



Islamabad POST

Saturday, December 13, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

US President says both Russia and Ukraine stubborn

Detailed News On Page-08

Relations with Iraq growing, says Naqvi

Detailed News On Page-08



Vawda Claims Faiz to Testify against Imran

Detailed News On Page-08



Ashgabat meeting

Pakistan, Turkiye pledge to solidify ties in all fields

President Erdogan thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for his views , particularly his kind words and expressed his desire to work together with a view to build stronger ties between the two countries

DNA

ASHGABAT: Meeting of the Prime Minister with President of Türkiye on the sidelines of International Conference on Peace and Trust Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, , on the sidelines of the International Forum dedicated to the International Year of Peace and Trust in Ashgabat. During their warm and cordial meeting, the two leaders reaffirmed the significance of the historic and deep fraternal bonds between the two nations, that were rooted in shared values and a common aspiration for peace and prosperity. While expressing his satisfaction at the frequent leadership level engagements between Pakistan and Türkiye this year, the Prime Minister expressed his firm resolve to further strengthen bilateral cooperation with Türkiye in all areas of mutual interest including political, energy, economic, defence and investment. In this regard, the Prime Minister expressed his satisfaction at the convening of the 16th session of the Pak-Türkiye JMC that would ensure implementation of the decisions of the 7th HLSCC. While identifying energy, petroleum and minerals as priority sectors, the Prime Minister welcomed Turkish interest and investments in these areas. He urged the two sides to ensure the timely implementation of the recently signed MOUs/agreements in these critical sectors. The Prime Minister said that Pakistan sought to benefit from Turkish expertise in the privatization of distribution companies. In this regard, it was decided that Ministerial level exchanges between the two countries would take place very soon.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan calls for peaceful conflict resolution

DNA

ASHGABAT: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the peaceful settlement of global disputes, while urging the international community to press the Afghan Taliban to honour their international obligations and curb terrorist groups operating from Afghan soil. "Peaceful resolution of disputes is a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign diplomacy. It is in the same spirit that Pakistan supported the Gaza Peace Plan and its subsequent endorsement by the UN Security Council," the prime minister said in his address to the international forum held in connection with the International Year of Peace and Trust 2025, the International Day of Neutrality, and the anniversary of Turkmenistan's permanent neutrality. The prime minister pointed out that Pakistan began the year by assuming its place as non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, where the country was striving to uphold global peace and security.

Continued on Page 06

Five cops injured in Bannu blast

BUREAU REPORT

BANNU: Five cops were injured after terrorists launched a late-night attack on a police checkpoint in Shaikh Landak area located within the Havaid police jurisdiction in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bannu, it emerged on Friday. A statement released by the spokesperson for the regional police officer, Kashif Nawaz, said Fitna al Khawarij terrorists attacked the post late on Thursday night. Fitna al Khawarij is a term the state uses for terrorists belonging to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The statement said that police personnel showed courage, bravery and acted in a timely manner, managing to repel the attack. "As a result of the effective and vigorous retaliatory fire by the police, the terrorists suffered heavy casualties," the statement said. It said that the exchange of fire continued for three hours, adding that reports suggested that several terrorists had been killed and injured. It added that armed tribesmen and members of the peace committee backed police personnel in the gunfight with the terrorists. It added that during this process, five cops sustained "minor injuries" and

Continued on Page 06

India frees up visas for Chinese people

DNA

NEW DELHI: India has cut red tape to speed business visas for Chinese professionals, two officials said, a major step to boost ties between the Asian giants and end chronic delays that cost output worth billions of dollars because of scarce technicians. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi cautiously rekindles ties with Beijing in the face of punishing US tariffs, the officials said New Delhi dropped a layer of bureaucratic scrutiny and shortened visa approval times to less than a month. Both officials who confirmed the development to Reuters spoke on condition of anonymity. India had blocked virtually all Chinese visits after the nuclear-armed neighbours clashed on their Himalayan frontier in mid-2020, widening its vetting of business visas beyond the home and foreign ministries. The issues around securing visas have now been completely

Continued on Page 06



ASHGABAT: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meets the President of Türkiye H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the sidelines of the International Conference on Peace and Trust in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. – DNA

Economic stability

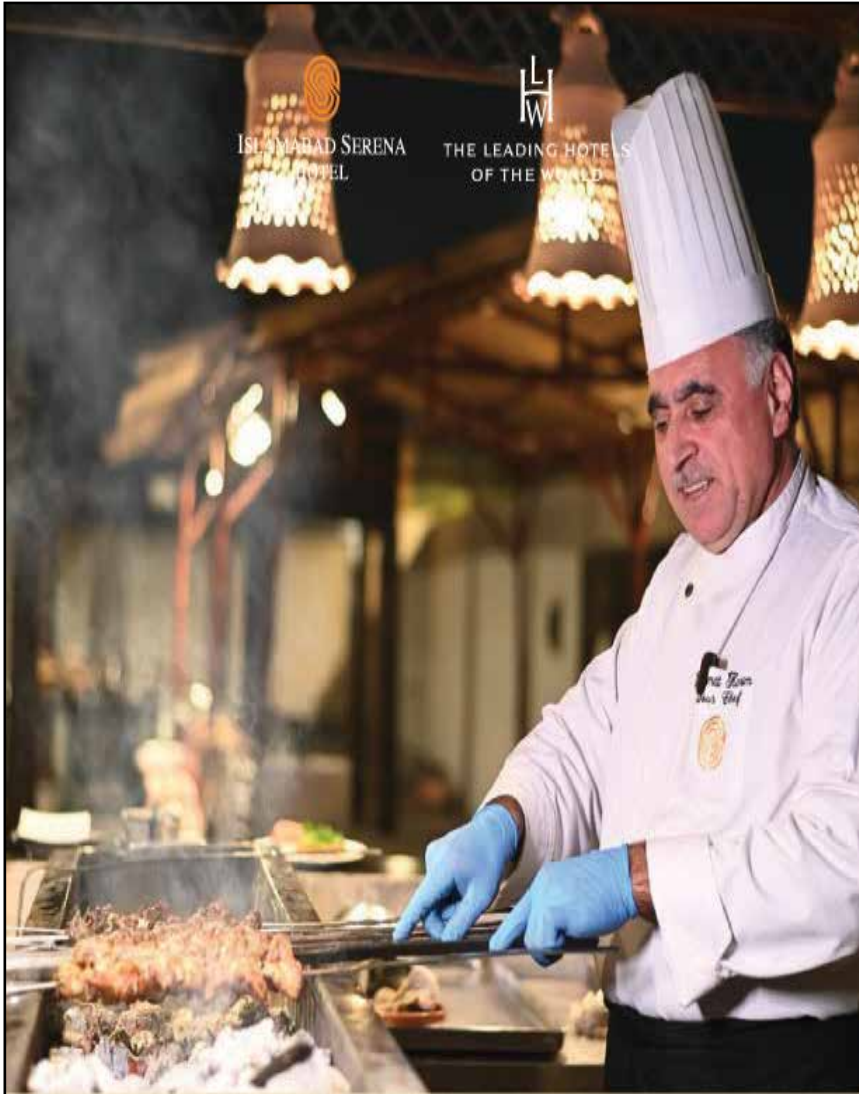
SBP likely to hold rate at 11% as IMF flags inflation risks

All 12 analysts surveyed in a Reuters poll expect no cut in the policy meeting on Monday

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) is expected to retain interest rates at 11% on Monday, a Reuters poll showed, as analysts push back rate-cut forecasts to late 2026 after the IMF warned inflation risks persist and policy must stay "appropriately tight". All 12 analysts surveyed expect no cut in the policy meeting on Monday. A majority of them see inflation hovering at 6%-8% in the coming months before rising again toward the end of fiscal 2026 as base effects fade and food and transport prices stay volatile after flood-related supply disruptions. Most respondents now believe the central bank will not begin easing until the closing months of FY26, which ends in June 2026, with some analysts pushing fore-

casts for the first cut into fiscal year 2027, beginning July 2026. The IMF, in a second review released on Thursday, said monetary policy needs to remain "appropriately tight and data-dependent" to keep expectations anchored and noted that the SBP had maintained positive real interest rates on a forward-looking basis. It said the tight stance had been pivotal in reducing inflation and should be maintained to ensure price stability and support the rebuilding of external buffers. Analysts said these risks, along with the SBP's preference for maintaining positive real interest rates, would keep policymakers cautious. The SBP has held its policy rate at 11% since September, after cutting it by 1,100 basis points between June 2024 and May 2025 as inflation fell sharply from highs near 40% in 2023.



A REFINED BBQ EXPERIENCE

Inspired by authentic flavours, Baradari serves BBQ that transforms tradition into an unforgettable dining experience.

7:30 pm till 11:00 pm

For reservations, please call: 051 111 133 133

Briefs

GB elections on Jan 24

DNA

GILGIT-BALTISTAN: President Asf Ali Zardari on Friday approved the schedule for the upcoming general elections in Gilgit Baltistan, according to an official notification. The notification read that elections for the Gilgit Baltistan Assembly will be held on January 24, 2026. Following the president's approval, the Election Commission of Gilgit Baltistan will issue a new and detailed election schedule, said Chief Election Commissioner Abid Ali. He added that the election watchdog will soon convene an all-parties conference to hold consultations with political stakeholders. Justice (ret'd) Yar Muhammad Nasir, the former judge of the Gilgit Baltistan Chief Court, was sworn in as the caretaker chief minister of the region.

Storm Byron razes 12 buildings in Gaza

DNA

GAZA: Gaza's Ministry of Interior and National Security said that response teams have fielded over 4,300 emergency calls from residents throughout the enclave since the storm began, Al Jazeera reported. In the past few hours, the ministry said at least 12 previously shelled buildings have collapsed because of powerful winds and heavy rainfall. The ministry said its police forces were helping civil defence and municipal teams conduct rescue operations despite limited resources. Several people were missing, and authorities believe they may be trapped beneath the rubble of collapsed buildings or remain unaccounted for.

Iran confirms regional meeting on Afghanistan

Baqaei said the planned meeting reflects the Islamic Republic of Iran's ongoing consultations with neighboring states, including Pakistan and Afghanistan, aimed at strengthening peace, stability, and cooperation in the region

DNA

TEHRAN: Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmail Baqaei has confirmed that a key regional meeting on Afghanistan will take place in Tehran next week, bringing together special envoys from neighboring and regional countries to discuss the evolving situation in Afghanistan and broader regional stability. Speaking to reporters, Baqaei said the planned meeting reflects the Islamic Republic of Iran's ongoing consultations with neighboring states, including Pakistan and Afghanistan, aimed at strengthening peace, stability, and cooperation in the region. "Iran attaches fundamental importance to security and stability in its neighborhood and will spare no effort to help reduce tensions between regional countries and enhance mutual understanding," the Spokesperson stated. He emphasized that the upcoming gathering is the outcome of extensive consultations held at multiple levels with regional partners.

