmad Anjum and Head of Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Sheikh Waqar Ahmad, briefed the Finance Minister on the company's longstanding commit-

ment to Pakistan and its plans for future expansion. The CEO elaborated on ongoing and upcoming investments in sustainability, agricultural services transformation, enhanced manufacturing capacity, and the deployment of advanced technologies across the value chain. He explained that Nestlé is implementing solar and biomass energy systems, digital dashboards, environmentally improved packaging, and supply-chain automation, enabling reductions in operational costs and greenhouse-gas emissions while strengthening the company's long-term competitiveness. As part of their broader shift toward domestic value creation, the delegation highlighted that Nestlé's localization efforts have materially strengthened its resilience. They noted that through sustained efforts to localize raw materials and reconfigure product portfolios, Nestlé Pakistan has reduced its import volumes by nearly half over the past three years from around USD 150 million to approximately USD 76-80 million, thereby minimizing exposure to foreign-exchange pressures and deepening integration with Pakistan's agricultural and manufacturing base. The Finance Minister commended these localization efforts and underscored the Government's intention to facilitate greater formalization and enhanced tax equity across the food and beverages sector.

Thailand-Cambodia clashes reignite

BANGKOK: Thailand launched air strikes Monday on its neighbour Cambodia, with both sides trading blame for renewed fighting on their disputed border that has killed four Cambodian civilians and a Thai soldier. Around 35,000 people in Thailand have been evacuated from border areas, the country's Second Army Region said in a statement. Five days of combat between Thailand and Cambodia this summer killed 43 people and displaced around 300,000 on both sides of the border before a truce took effect. But last month Thailand paused a follow-on deal backed by US President Donald Trump to wind down hostilities, saying a landmine blast at the border had wounded several soldiers. Since then, Cambodian and Thai officials have reported sporadic skirmishes along their frontier, which reignited Sunday and Monday. Cambodia's information minister Neth Pheaktra told AFP that "at least four Cambodian civilians were killed in the Thai attacks" on Monday, including a woman who died when a shell hit in Preah Vihear province. – APP

Trump says 'a little bit disappointed'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Sunday said he felt "a little bit disappointed" with Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky for not engaging with a plan to end the war with Russia. "So we've been speaking to President Putin and we've been speaking to Ukrainian leaders – including Zelensky, President Zelensky – and I have to say that I'm a little bit disappointed that President Zelensky hasn't yet read the proposal, that was as of a few hours ago," Trump told reporters when asked on the red carpet for the Kennedy Center Honors. Days of negotiations between US and Ukrainian officials, including Zelensky, ended Saturday without an apparent breakthrough, though Zelensky committed to conducting further talks toward "real peace." The talks came after US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner met Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin, with Moscow rejecting parts of the US proposal. – APP



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