Continued on Page 06

Joint statement by the FM's of Pakistan, Egypt, Indonesia,others

DNA

CAIRO: The Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Indonesia, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Türkiye, and the United Arab Emirates reaffirm the indispensable role of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in safeguarding the rights and well-being of Palestinian refugees. For decades, UNRWA has carried out a unique mandate entrusted to it by the international

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan signs MoU with Binance to explore Innovation

The MoU establishes a framework for exploring potential collaboration on the tokenisation and blockchain-based distribution of Pakistan's real-world and sovereign assets, including government bonds, treasury bills, commodity reserves and other federally owned assets



FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: In a significant step towards leveraging emerging financial technologies to strengthen Pakistan's capital markets and enhance global investor access, the

Ministry of Finance, Government of Pakistan, today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Binance Investments Co., Ltd., one of the world's leading blockchain and digital asset technology companies. The MoU was signed at the Finance Division, Islamabad, by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, and Mr. Richard Teng, Co-CEO of Binance, in the presence of Mr. Changpeng Zhao (CZ), CEO of Binance. The MoU establishes a framework for exploring potential collaboration on the tokenisation and blockchain-based distribution of Pakistan's real-world and sovereign assets, including government bonds, treasury bills, commodity reserves and other federally owned assets. Subject to applicable laws, policies and regulatory approvals, the initiative may involve assets of up to USD 2 billion, with the objective of enhancing liquidity, transparency and international market accessibility. Under the proposed arrangement, Binance and/or its affiliates may provide technical expertise, advisory support, training and capacity building to enable Pakistan to assess modern, compliant blockchain infrastructure.

Continued on Page 06

A group of men are seated around a small wooden table in a meeting room. On the left, two men in suits are engaged in conversation. In the center, a man in a light-colored suit sits with his hand to his chin, listening. On the right, a man in a dark police uniform with 'POLICE' and 'BALUCHISTAN' visible on his sleeve sits with his hands clasped. Next to him, an older man in a grey kurta and shawl sits attentively. The table holds two small flags of Pakistan, a water bottle, and some papers. The background features a wood-paneled wall with a large crest of the Balochistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

ISLAMABAD: President ICCI Sardar Tahir Mehmood meeting with Police Inspector General Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi.

Pakistan's transmission infrastructure development, strengthening the strategic partnership between both organizations.

“SAY NO TO CORRUPTION”

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY
(PROCUREMENT & CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION SECTION)

SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE
INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION

PAKISTAN
CONSTRUCTION OF HYDERABAD SUKKUR MOTORWAY (M-6) PROJECT
SECTION 5: RANIPUR- SUKKUR (59.88 KM)
(PAK1064)

This Invitation for Prequalification follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in “Roznama Jang” and “The News” of October 03, 2025 on-line.

- The Islamic Republic of Pakistan has applied for a Finance from the Islamic Development Bank (ISDB) toward the cost of the **Construction of Hyderabad Sukkur Motorway (M-6) Project**, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this financing to payments under the contract for **Section 5: Ranipur- Sukkur (59.88 Km)**. The National Highway Authority intends to prequalify contractors and/or firms for **Section 5: Ranipur- Sukkur (59.88 Km)**. It is expected that invitations for bid will be made in **March 2026**.
- Prequalification will be conducted through prequalification procedures specified in the Procurement Guidelines for the Procurement of Goods, Works and Related Services under ISDB Financing, April 2019 (Revised February 2023) and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries, as defined in the guidelines.
- Interested eligible Applicants may obtain further information from and inspect the prequalification document at the **General Manager Procurement and Contract Administration (P&CA)** (address below) from 9:00-04:30 (excluding the statutory public holidays and official holidays). A complete set of the prequalification document in *English* may be purchased by interested Applicants (a) on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **Rs. 10,000** or in **US\$50**. The method of payment will be **Pay Order/Demand Draft in favor of National Highway Authority**. The document may be collected in person at the address mentioned below.
- Applications for prequalification should be submitted in sealed envelopes, delivered to the address below by **January 26, 2026**, and be clearly marked **“Application to Prequalify for Construction of Hyderabad Sukkur Motorway (M-6) Project; Section 5: Ranipur - Sukkur (59.88 Km).”**

National Highway Authority
Ministry of Communications Government of Pakistan,
GENERAL MANAGER PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION (P&CA)
NHA Head Quarters, P.O. Box No.1205, 28-Mauve area, Sector G-9/1, Islamabad
Telephone No. 051-9032727, Fax No. 051-9260419
Email: gmpca.nha@gmail.com & Website: www.nha.gov.pk

PID(I)4946/25

محفوظ شامزین محفوظ پاکستان

National Days and Armed Forces Days

DECEMBER

Dec 01/Romania National Day

Dec 02/United Arab Emirates National Day

Dec 02/Laos Republic National Day

Dec 05/Thailand National Day

Dec 06/Finland Independence Day

Dec 07/India Armed Forces Flag Day

Dec 09/Tanzania National Day

Dec 11/Oman Armed Forces Day

Dec 12/Kenya Independence Day

Dec12/Turkmenistan Neutrality Day

Dec 16/Bahrain National Day


Dec 16/Kazakhstan Independence Day

Dec 18/Qatar National Day

Dec 18/Niger National Day


Dec 23/Philippines Armed Forces Day

Dec 23/Japan National Day




Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....9266044
Motorway Police.9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20




Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
CAA.....9281092




Hospitals

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




Departments

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



Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224
Potohar Town.....9209224
Rawal Town.....5773343



Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Senator alleges ‘corruption’ of billions at MOFA attestation wing

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: After Senator Rana Mahmoodul Hassan alleged on Friday that “corruption of billions of rupees” was being committed daily at the foreign affairs ministry in the attestation of documents, a Senate body decided to raise the matter with the Foreign Office (FO). The attestation of documents, such as educational and marriage certificates, by the foreign affairs ministry is typically required for recognition by international and foreign entities. The matter came up during a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, where Senator Hassan of the PPP alleged corruption in the process and remarked: “Overseas Pakistanis are either running from post to pillar for a single signature or paying money for corruption.” He said that people had been complaining about having to spend nights on pavements to get their documents attested. The attestation process should either be digitised or union councils and deputy commissioners should be authorised to attest documents, he stressed. Senator Anwaarul Haq Kakar also raised the question of why the process was not being digitised. “Is there a lack of resources?” he said, adding that there should be an app for the FO. He further stated that the FO should be asked why the issue was not being resolved. “The higher-up in the Foreign Office does not want to let go of control, and the subordinate is running a shop,” he commented without taking any names and elaborating further. “What is the job of the Foreign Office?” he added. PML-N Senator Agha Shahzaib Durrani claimed during the meeting that a commander of the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban (TTP) had travelled for Haj and Umrah on a Pakistani passport. At that, Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl Senator Maulana Attaur Rehman asked, “Who allowed the TTP to enter [the country]?” Senator Kakar responded to that, saying, “We, too, were with those who gave the permission.” He also mentioned that when TTP’s Mullah Mansour died, a Pakistani passport was also found in his possession. As the Senate standing committee expressed reservations over the attestation process, it decided to raise the matter with the FO. Earlier in the meeting, Senator Agha Shahzaib Durrani was elected to chairperson of the standing committee. The body was previously headed by PML N’s Irfan Siddiqui, who passed away on November 10.

Pak, Yemen vow to strengthen bilateral trade ties



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan met with Ambassador of Yemen to Pakistan, Mohammed Motahar Alashabi, on Friday in Islamabad for a constructive discussion on enhancing Pakistan-Yemen trade and economic co-operation. During the meeting, H.E. Alashabi highlighted the historically warm relations between the two countries and stressed Yemen's desire to expand commercial engagement with Pakistan, said a release issued here. He noted that despite logistical and regional challenges in recent years, Yemen continues to value Pakistan as a trusted partner. He shared that nearly 300 Yemeni students are currently studying in Pakistan, reflecting strong

people-to-people ties and continued confidence in Pakistan's educational institutions. He emphasized the need to revive and operationalize existing bilateral agreements and strengthen institutional mechanisms to facilitate trade. Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening economic co-operation with Yemen, noting that Pakistan places high priority on expanding trade with regional and nearby markets. Jam Kamal highlighted the importance of creating efficient, low-cost logistics channels for small and medium enterprises and informed H.E. Alashabi that the Ministry is examining the introduction of ferry-based small shipping

services to reduce freight costs and improve turnaround time for regional trade. The Minister observed that Pakistan's growing entrepreneurial and SME sectors can greatly benefit from improved access to close-proximity markets such as Yemen, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Oman. He assured that Pakistan will follow up on institutional proposals and engage relevant platforms, to strengthen bilateral cooperation. Both sides expressed confidence that sustained dialogue, improved logistics, and revival of formal cooperation mechanisms will help unlock new opportunities for trade and investment between Pakistan and Yemen.—APP

Weekly inflation falls slightly

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), recorded a slight decrease of 0.03 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on December 11, 2025, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review was recorded at 335.73 points, down from 335.84 points last week. On a year-on-year basis, the SPI increased by 3.90 percent. The weekly SPI with base year 2015=100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group (up to Rs17,732) decreased by 0.26 percent, to 326.84 points from 327.70 points. The SPI for consumption

groups of Rs17,733–22,888; Rs22,889–29,517 and Rs29,518–44,175; decreased by 0.17 percent, 0.09 percent, 0.04 percent respectively, while it increased by 0.02 percent for and above Rs44,175. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 12 (23.53%) items increased, 10 (19.61%) items decreased, and 29 (56.86%) items remained stable. Major commodities registering a week-on-week decrease included tomatoes (16.18%), sugar (4.91%), onions (4.08%), potatoes (1.71%), bananas (1.01%), pulse gram (0.36%), pulse masoor (0.10%), gur (0.08%) and LPG (0.08%). Items showing an increase in prices included chicken (6.19%), wheat flour (2.88%), eggs (0.93%), cooking oil 5 litre (0.72%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (0.70%),

tea prepared (0.56%), powdered milk (0.39%), pulse moong (0.37%), washing soap (0.20%) and firewood (0.08%). On a year-on-year basis, major increases were observed in the prices of sugar (30.28%), gas charges for q1 (29.85%), wheat flour (21.59%), gur (14.96%), beef (13.42%), firewood (12.86%), powdered milk (9.46%), chicken (8.62%), diesel (8.42%), lawn printed (8.29%) and cooking oil 5 litre (7.92%) an bananas (7.79%). Commodities witnessing year-on-year decline included potatoes (42.59%), tomatoes (40.75%), garlic (37.46%), onions (30.23%), pulse gram (28.95%), tea packet (17.79%), pulse mash (13.33%), electricity charges for Q1 (8.40%) and salt powder (5.08%).—APP

CDA plans mulberry-free Capital

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy DG Environment at the Capital Development Authority (CDA), Irfan Azeem Khan Niazi announced on Friday that the Prime Minister is prioritizing the beautification of the capital, with plans to inaugurate new flyovers within the next two days and replace mulberry trees with species better suited for allergy-prone residents. In an exclusive conversation with PTV News Channel, the DG disclosed that two new flyovers at D Chowk and Shaheen Chowk will be inaugurated within the next two to three days, depending on the Prime Minister's availability. He emphasized that these flyovers are part of the ongoing efforts to improve the capital's infrastructure. The Interior Minister has strictly advised CDA DG that the focus remain not only on the timely construction of the flyovers but also on the beautification

of the green spaces surrounding them. This includes the addition of flowering plants to enhance the city's aesthetic appeal and environmental quality. He further added that the Faizabad remodeling project, which includes widening the roads and extending the loops, is nearing completion, adding, these upgrades will significantly enhance traffic flow in the area. He also discussed the ongoing beautification of key interchanges, emphasizing that efforts to enhance their aesthetic appeal with greenery and landscaping are well underway. Responding to a query about mulberry trees causing allergies for residents, he explained that when Islamabad was first developed, the population was much smaller, adding, however, with the growing population, the issue has become more prominent. He assured that by Spring, Islamabad will be mulberry-free, with 75% of the work already completed. Talking about park maintenance,

he disclosed that there are 12 major parks in Islamabad, including the second phase of Lake View Park, which is set to begin soon. He also mentioned that a comprehensive program is being introduced for community parks, along with the implementation of uniformed cards for food vendors. In total, Islamabad has 320 parks total and efforts are underway to enhance their maintenance and facilities. When asked about tree cutting, he explained that no one, including citizens, can cut or trim trees without obtaining permission from the CDA. He called for greater awareness of this policy to protect the city's environment. In his concluding remarks, he highlighted that social media platforms are actively being used to address citizen concerns, with the Chairman of CDA personally overseeing the matters. He emphasized that if any citizen reports a complaint, they receive a response directly from the CDA.

Senate body approves transfer of Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2025

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Railways on Friday unanimously approved the draft of the Transfer of Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2025 after detailed deliberations. The body met under the chair of Senator Jam Saifullah Khan which was attended by Senator Dost Ali Jeesar, Senator Kami Ali Agha, Senator Rubina Khalid and Senator Shahadat Awan. Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi briefed the committee on the objectives of the proposed legislation, saying that the amendments aim to attract investment by enabling track access for various stakeholders. He said that the provision would play a pivotal role in facilitating major national projects, including the Reko Diq project. The committee was informed that several provincial governments had expressed interest in investing in Pakistan Railways, and the proposed amendments would create an enabling framework for them to contribute to railway infrastructure development. The Chairman directed the Ministry to ensure the Minister's inclusion in the Board to reinforce public oversight and strengthen institutional supervision. The committee also recommended several measures to improve Pakistan Railways' performance. It advised the Ministry to engage Chambers of Commerce to encourage investment and expand public-private partnerships. The Chairman further instructed that the ongoing infrastructure upgrades—such as the installation of LED lighting at major railway stations—be extended to smaller stations as well. He also called for enhanced public awareness campaigns on safety near railway tracks. The Chairman directed the Ministry of Railways to present a comprehensive briefing in the next meeting, covering issues such as outsourcing, new recruitments, its effects on employees, manpower planning, budgetary impacts, and comparative revenue statistics before and after outsourcing initiatives.—APP

Senate panel seeks full disclosure of ETPB properties

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Less Developed Areas on Friday directed the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) to submit a complete record of all properties under its management, along with revenue details, before the next session. The Sub-Committee, chaired by Senator Danesh Kumar, convened the same day, where the convener asked ETPB officials to brief the panel on the criteria and mechanisms through which the department generates its revenue. He expressed concern that numerous ETPB properties had been leased out at disproportionately low monthly rental values, and instructed the Board to undertake a comprehensive reassessment and fair revaluation of these assets. During the briefing, the ETPB representative informed the committee that surveys of various properties had been completed and rents reassessed accordingly. Based on these surveys, rental values are expected to increase by up to 460%. The officials added that certain aspects of the matter were linked to ongoing judicial proceedings; therefore, progress was being carried out gradually and strictly in line with legal requirements. While reviewing the agenda, Convener Danesh Kumar expressed displeasure over the delayed submission of the working paper, noting that timely provision of documents would have enabled the committee to conduct a more detailed examination prior to the meeting. The meeting was attended by Senator Nadeem Bhutto, Chairman Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), the Additional Secretary, and other senior officers of the ETPB. Highlighting the importance of the ETPB's mandate, Senator Danesh Kumar underscored that the restoration and maintenance of temples, gurdwaras, and other heritage sites play a vital role in projecting Pakistan's positive soft image globally. Speaking about Balochistan, he noted that the Hinglaj Mata Mandir hosts the second-largest Hindu religious pilgrimage after India. He informed the committee that one temple in Balochistan had recently been handed over to the Sikh community, while an ancient Mandir in Zhob had been restored and returned to the Hindu community. He further shared that a local Imam had participated in the inauguration ceremony, presenting an exemplary gesture of interfaith harmony.—DNA

Syedaal briefed on FIA Cyber Crime Wing performance

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Syedal Khan on Friday met Director General of the FIA Cyber Crime Wing, Syed Khurram Ali, at the Parliament House, where the DG gave a detailed briefing on the wing's functions, performance, and challenges. The Director General explained that the Cyber Crime Wing (CCW) is a specialized department of FIA operating under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA 2016). Established in 2007, the wing is equipped with modern technology and possesses expertise in digital forensics, technical investigations, information security audits, penetration testing, and professional training. He further noted that the CCW is the only national institution that directly receives public complaints and takes legal action against perpetrators of cybercrimes. Deputy Chairman Senate Syedal Khan appreciated the services of the Cyber Crime Wing, expressing concern over baseless propaganda targeting political leaders and prominent personalities on social media. He emphasized the need for effective mechanisms to curb such practices. He stressed that strategies must be adopted that safeguard individuals from defamation and encourage the responsible and constructive use of social media in the national interest. He appealed to the public to use social media responsibly, noting that its misuse not only harms the country but also affects the reputation of key national figures. The Deputy Chairman expressed hope that FIA's Cyber Crime Wing would continue to enhance its performance and play a vital role in national development, public protection, and the promotion of healthy digital platforms. He underlined the importance of robust strategies to counter misinformation circulating on social media, stating that the role of the Cyber Crime Wing in this regard is of critical importance.—APP

SP honours retiring cop for dedicated service

ISLAMABAD: Superintendent of Police (SP) Awane-Sadr Tahir Mahmood Khan on Friday paid tribute to retiring Head Constable Tanveer Ahmed and Constable Muhammad Kabir, acknowledging their long and devoted service to Islamabad Capital Territory Police. An ICT Police official told APP that the SP presented commendation certificates and gifts to the retiring officials in recognition of their dedication, discipline and professional conduct during their years of service. He said the services rendered by police officers throughout their careers play a vital role in maintaining law and order and strengthening public trust in the force. He appreciated the retiring officials for performing their duties with honesty and commitment. SP Tahir Mahmood Khan extended best wishes to Head Constable Tanveer Ahmed and Constable Muhammad Kabir for a healthy and successful life after retirement, adding that their contributions to Islamabad Police would always be remembered.—APP

Over 712 kanals of valuable estate land reclaimed

ISLAMABAD: The grand operation against illegal constructions and encroachments in the Federal Capital, Islamabad, is progressing rapidly, in line with the direction of Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa. According to details, the anti-encroachment operation in the area adjoining Diplomatic Enclave of the Federal Capital Islamabad is being conducted successfully. During this operation, over 712 kanals of valuable estate land, worth billions of rupees, has been reclaimed so far. For over a month now, land is being retrieved from illegal occupants under a comprehensive strategy as part of this ongoing anti-encroachment drive. In line with the direction of Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Deputy Director General Enforcement, Dr. Anam Fatima, is personally supervised this grand operation on a continuous basis. Besides, Assistant Commissioner City, Sahibzada Yousuf from ICT Administration.—APP

Briefs

Indian Police crackdown aims to crush Hurriyat resistance in Sopore

ISLAMABAD: Once again, the Indian police have raided the homes of Hurriyat leaders in Sopore, showing their true face as agents of state-sponsored repression where this latest crackdown is just another example of how the people of Jammu and Kashmir are constantly subjected to intimidation and harassment in their fight for justice. According to Kashmir Media Service, Indian police conducted raids and searches at the residences of Trehree-e-Hurriyat and Muslim League members, including Zaffar Islam, Lateef Ahmad Kaloo, Mohammad Ashraf Malik, and Farooq Tawheedi, in several areas of Sopore. These coordinated operations aimed to intimidate and silence key figures associated with the resistance movement. The raids were carried out under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a controversial law frequently used by the authorities to suppress dissent and target activists. The use of UAPA in this instance further highlights the ongoing repression and the Indian state's relentless efforts to crush any opposition to its illegal control over Jammu and Kashmir. The draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) effectively grants impunity to Indian forces, enabling them to carry out human rights violations and atrocities in the occupied territory without fear of accountability.—APP

Sanaullah says Faiz verdict upholds equality

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister Rana Sanaullah expressed on Friday that the Court's verdict regarding Faiz Hameed's case is an important example of military accountability. In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, Sanaullah said that everyone, regardless of their position, must face the law and described it as "a consequence of actions". He highlighted that it serves as a reminder that no one is exempt from accountability. He also expressed his respect for the Armed Forces, acknowledging that their trust and credibility have been further solidified. At the same time, he criticized Faiz Hameed, suggesting that his actions had a negative impact on the country's stability. He remarked that Faiz Hameed and others in similar positions should take this as a lesson, emphasizing the importance of accountability and the consequences of actions that affect the nation's stability. In response to another question, he claimed that Faiz Hameed pursued his personal agenda alongside his official duties.—APP

Pakistan-Qatar to further strengthen coop in edu

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Wajihah Qamar, met Ali Al Khater, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Pakistan, at the Qatar Embassy following her successful participation in WISE 12 in Doha. According to the ministry on Friday, She expressed her sincere gratitude to Mrs. Lolwa AlKhater for the warm hospitality and the opportunity to engage in high-level global dialogue on innovation, inclusion, and future-oriented education. During the meeting, Wajihah Qamar briefed the Ambassador on key takeaways from WISE 12 and highlighted Pakistan's commitment to advance quality education, skills development, and international collaboration. Both sides reaffirmed their shared resolve to further strengthen Pakistan-Qatar cooperation in education, professional training, academic exchanges, and youth development. The meeting reflected the strong brotherly relations and underscored a mutual vision to promote knowledge-sharing, institutional partnerships, and human capital development for the benefit of future generations.—APP

CPEC potential undermined by Pak institutional inconsistencies

The session concluded with a reaffirmation of the enduring Pakistan-China partnership and the shared commitment to modernization, cultural exchange, and mutual progress.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), in collaboration with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, hosted a dialogue on "China's Path to Development and Modernization: Lessons and Opportunities for Pakistan." The event featured young diplomats from the Embassy of China, led by Mr. Wang Shengjie, Counselor and including Mr. Zhang Duo, Attaché; Mr. Yang Taofei, Attaché; Ms. Wang Yiqiu, Third Secretary; Mr. Li Zhen, Third Secretary; Mr. Zhang Datuo, Second Secretary; Ms. Jiang Lezan, Third Secretary; and Mr. Zhang Pengfei, Attaché. Other panelists included Dr. Usman Chohan, Mr. Zeeshan Ahmed, Dr. Furqan Rao, Dr. Mehmood Hassan, Mr. Tahir Dhindsa, Barrister Zopash Khan, Mr. Assadullah Khan, young and emerging scholars and influencers who exchanged views with

the delegates, aimed at deepening understanding on the development, governance of China and exploring opportunities in China's modernization drive 2035; as well as the targets to be achieved with another very effective Five-Year Plan 2026-2030 focused on high-quality development, self-reliance in technology, boosting of domestic consumption and opening wider for global business and exchanges. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, delivered the opening remarks, highlighting China's remarkable achievements in poverty alleviation, economic growth, and modernization. He noted that China's national strategies, particularly its Five-Year Plans, provide valuable lessons for developing countries such as Pakistan seeking sustainable and equitable development. A central feature of the dialogue was the display and discussion of the Fifth Volume of "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China." Published in July 2025, the volume compiles 91 speeches

and writings of President Xi Jinping from May 2022 to December 2024, along with photographs documenting key moments of governance. Divided into 18 thematic sections, the book presents China's defining features of modernization, its practical pathways, and achievements under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC). The earlier series, already translated into more than 40 languages and distributed in over 180 countries, continues to shape global understanding of China's governance philosophy. Since China's development has evolved, so has its role in the world, and the new editions of President Xi's work provide the guidance, ideas, and inspiration accordingly. The delegation shared perspectives on China's people-centric diplomacy, people-centered governance, the four initiatives, the Belt and Road Initiative, and reforms in the Communist

Party of China (CPC). They emphasized that China's development model is rooted in inclusivity, self-reform, and cultural harmony, while initiatives such as CPEC continue to serve as vital pillars of Pakistan-China friendship. Notable Pakistani experts, scholars, and educationists contributed their views on governance, policymaking, and business opportunities. They underscored the importance of consistency in national policies, competence-based education, and people-centric approaches to development. The dialogue also explored how Pakistan could benefit from China's experience in long-term planning, inclusive policymaking, and technological investment. The session concluded with a reaffirmation of the enduring Pakistan-China partnership and the shared commitment to modernization, cultural exchange, and mutual progress.

Global action urged to protect climate-threatened heritage

Pakistan Calls for Global Action to Safeguard Climate-Threatened Cultural Heritage as Minister Aurangzeb Khan Khichi Highlights Urgent Risks and Proposes International Collaboration at High-Level ICCROM Event in Rome This Week



ROME: Federal Minister for National Heritage & Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi delivered a keynote statement at a high-level special event titled "Culture-Climate Nexus: The Missing Link", held on the margins of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) General Assembly. Speaking before international delegates, the Minister highlighted Pakistan's vast and diverse cultural heritage from the ancient urban civilizations of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa to the Buddhist sites of Taxila and Takht-i-Bahi, the Mughal-era Lahore Fort and Shalimar Gardens, and vibrant indigenous cultures stressing that these treasures now stand on the frontline of the global climate crisis. He underscored the severe impact of climate change on Pakistan's heritage, recalling the 2022 floods that damaged more than 750 registered heritage sites, including the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Mohenjo-Daro. The Minister further pointed to growing threats such as glacial lake outburst floods jeopardizing rock carvings along the Karakoram Highway and petroglyphs in the Diamer-Bhaskara region, as well as coastal erosion and rising sea levels affecting Banbhore and the Makli Necropolis. Calling for stronger international solidarity, Khichi urged the global community to formally recognize cultural heritage as a strategic asset within climate adaptation and mitigation frameworks. He advocated integrating heritage protection into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and proposed the establishment of a dedicated funding window for climate-impacted heritage under the Loss and Damage Fund. The Minister also recommended the creation of an ICCROM-led global knowledge platform bringing together scientists, heritage professionals, indigenous communities, and youth to co-develop resilient, culture-centered solutions. He further proposed incorporating culture-based indicators into the UNFCCC Global Stocktake to measure cultural loss alongside rising global temperatures. It is important to mention here that Cultural Minister Aurangzeb Khan Khichi is leading Pakistan's delegation to the ICCROM General Assembly Session, taking place in Rome, Italy from December 10–12, 2025.—DNA

SAPM engages Turkish business delegation to boost bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Friday held a meeting with Turkish business delegation and discussed joint ventures, investment opportunities, and facilitation measures for Turkish investors in key industrial sectors. The meeting was attended by the CEOs of Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), Engineering Development Board (EDB), along with senior public and private-sector representatives, said a news release. The agenda focused on Pakistan-Turkey joint ventures, investment opportunities, and facilitation measures for Turkish investors in key industrial sectors. Haroon highlighted prime minister's vision of strengthening ties with brotherly nations, noting that the current Pakistan-Turkiye trade volume stands at \$1 billion, with the potential to reach \$5 billion. The Turkish delegation expressed strong interest in expanding their business footprint in Pakistan, adding that leading Turkish textile brands, including LC Waikiki, are looking to enter the Pakistani market. The delegation also requested support for opening Turkish banks in Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore

to facilitate smoother bilateral trade and investment flows. Assuring full cooperation, Haroon Akhtar Khan said that the government will ensure banking facilitation, including letters of credit (LCs) and other financial channels, to support Turkish investors. Pakistan is introducing regulatory reforms aimed at improving the ease of doing business and creating an investor-friendly environment. The Turkish delegation also conveyed interest in accelerating efforts to operationalize the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad (ITI) trade corridor, which is expected to significantly boost regional connectivity. SAPM Haroon briefed the participants on Pakistan's Land Lease Policy, explaining that it provides substantial support to investors looking to set up industries. He further noted that the National Industrial Policy, prepared under the directives of prime minister, includes comprehensive facilitation measures for both local and foreign investors. To support Turkish investment, the government has also established a special facilitation committee, he added. Both sides agreed on enhancing cooperation across multiple sectors and working on joint projects to strengthen economic relations between Pakistan and Turkey.—DNA

Rain, snowfall set to end dry spell

ISLAMABAD: After an extended period of dry weather that has persisted through the early winter months, mirroring drought patterns seen in recent years, Pakistan is finally set to receive much-needed precipitation this weekend, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD). A shallow western disturbance approached the western regions of the country on Friday bringing with it the promise of rain and snowfall across multiple provinces. The Met Office forecasts light to moderate rain and thunderstorms in the plains, with snowfall expected over hilly areas from December 13 to 15. The precipitation will bring relief to regions that have been gripped by unusually dry conditions during what is typically a wetter period. Light to moderate rain and thunderstorm accompanied by snowfall over the hills is expected in Chitral, Dir,

Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Malakand, Manshera, Abbottabad, Haripur, and Buner from December 13 to 15 with occasional gaps. The same weather pattern will affect Gilgit-Baltistan including Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, and Shigar during this period. Kashmir areas including Neelum Valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, and Haveli are similarly expected to receive light to moderate rainfall and snowfall over the hills between December 13 and 15 with occasional gaps. Partly cloudy to cloudy conditions with light rain and snowfall are expected in Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, and Waziristan on December 14 and 15. The same weather pattern will affect Quetta, Ziarat, Zhob, Sherani, Chaman, Pishin, Qilla Abdullah, Qilla Saifullah, and Noushki during this timeframe. There are chances of drizzle in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Pe-

shawar, and the Potohar region, while light rain and light snow is expected in Murree and Galliat on Sunday and Monday. From the night of December 12 through December 16, moderate and at times dense foggy conditions are likely to develop over plain areas of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and upper Sindh. These foggy conditions may reduce visibility significantly and disrupt traffic over motorways and highways, and the public is advised to remain cautious during this period. The Met Office has indicated that another western disturbance is likely to influence western and upper parts of the country from December 19, suggesting that the current dry spell may finally be coming to an end with multiple weather systems on the horizon. The rain will also help reduce effects smog which is causing serious consequences for those having allergies.—DNA

Researcher Rafay calls for skilled cybersecurity workforce

ISLAMABAD: Prominent cybersecurity researcher Rafay Baloch has urged Pakistani youth to build strong technical foundations and adopt globally recognised certifications to compete in the rapidly expanding cyber industry, as ethical hacking is no longer a niche discipline but a critical component of modern digital safety. In an exclusive interview with APP here, he explained that the concept of hacking is neutral and becomes harmful only when associated with malicious motivations. He said the public often views hacking through a negative lens due to cybercrimes, financial fraud and identity theft, but ethical hacking aims to identify vulnerabilities before criminal actors exploit them. "The methods may be similar, but the intent defines whether a hacker is securing a system or attempting to harm it," he said and highlighted the broad categories of hackers, including black-hat, white-hat and grey-hat. He emphasised that ethical hackers follow legal frameworks and responsible disclosure practices. He said the first step towards cybersecurity proficiency is curiosity, which drives individuals to understand how systems function internally and how they can be breached. He noted that persistence remains equally essential, as hacking is a highly challenging, technical field. Commenting on education pathways, he said many globally renowned hackers did not come from formal computer science backgrounds but relied on self-learning, experimentation and community engagement. "With modern tools such as large language models and AI-assisted programming, the barriers for beginners have significantly decreased, enabling students without deep coding knowledge to pursue cybersecurity roles, he maintained. He said that practical exposure through online labs, exercises and challenges is far more valuable than relying solely on textbooks. Rafay cautioned against a common trend in which students shift rapidly from one technology field to another, such as blockchain, AI, and cybersecurity, without genuine interest. He advised aspiring professionals to choose a specialisation based on passion rather than hype, as long-term success requires sustained commitment. Among in-demand roles, he cited penetration testing, bug hunting, cloud security and mobile application security as areas offering strong career prospects. He said certifications such as OSCP, CISSP, CISA and CREST are widely respected internationally and often serve as key differentiators for job applicants. These certifications, coupled with hands-on experience, help candidates stand out in competitive global markets, he said, adding that new regulatory frameworks, including SOC 2 and GDPR compliance standards, have increased the global demand for offensive security testing. Discussing cybercrime, Rafay said Pakistan's laws, including PECA, impose strict penalties for unauthorised access and data modification.—DNA

Review meeting on curriculum reforms held at M/o FE&PT

ISLAMABAD: A review meeting on the proposed curriculum reforms and upgradation, was held at Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training (M/o FE&PT), focusing key findings and recommendations from provinces.

According to the ministry on Friday, the meeting was chaired by the Secretary, M/o FE&PT Mr. Nadeem Mahbub. Other attendees included representatives from NCC, FBISE, IBCC, NRK-NA, AIU, FDE and PIE along with the experts on the subject.

Dr. Tabassum Naz, Director National Curriculum Council (NCC), briefed the meeting on the wide-ranging provincial consultations, which were held in all the provincial capitals and the federating units.

She presented the key findings and recommendations from provinces that would feed into curriculum upgradation exercise.

She also spoke about the next steps, including finalization of the National Curriculum Framework, rationalization of core subjects at secondary and higher secondary levels, revision of the scheme of studies, and international curriculum conference among others.

It was decided to move ahead with the strategy as proposed during the meeting. Further, a broad range of subject specialists would be involved in the whole exercise.—APP

Police nab nine in anti-narcotics sweep

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Police, acting on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani, carried out a coordinated crackdown on narcotics suppliers across the district, arresting nine suspects and recovering over 17.5 kilograms of charas. A police spokesman said on Friday the operation formed part of efforts to fulfil the Punjab chief minister's vision of a drug-free province. According to the spokesman, the Wah Cantt Police apprehended a major narcotics supplier and seized 5.5 kilograms of charas from his possession. The Pirwadhai Police rounded up two suspects and recovered 3.220 kilograms of charas, while the Morgah Police held two suppliers with 3.8 kilograms of the contraband. Similarly, the Wah Saddar Police detained two suspects and recovered 2.84 kilograms, while the Ratta Amral and Taxila Police arrested one supplier each with 1.72 kilograms and 1.3 kilograms of the contraband respectively.—APP

MOST EXPERIENCED
MANUFACTURERS &
EXPORTERS OF
MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS
IN
PAKISTAN

WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED

JUDO
KARATE
KUNG-FU
JU-JITSU
TAEKWONDO
UNIFORMS AND
COLOURED BELTS

Ashraf

ASHRAF INDUSTRIES (PVT) LTD
127 C, Industrial Estate
Sialkot-51340, Pakistan
Phones: +92-52-3256000 / 3255788
E-mail: info@ashraf.net.pk

What comes after multilateralism

JAVIER SOLANA

THE world is on the cusp of a profound geopolitical restructuring, as escalating great power rivalries erode the multilateral structures that have supported the global order since the mid-20th century. To prevent the international system from sliding into chaos and conflict, those unwilling to accept a world governed solely by raw power must find ways to reinforce today's debilitated multilateral institutions through informal arrangements and bilateral agreements. From the end of the Second World War to the early 2010s, multilateralism provided the framework for international cooperation. Though imperfect and often inconsistent, it was the most effective model of global governance ever created. But after more than a decade of continuous erosion, it is clear that the multilateral system as we know it can no longer facilitate collective action.

Without a framework capable of coordinating relations among countries, the alternatives are stark: a world government – an unfeasible prospect – or a steady drift toward anarchy. Multilateralism emerged as the pragmatic middle ground: collective decision-making and binding rules, rather than a single global authority or none at all. Born of unique historical circumstances, this model took shape as the US – the dominant postwar global power – promoted a treaty-based system guided by enlightened self-interest. That vision was realized at the Bretton Woods and San Francisco conferences, which led to the establishment of the UN, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, as well as its successor, the World Trade Organization. It is now clear that the multilateral system as we know it can no longer facilitate collective action.

In principle, if not always in practice, these multilateral institutions were open to all countries, with bodies like the WTO and the International Civil Aviation Organization providing a shared framework of rules, standards and responsibilities. But in recent years, they have been severely undermined by the rise of sovereignty in developed economies like the US and in emerging powers like China. The US, for its part, played a significant role in weakening the very institutions it helped create. The 2003 invasion of Iraq and its intervention in Libya's civil war in 2011 showed that the world's major powers did not see themselves as bound by the so-called rules-based international order. This trend was reinforced by President Donald Trump's election in 2016, while his return to office in 2025 represented an explicit repudiation of the multilateral approach. Meanwhile, Russia and China have been eager to undermine a system they view as detrimental to their interests. Russia's 2008 invasion of

IslamabadPOST

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 172

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394 / 051-2261960

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



Georgia and invasions of Ukraine in 2014 and 2022 openly defied international law, bringing large-scale war back to Europe. Likewise, China's "Made in China 2025" industrial strategy violates WTO rules and its aggressive actions in the South China Sea show complete disregard for the 2016 arbitral ruling that rejected its expansive maritime claims. The consequences are now widely evident: on the issues that matter most, multilateral institutions no longer drive global decision-making. Paralyzed by vetoes by its permanent members, the UN Security Council has been largely inactive, with the notable exception of its recent endorsement of Trump's Gaza peace plan. At the same time, the WTO – whose establishment in 1995 was multilateralism's last meaningful achievement – can no longer enforce its own rules since the US rendered its appellate inoperative in 2019.

This institutional paralysis is part of a broader trend. No major multilateral institution has been created in decades, while informal arrangements – lacking binding rules and often involving nonstate actors – have proliferated, offering more agile and adaptable forms of coordination better suited to an increasingly fragmented world. Today, multilateral institutions account for only a quarter of the global governance ecosystem. In this environment, preventing the disintegration of the international order is a daunting task. What is needed are intermediate mechanisms that do not depend on universal participation or the adoption of comprehensive, binding rules. While achieving global consensus is virtually impossible, informal alliances, public-private platforms and flexible coordination mechanisms can help mitigate geopolitical risks. Informal arrangements have proliferated, offering more agile and adaptable forms of coordination Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance – which has immunized more than a billion children since 2000 – offers a useful model, as do the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, with its globally accepted technical standards (including Wi-Fi), and the International Organization for Standardization. Although lacking legal authority, these bodies have achieved technical legitimacy and broad voluntary compliance. Once secondary to multilateral institutions, they may now emerge as pillars of global coordination.

As private actors, subnational governments, academic institutions and professional networks continue to gain influence, diplomacy is no longer the exclusive domain of foreign ministries. Global governance, in turn, is becoming increasingly decentralized, especially in critical areas like cybersecurity. To avert a global catastrophe, today's institutional vacuum must be filled by flexible, workable arrangements: less formal, less universal and less binding, yet still capable of facilitating cooperation among countries and key actors. These include public-private partnerships, interregional agreements such as the EU-Mercosur trade deal and "coalitions of the willing" like the Just Energy Transition Partnerships. Admittedly, this approach involves higher transaction costs and cannot guarantee certainty or uniformity. But the task facing international policymakers is not to design the perfect model – it is to identify the one that is most viable in a rapidly changing world teetering on the edge of systemic collapse.

Can Civilisation Collapse in an Hour?

Qamar Bashir



Electricity remains vital, whether generated by fossil fuels, nuclear plants, or renewable sources. Oil and gas still matter. But beneath energy lies something more fundamental: information. Data now directs how energy is produced, distributed, priced, and consumed. It governs logistics, storage, transportation, and payments. It manages air traffic, maritime shipping, rail networks, and road signals. It powers stock exchanges, banking systems, hospitals, and government services. Remove the data layer, and the physical infrastructure becomes blind and inert

FOR most of human history, civilisations did not die suddenly. They rose slowly, flourished over centuries, and declined through prolonged periods of decay, conquest, or exhaustion. The Roman Empire did not fall overnight. Pharaonic Egypt endured dynasties across millennia. Persian, Greek, and later imperial systems were replaced gradually by rival powers, often after decades of war, rebellion, and internal rot. Their foundations were physical—land, food, water, animals, metals, and manpower—and therefore their destruction required time, force, and mass mobilisation. That historical rhythm has now been broken.

Modern civilization has entered a phase in which collapse is no longer necessarily slow or visible. For the first time in human history, the core operating system of society is not material but digital. Cities, institutions, economies, and even military power are no longer coordinated primarily by physical mechanisms, human judgment, or local redundancy, but by data. This shift has made modern civilization extraordinarily efficient—and extraordinarily fragile.

In earlier eras, even when empires fell, daily life often continued. Farmers still tilled land. Local markets still functioned. Water could still be drawn from wells. Authority might collapse, but society retained resilience because its foundations were decentralised and human-scale. Today, by contrast, modern cities function as tightly coupled machines. Their survival depends on uninterrupted flows of data that synchronise power grids, traffic systems, hospitals, supply chains, financial transactions, communications, and emergency services. When that coordination fails, the city does not merely slow down—it stops.

Electricity remains vital, whether generated by fossil fuels, nuclear plants, or renewable sources. Oil and gas still matter. But beneath energy lies something more fundamental: information. Data now directs how energy is produced, distributed, priced, and consumed. It governs logistics, storage, transportation, and payments. It manages air traffic, maritime shipping, rail networks, and road signals. It powers stock exchanges, banking systems, hospitals, and government services. Remove the data layer, and the physical infrastructure becomes blind and inert.

This is why the idea that civilization could be crippled in an hour is no longer hypothetical. A severe disruption to critical data systems—whether through cyberattacks, malware, corrupted databases, sabotaged fibre-optic links, or compromised control software—could paralyse entire regions without a single shot being fired. The destruction would not come through explosions but through silence: dark screens, frozen systems, stalled traffic, grounded flights, empty fuel pumps, inaccessible bank accounts, and broken communication.

We have already witnessed partial versions of this vulnerability. Disruptions to energy distribution have plunged major cities into darkness. Failures in digital coordination have erased billions of dollars from financial markets in minutes. Interruptions in pipeline or logistics data have triggered fuel shortages and panic buying despite ample physical supply. These incidents reveal a sobering truth: scarcity today is often not material but informational.

The modern supply chain illustrates this danger most clearly. A grocery store shelf looks simple, but behind it lies a complex, data-driven choreography of procurement, warehousing, refrigeration, inventory forecasting, transport routing, fuel purchasing, and digital payment systems. Food does not disappear because farms stop producing; it disappears because coordination fails. When databases are corrupted or systems shut down, the entire chain collapses rapidly, even though physical goods still exist.

Transportation systems are even more exposed. Modern aviation is entirely dependent on data—navigation, scheduling, air traffic control, maintenance logs, and safety systems. Shipping relies on digital tracking, port scheduling, customs processing, and fuel optimisation. Trains and metros depend on automated signalling. Road traffic is governed by sensor-driven control systems. A serious digital failure would not only halt movement but risk catastrophic accidents across air, sea, and land. Military power, once the domain of brute force, is now inseparable from data supremacy. Modern aircraft are flying computers. Naval fleets are networked command systems. Missile defence, surveillance, and early-warning systems rely on continuous data fusion. Even nuclear command-and-control structures are deeply digital. This reality transforms the nature of warfare. Victory no longer depends solely on destroying armies or occupying territory, but on disabling an adversary's digital nervous system.

In such a world, resilience becomes the true measure of sovereignty. A country that cannot secure, isolate, and rapidly restore its critical data infrastructure can be defeated without ever engaging in conventional battle. Conversely, a state that masters digital defence—and offensive disruption—can neutralise rivals with minimal physical confrontation. Warfare thus shifts from mass killing to systemic paralysis. This transformation carries grave ethical and political consequences. When cities are paralysed, civilians suffer first. Hospitals, water systems, emergency services, food distribution, and communications are all civilian infrastructures, yet they are increasingly vulnerable to digital attack. The traditional distinction between battlefield and home front dissolves. A cyber strike on data systems can harm millions of ordinary people instantly, without warning or visible aggression.

sion.

Despite this reality, global governance has not kept pace. Cybersecurity is still treated largely as a technical or national issue, addressed through firewalls, patches, and specialised units. These measures are necessary but insufficient. What is needed is a civilisational response. Data is no longer merely a commercial or strategic asset; it is the backbone of modern life. Its protection must be elevated to the level of international norms and collective responsibility. Just as humanity eventually recognised rules governing chemical weapons, attacks on hospitals, and treatment of civilians, it must now establish clear red lines around digital infrastructure. There must be international agreements defining unacceptable attacks on civilian data systems, shared mechanisms for attribution and investigation, and credible consequences for violations. Without such frameworks, escalation will be silent, deniable, and destabilising.

At the national level, societies must rethink how they design systems. Extreme efficiency without redundancy is a recipe for collapse. Civilisation now requires layered resilience: segmented networks, offline fallbacks, manual override capacity, secure authentication, and decentralised control. Public institutions must be able to function, at least partially, when digital systems fail. Citizens must be educated to understand that convenience comes with vulnerability, and that resilience demands investment and restraint. Elon Musk's warning that future empires may fall not in years but in minutes is not exaggeration—it is diagnosis. The danger is not that technology itself is destructive, but that civilisation has placed too much of its survival logic into fragile, interconnected systems without sufficient safeguards.

Humanity stands at a critical threshold. The same data-driven intelligence that has made cities cleaner, faster, and more productive could also become the instrument of unprecedented collapse. Civilisations will still rise and fall for familiar reasons—political failure, injustice, moral decay—but now they face an additional risk: sudden paralysis. A civilization that can be stopped in an hour must learn to protect what keeps it alive. The future will not be decided only by armies or economies, but by whether humanity can govern its own digital heartbeat. If it fails, the fall of empires will no longer be written over centuries—but logged in error reports, measured in minutes, and remembered as the moment when progress outpaced wisdom.

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

Healing the Nation through Understanding and Unity

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The Holy Qur'an repeatedly guides believers to adopt humility and forgiveness as essential qualities. Allah Almighty says, "Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant" (Qur'an 7:199). In this verse lies the blueprint for managing the inevitable imperfections of those around us. If we treat the errors of our own people as foreign or distant...

IN every society, the fabric of relationships is woven with threads of affection, loyalty, and unspoken obligations. In Pakistan, where family bonds, kinship networks, and the traditions of collective living define much of social life, these threads hold even greater meaning. Yet, it is equally true that misunderstandings, errors in judgment, and personal shortcomings emerge most often within these very circles. As a wise saying reminds us, "The mistakes of our own people are, in fact, our own mistakes as well; they should be corrected together with understanding and unity. One should not wear the crown of ego and wait for others to bow first." This is not merely a moral lesson; it is a philosophy that speaks to the heart of communal life, reconciliation, and the higher ethics of human dignity. The Holy Qur'an repeatedly guides believers to adopt humility and forgiveness as essential qualities. Allah Almighty says, "Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant" (Qur'an 7:199). In this verse lies the blueprint for managing the inevitable imperfections of those around us. If we treat the errors of our own people as foreign or distant, we erode the unity that elevates societies. But when we embrace the truth that their missteps are intertwined with our own collective identity, we create room for correction and growth without bitterness. This principle is profoundly relevant to Pakistani culture. In our homeland, elders mediate disputes, families come together to ease tensions, and tribal traditions uphold the practice of Jirga or Panchayat—systems built on dialogue rather than arrogance. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) instructed, "A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim. He does not oppress him, nor does he abandon him, nor does he look down upon him." In these words, one finds the moral compass for dealing with the shortcomings of those closest to us. To abandon a relative, a friend, or a colleague because of their mistake is to abandon a part of ourselves. Ego, however, has become one of the most destructive forces in modern social behavior. The notion of "wearing the crown of ego," refusing to initiate reconciliation, or expecting others to bow first creates an environment where forgiveness becomes a rarity. In Pakistani households, workplaces, and even public institutions, countless conflicts linger not because the issues are grave, but because individuals refuse to let go of pride. The Qur'an teaches us, "Indeed, Allah does not like the arrogant and boastful" (Qur'an 31:18). When ego overshadows wisdom, correction becomes impossible, and relationships turn cold. In family life, especially, this philosophy carries immense value. Parents, siblings, and spouses are bound not only by affection but by moral duty. A father's sternness, a mother's moment of anger, a sibling's careless word—these are not reasons to divide hearts. Instead, they are reminders of human frailty. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "The best among you are those who are best to their families." To be "best" in this context means to forgive readily, advise gently, and understand deeply. Where ego prevails, affection fades; where humility prevails, affection flourishes. The same truth applies at the societal level. Communities fracture when individuals or factions refuse to acknowledge that shared destiny is more important than personal pride. Our neighborhoods, mosques, educational institutions, and workplaces all experience moments where misunderstandings arise. Pakistan's social fabric is strong precisely because, historically, people have preferred collective harmony over individual stubbornness. Sufi thought, which has shaped much of our cultural and spiritual heritage, repeatedly discourages the dominance of ego. Maulana Rumi writes, "Raise your words, not your voice. It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder." The essence of correction lies in gentleness, not confrontation. In national life as well, this wisdom holds weight. Pakistan's political discourse and social media conversations often reflect a harshness that stands in contrast to our traditions of tolerance. If political actors, social leaders, and citizens embraced the idea that errors within the nation are a collective concern—rather than weapons for mutual humiliation—the journey toward national cohesion would accelerate. Prosperity lies in unity, and unity demands humility. Even in economic dealings and professional relationships, the act of correcting mistakes with dignity rather than ego strengthens institutions. Leaders who listen rather than command, colleagues who cooperate rather than compete, and citizens who forgive rather than hold grudges create an atmosphere in which shared progress becomes natural. Our society has long admired those who possess a "big heart," a phrase deeply rooted in our cultural appreciation for generosity of spirit. Ultimately, the philosophy embodied in the opening statement is a reminder that human beings are not perfect, but they are redeemable. Pakistani culture, enriched by Islam, tradition, and the wisdom of centuries, teaches that mending relationships is nobler than winning arguments. When one sets aside ego and takes the first step toward correction, it does not diminish status; it elevates character. And when we work together to improve, we do not merely correct mistakes—we strengthen the foundations of our society. The path to harmony begins not with expecting others to bow, but with lowering one's own gaze in humility. This is the way of faith, the way of culture, and the way of wisdom.

Briefs

Pakistan, Turkiye Pledge to solidify ties in all fields

FROM PAGE 01
The Prime Minister underscored the importance of regional connectivity as manifested by the revival of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul rail network. Both leaders also exchanged views on regional as well as global developments. The Prime Minister appreciated President Erdogan's bold leadership and strong commitment to peace efforts in Gaza. He also thanked Turkiye for its constructive role in facilitating talks between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban regime but stressed that peace would only be possible if Pakistan's security concerns were fully addressed. President Erdogan thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for his views, particularly his kind words and expressed his desire to work together with a view to build stronger ties between the two countries.

Pakistan calls for peaceful conflict...

FROM PAGE 01
"While we persevere in this quest for peace, the scourge of terrorism is, however, raising its head yet again, and this time, unfortunately, Afghan soil," he said urging the international community to press the Afghan Taliban regime to fulfill its international obligations and commitments and rein in terrorist elements operating from its territory. Meanwhile, he expressed gratitude to the brotherly countries- Qatar, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Iran-for their sincere desire and efforts to achieve permanent ceasefire, "which, as I speak, is still very fragile". He said the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2788 earlier this year was a strong endorsement of Pakistan's vision for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The prime minister hoped that as part of the group of eight Arab Islamic countries, the ongoing peace efforts in the Middle East will ultimately protect and save the lives of innocent Palestinians, ensuring a lasting and permanent ceasefire, allow the flow of critical humanitarian aid, and help in the reconstruction of Gaza. He also reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to support all efforts aimed at upholding the inalienable right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, as well as for the brave and resilient Kashmiri people. The prime minister noted that the pursuit of lasting peace was intrinsically linked to the path of sustainable development. In this regard, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents a universal blueprint for a better and peaceful world. Socioeconomic development and the welfare of our people are my government's foremost priority.

Pakistan signs...

FROM PAGE 01
The collaboration aims to explore secure and transparent digital platforms that could facilitate broader participation by international investors, while fully respecting Pakistan's regulatory framework and sovereign control. Speaking on the occasion, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb described the MoU as a strong signal of Pakistan's reform trajectory. "This is a very strong message - not only for Pakistan, but for the entire world. What we have signed today reflects a long-term partnership. From where we started to moving towards operationalisation, this progress could not have happened without active guidance and leadership. The next step for us is execution, and we are fully committed to delivering results with speed and quality," he said, while also acknowledging the vision and support of the country's top leadership. Mr. Changpeng Zhao (CZ) termed the MoU a landmark development for Pakistan's future.

Pakistan push Argentina to the limit in narrow 3-2 defeat in Pro League match

Ranked No. 14 in the world—and the lowest among all teams participating in this year's Pro League—Pakistan surprised many with their pace, determination, and attacking flair. The team kept Argentina under constant pressure and matched the South American giants in all departments

DNA

SANTIAGO: Pakistan put up a spirited fight against world No. 6 Argentina but narrowly lost 3-2 in a thrilling FIH Pro League encounter played in Santiago on Friday. Despite the defeat, the Green Shirts earned widespread



praise for their impressive performance against a far superior and more experienced Argentine side. Ranked No. 14 in the world—and the lowest among all teams participating in this year's Pro League—Pakistan surprised many with their pace, determination, and attacking flair. The team kept Argentina under constant pressure and matched the South American giants in all departments. Argentina, however, relied on their exceptional goalkeeper and clinical finishing to stay ahead. Each time Pakistan mounted a comeback, the Argentine custodian produced crucial saves that proved decisive in the final outcome. It is important to note that Pakistan did not initially qualify for the Pro League. Their entry became possible only after New Zealand withdrew from the event, creating an unexpected opportunity for the young Pakistani side to compete at the highest international level. Despite being underdogs, Pakistan's energetic display won the hearts of spectators and analysts alike. The narrow margin of defeat against a top-six side is being seen as a confidence booster as Pakistan continues its rebuilding journey in international hockey. Pakistan will look to carry this momentum into their upcoming fixtures as they aim to gain valuable experience and establish their presence on the global stage once again.

Gaza's maternal and newborn health system 'decimated', UN warns

UNITED NATIONS: m Gaza's health system for mothers and newborns has been "decimated", the United Nations said on Thursday, with Israeli attacks destroying almost all hospitals, cutting off medical supplies and driving sharp rises in maternal deaths, miscarriages and newborn fatalities amid mass displacement and hunger. According to the UN human rights office (OHCHR), more than 70,000 Palestinians have been killed since 7 October 2023. OHCHR said 94 per cent of Gaza's hospitals have been damaged or destroyed, leaving pregnant women and newborns without essential care. "The Israeli blockade has also prevented the entry of objects indispensable to the survival of civilians, including medical supplies and nutrients required to sustain pregnancies and ensure safe childbirth," the Office said. By late 2024, women in

Gaza were three times more likely to die in childbirth and three times more likely to miscarry compared with pre-war levels, while newborn deaths also increased, OHCHR reported. Israeli strikes hit maternity wards and neonatal intensive care units, while the December 2023 shelling of Gaza's largest fertility clinic caused the loss of over 4,000 embryos and 1,000 sperm and egg specimens. Medical personnel have also been targeted, OHCHR said, citing Palestinian Ministry of Health figures reporting 1,722 healthcare workers killed as of September 2025. Dr. Ambereen Sleemi, a gynecologist who volunteered in Gaza, told OHCHR: "As we did our rounds, bombs were going off in the background... Sometimes quadcopters would come in and try to shoot nurses or literally chase them through the

hospital corridors." She said pregnant women arrived with gunshot wounds, including to the abdomen. "Many women were simply too injured to survive. If their injuries did not claim their lives, then sepsis often did, as there were not enough medical supplies or antibiotics." The blockade has driven severe shortages of food and baby formula. As of October 2025, 463 Palestinians had died from malnutrition, including 157 children, the Ministry of Health reported. Jonathan Crix of UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), speaking from Gaza, told UN News that children and families enduring winter storms in makeshift tents: "Everything was completely damp...the mattresses were wet; the children's clothes were wet. It's extremely difficult to live in those conditions." He warned of a surge in acute watery diarrhoea and fears of further

disease outbreaks. "With the very poor hygiene conditions and very limited sanitation system available, we are extremely concerned to see the spreading of waterborne diseases." OHCHR also voiced alarm over Israel's construction of a new barrier and road in the Jordan Valley. Ajith Sunghay, the Head of Office in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, said this would "separate Palestinian communities from each other and the Palestinian farmers in Tubas from land they own on the other side of the planned barrier." He also warned that it would be "another step towards the progressive fragmentation of the West Bank, which will eventually lead to the consolidation of annexation," stressing that that rights of Palestinian refugee status "cannot be stripped or altered by unilateral coercive measures." – APP

Cameron Norrie chooses favourite between Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz

"I always think he has more variety and I love watching him. He is so good to watch, my favourite to watch. So I always back Alcaraz and I stick with him"

ITALY: Cameron Norrie has chosen his favourite between Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz. Sinner and Alcaraz are the two tennis players who are currently ruling the world of tennis. They have claimed the past eight majors between them. Alcaraz defeated Sinner in this year's French Open final, while the Italian dethroned the Spaniard to claim his first Wimbledon title. And then the Spaniard hit back, avenging Wimbledon defeat, ending the reign of Sinner at the US Open with a dominant victory. It has become difficult for most analysts and fans to predict who will dominate the rivalry next year. However, British tennis player Cameron Norrie has chosen his favourite between them. Norrie has not played against Jannik Sinner, but has shared the court with Carlos Alcaraz eight times, winning three of them. The 30-year-old appeared as a guest on the Nothing Major Show, where he shared his opinion about Sinner vs Alcaraz, choosing the Spaniard as his favourite. "I have never played Sinner. I have practiced with him a lot. I really want to play him. I would like to do that first before I give you my honest opinion but I always back Alcaraz to be honest," Norrie said. – Agencies

Rocket returns: Hamza sparks Pak olympic hopes

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD:Hamza Asif, Pakistan's rising swimming sensation, has solidified his status as the nation's fastest swimmer following a record-breaking performance at the 35th National Games in Karachi. With this extraordinary achievement, Hamza has reignited the country's hopes of qualifying for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics, reviving Pakistan's long-quiet dreams of Olympic success in swimming. The 19-year-old, who began his career as a young trainee at Faisalabad's Chenab Club, secured three gold medals, one silver, and set a new national record in the 50m breaststroke. His achievements have intensified comparisons with Pakistan's former Olympic swimmer Ifkhar Ahmed Shah, who represented the country at the 1948 London Olympics, exactly 80 years before the LA Games where Hamza now aims to compete. At the National Games this year, Hamza delivered one of the most dominant swimming performances in recent memory. He won gold in the 100m freestyle, gold in the 50m freestyle (23.65 seconds), gold in the 50m breaststroke, and silver in the 50m butterfly.



Spain opens doors to descendants of Franco-era exiles

MADRID: Spain has received a surge of citizenship applications from descendants of emigrants who fled the country's 1930s civil war and Francisco Franco's dictatorship under a scheme aimed at addressing historical injustices. The so-called "grandchildren's law" allows children and grandchildren of Spaniards who lost or renounced their nationality after leaving for "political, ideological or belief-related reasons" to reclaim citizenship. The measure also covers those who fled persecution based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The initiative is part of a 2022 law introduced by Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez aimed at righting the wrongs of the 1936-1939 civil war and the brutal dictatorship that followed until General Franco's death in 1975. – Agencies

Thai PM dissolves parliament, paving way for national elections

BANGKOK: Thailand's Prime Minister dissolved parliament on Friday after three months in office, a royal decree showed, paving the way for general elections early next year. The move comes earlier than expected and during renewed deadly clashes between Thailand and Cambodia along their disputed border. "The House of Representatives is dissolved to hold a new general election for members of the House," the decree published in the Royal Gazette said. Anutin Charnvirakul, of the conservative Bhumjaithai party, became prime minister in September after his predecessor was removed from office by the court over an ethics violation. Earlier this year, he pledged to dissolve the lower house – the formal step to call an election – and hold a vote by early 2026. Anutin was widely expected to wait until after Christmas to dissolve parliament. The move comes as fighting flares again on the border with Cambodia, where clashes have killed at least 20 people and displaced around 600,000, mostly in Thailand. "Since the administration is a minority government and domestic political conditions are fraught with multiple challenges, the government cannot continue administering state affairs continuously, efficiently, and with stability," the Royal Gazette said, citing a report received from Anutin. "Therefore, the appropriate solution is to dissolve the House of Representatives and hold a new general election." - 'Power to the people' - Under Thai law, elections must be held between 45 and 60 days after parliament is dissolved, meaning polls are expected around end of January or early February. Anutin said in a Facebook post late Thursday he "would like to return power to the people", a known signal in the kingdom that a prime minister intends to dissolve parliament, paving the way for fresh elections. The cannabis-championing conservative took power in September with coalition backing conditional on dissolving parliament, becoming the kingdom's third leader in two years. He was once an ally of the influential political clan of Thaksin Shinawatra – who have been a dominant force in Thai politics since the turn of the century, but are increasingly faltering after a succession of legal and political setbacks. – Agencies

Iran confirms regional meeting on Afghanistan

FROM PAGE 01

Baqaei expressed hope that the initiative will serve as an effective platform for fostering convergence and addressing regional challenges, particularly those linked to Afghanistan's current political and security landscape. The meeting—hosted by Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs—will bring together special representatives for Afghan affairs from Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, China, and Russia. The regional dialogue is expected to focus on coordinated efforts to promote stability, humanitarian support, and collective strategies to address shared security concerns.

India frees up visas for Chinese people

FROM PAGE 01

resolved, said one of the officials with knowledge of the matter. "We have removed the layer of administrative vetting and are processing the business visas within four weeks," the official added. India's ministries of external affairs, home and trade, as well as the prime minister's office and the top think tank on policy, did not respond to email requests for comment. Following the news, China's foreign ministry said it had noticed "positive action" from India to facilitate people-to-people exchanges in the common interest.

Five cops injured in Bannu blast

FROM PAGE 01

were taken to the hospital for medical treatment. The statement said that on the instructions of Bannu Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Sajjad Khan, additional personnel reached the scene and surrounded the area. It said that the Bannu DIG and District Police Office (DPO) Yasir Afridi praised the efforts of the police, and the courage and bravery of the people in the area. The statement went on to say that the Bannu DPO later visited the injured cops at the hospital. "Bannu police have once again proven that it stands as a strong wall in front of the enemies of peace. The war against terrorism will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated," the statement quoted him as saying. The development came as the situation remained tense in the area on Thursday after at least seven people, including minors, were injured in a quadcopter attack carried out by terrorists on a playground during a football match. Pakistan has been witnessing a surge in terror activities, particularly in KP and Balochistan. The spike in incidents follow the TTP ending a ceasefire with the government in November 2022 and vowing to attack security forces, police, and personnel of law enforcement agencies.

Joint statement by the FM's...

FROM PAGE 01

community, providing protection, education, health care, social services, and emergency assistance to millions of Palestinian refugees in its areas of operation, in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 302 (1949). The adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution to renew UNRWA's mandate for an additional three years, reflects international confidence in the vital role played by the agency and the continuity of its operations. The Ministers condemn the storming of the UNRWA headquarters in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem by Israeli forces, as this attack represents a flagrant violation of international law and the inviolability of UN premises, which constitutes an unacceptable escalation, and violates the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice dated 22 October 2025, which clearly states that Israel, as an occupying power, is under an obligation not to impede the operations of UNRWA and, on the contrary, to facilitate them.

US President Donald Trump's Social Media Checks Raise FIFA 2026 Travel Concerns

The proposal would require every tourist to list every social media account they used in the last five years, along with old phone numbers, past email addresses, and multiple biometric details

WASHINGTON: The United States is planning a travel ban ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026 that would result tourists from 42 visa-waiver countries to submit five years of their social media history before entering U.S. The move, pushed by U.S. President Donald Trump, has sparked a furious fan backlash online, ahead of the extravaganza of the global sports extravaganza. Travelers are voicing fears the rule will bog down entry, causing massive queues at the airports and discouraging people from traveling at all. The proposal would require every tourist to list every social media account they used in the last five years, along with old phone numbers, past email addresses, and multiple biometric details, including face, fingerprints, and DNA. Officials defend the measure as necessary to scan "anti-American views" pre-entry. The policy was established via an executive order signed by Donald Trump on his first day in the Oval Office. The United States is co-hosting the FIFA World Cup



2026 with Canada and Mexico. FIFA expects to draw millions of fans to attend matches, with millions more traveling across borders during the mega-spectacle. Netizens react: Netizens are sharing their

reactions to the proposed social media scrutiny rule. One user commented on X (formerly Twitter), "The Trump administration is trying to make it a requirement that Foreign tourists coming to the World Cup

submit at least five years of their social media data! This will end up causing the numbers to dwindle because people from other countries already don't trust him or The U.S." "The US checking people's social media before letting them into the country is just wild. Imagine being told 'sorry, you can't go see your country play in the World Cup because you called the president of the United States a buffoon on social media in December last year,'" commented another. FIFA World Cup 2026 travel fears grow over Trumps proposed five-year social media checks. For now, the plan is open for public feedback, but many expect the Trump administration to push forward. If the rule is implemented, this could redefine international travel norms and jeopardize the viability of future large-scale global events. The rule explains that for anyone travelling from countries that use the ESTA system, including the UK, Australia, Germany, France, Japan, and many others, the visitors from these countries normally enter the U.S. without a visa.

Briefs

Gold price increases by Rs10,700 per tola

ISLAMABAD, Dec 12 (AP-P):The price of per tola 24-karat gold on Friday increased by Rs10,700 to Rs454,262 compared to its sale at Rs.443,562 the previous day, according to the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. The price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold rose by Rs9,174 to Rs389,456, while the rate of 10 grams of 22-karat gold increased by Rs8,410 to Rs357,014. In the international market, gold prices went up by \$107 to \$4,319. Meanwhile, per tola silver gained Rs232 to reach Rs6,684, and the price of 10 grams of silver rose by Rs199 to Rs5,730. International silver prices increased by \$2.32 to \$64.12.—APP

Rupee gains 04 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday appreciated by 04 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs280.32 compared to the previous day's closing at Rs280.36. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 281.5 and Rs 283.3, respectively. The price of the Euro increased by Rs 1.01 to close at Rs 329.08, from the previous day's close of Rs 328.07, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen went up by 01 paise and close at Rs 1.80, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs0.36 and closed at Rs 375.19 compared to the previous day's Rs 374.83. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 01 paise each and closed at Rs Rs76.32 and Rs 74.69, respectively.—APP

PSX stays bullish, gains 1,289 points

ISLAMABAD :The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Friday closed on a bullish note, rising by 1,289.83 points, a positive change of 0.77 percent, to settle at 169,864.53 points compared to 168,574.69 points on the previous trading day, according to PSX data. During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 873.030 million shares with a traded value of Rs40.870 billion, against 1,288.969 million shares valuing Rs55.231 billion in the previous session. Market capitalization increased to Rs19.321 trillion from Rs19.217 trillion a day earlier. Out of 482 active companies in the ready market, 259 advanced, 180 declined, while 43 remained unchanged. Hum Network led the volume chart with 71.840 million shares, followed by Dost Steels Ltd. with 46.970 million shares, and World-Call Telecom with 40.811 million shares. The top gainers included Hoechst Pakistan Limited, increasing by Rs428.27 to close at Rs4,711.61, and PIA Holding Company Limited-B, which rose by Rs159.50 to settle at Rs24,196.00. Major losers were Service Industries Limited, falling by Rs57.43 to close at Rs1,550.81, and Khyber Textile Mills Limited, declining by Rs53.02 to close at Rs1,972.51. In the futures market, turnover stood at 177.125 million shares with a traded value of Rs9.628 billion, compared to 224.650 million shares worth Rs10.890 billion in the previous session. Out of 316 futures-market companies, 175 recorded gains, 136 declined, while 5 remained unchanged. Among futures contracts, HUMNL-Dec led with 19.306 million shares, followed by PACE-Dec with 18.858 million shares, and SSGC-DECB with 13.537 million shares.—APP

Gilani urges tapping Pak's blue economy potential

He stressed on the importance of ensuring regional maritime security and lauded Pakistan Navy's efforts in safeguarding Pakistan's maritime frontiers

DNA

LAHORE: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani Friday underscored the need to fully harness Pakistan's blue economy potential. Addressing at concluding ceremony of 8th edition of Pakistan Navy's Maritime Security Workshop at Pakistan Navy War College, he emphasized on value of oceans which have become crucially important in twenty first century, said a statement issued by Directorate General Public Relations (Pak Navy). He stressed on the importance of ensuring regional maritime security and lauded Pakistan Navy's efforts in safeguarding Pakistan's maritime frontiers. The Chairman also appreciated the efforts of Pakistan Navy in sensitizing the nation on the importance of oceans and its undeniable link with national security. While highlighting the potential



of national maritime sector, he recounted the need to expand the existing capacity of country's shipping and fishing sectors in order to facilitate improved returns for economic and socio-economic uplift.

Earlier, the Chairman Senate was received by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf, upon his arrival at PN War College. Commandant Pakistan Navy War College Rear Admiral Sohail Ah-

mad Azmie in his welcome address, provided an overview of workshop's activities. The Maritime Security Workshop is an annual event organised by Pakistan Navy aimed to bring about improved understanding

of the maritime security and geopolitical underpinnings in the wider Indian Ocean. Participants included parliamentarians, policy makers, bureaucrats, academics, entrepreneurs, Armed Forces officers and media representatives.

China-Pak coop in canola oil makes Wuhan snack more appetizing

BEIJING: The China-Pakistan Modern Seed Industry Cooperation and Exchange Conference was held in Wuhan, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday. Syed Fahad Ali Sherazi, a participant in the Thousand Agricultural Talents Training Program in China from Pakistan, couldn't help but give a thumbs up after eating a Mianwo, a kind of Wuhan-style donut-shaped snack. This young man was so delighted to discover that the canola oil used to fry it came from his homeland, and the canola seeds were the result of joint research and development between China and Pakistan. In October, Huazhong Agricultural University and Wuhan Qingfa Hesheng Agricultural Development Co., Ltd. jointly held a three-month training course on Seed Production and Processing Technology. During the tea break, the organizer specially prepared semi-finished Mianwo, which were deep-fried on-site in "special" canola oil until golden brown. The crispy exterior and tender interior, along with the aroma of oil, attracted many Pakistani trainees. All of them sampled the exotic food, as well as many took photos and videos to share with their friends and family. Very soon, the trainees discovered the "special feature" of the rapeseed oil: the plastic bottle was printed with HC-021C, the name of a new canola variety that has been vigorously promoted for cultivation in Punjab, Pakistan, in recent years. This canola variety was jointly developed by China and Pakistan, and the oil extracted from it is sweeter and more fragrant than that of local varieties. Zhu Xiaobo, general manager of Qingfa Hesheng, the Chinese lead research institution for HC-021C, explained that Pakistan is a major consumer of edible oil but relies on imports for 94% of palm oil, and long-term consumption can easily lead to cardiovascular diseases. The safety of edible oils urgently needs to be addressed. From 2009 to 2019, the company, in collaboration with Pakistani partners, successfully bred a new generation of high-quality hybrid canola variety HC-021C, which has many characteristics such as short growth period, high yield, high oil content, and good oil quality. It has become the preferred variety for local farmers. To date, its cumulative planting area has exceeded 2.5 million mu (0.17 million hectares). Pakistani trainees, including Jatoi Ghulam Hussain and Muhammad Anser, expressed their sincere gratitude for the excellent courses arranged by the organizer and shared their plans for applying the technologies after returning home, conveying the solid public support for China-Pakistan agricultural cooperation. It is understood that since 2005, nearly 10 Wuhan-based breeding companies have been deeply involved in the Pakistani agricultural market, with the planting area of Chinese-tech hybrid rice, canola, and other seeds has been increasing year by year in the region. Chinese seeds have already borne fruit of friendship far away from home. Just like fragrant Mianwo, China-Pakistan agricultural cooperation will surely "fry" a more golden and splendid future through mutual trust and win-win results.—DNA

UN agency warns displaced Gazans face floods, as emergency supplies blocked

GENEVA: Hundreds of thousands of displaced Gazans face flooding of their tents and shelters by heavy rains, and materials for shelters and sandbags are not being allowed to enter the enclave, the UN International Organization for Migration said on Friday. Torrential rain swept across the Gaza Strip on Thursday, flooding hundreds of tents sheltering families displaced by two years of war, and leading to the death of a baby girl due to exposure, local health officials said. Nearly 795,000 displaced people are at heightened risk of potentially dangerous flooding in low-lying, rubble-filled areas where families are living in unsafe shelters, the IOM said. Insufficient drainage and waste management also heightened the risk of disease outbreak, the UN agency added. Materials to help reinforce shelters such as timber and plywood, as well as sandbags and water pumps to help with flooding have been delayed from entering Gaza due to ongoing access restrictions, the IOM said. Israel says it is meeting its obligations and accuses agencies of inefficiency and failing to prevent theft by Hamas, which the group denies. COGAT, the Israeli military arm that oversees humanitarian matters, was not immediately available for comment. Supplies already dispatched to Gaza, including waterproof tents, thermal blankets and tarpaulins, were not able to withstand the flooding, the IOM added.—APP

Govt prioritizes olive cultivation with modern facilities: Tanveer

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday said that the government was prioritizing the supply of quality saplings, research, modern oil extraction facilities and overall improvement of the olive value chain to promote olive cultivation in the country. Addressing the inaugural session of the 7th National Olive Festival, the minister said that government was taking measures for the upgrading olive packaging, branding and marketing to international standards, which was essential to enhance its exports. The minister stated that Pakistan has vast potential for olive cultivation and that the crop is no longer an experiment but has now matured into a fully emerging industry. He said that Pakistan's climate is highly suitable for the cultivation of premium-quality olives, adding that olives were an effective solution to climate change and an ideal crop for water-scarce regions. He noted that the olive sector is providing thousands of farmers with profitable and climate-resilient livelihoods, while also creating new business and employment opportunities in rural economies. He highlighted that Pakistan has the potential to become a leading regional hub for olive cultivation and processing, adding that the consumption of olive oil and other olive products is increasing in the country, and a portion of Pakistan's olive oil is already being exported — including the award-winning Pakistani olive oil that secured a silver medal in the United States. Rana Tanveer Hussain noted that olives constitute a major global agricultural industry, citing Spain's \$11 billion and Italy's significant annual exports. In comparison, Pakistan's total agricultural exports stand at \$9 billion,

while the country spends \$4 billion annually on importing palm oil. He emphasized that by increasing domestic olive production, Pakistan can not only meet its own needs but also generate valuable foreign exchange through exports in the coming years. He appreciated the support of the Italian government for the development of Pakistan's olive sector, noting that Italy is providing technical assistance and has also approved a 20 million project for Pakistan. He further announced that Pakistan

is expected to become a member of the International Olive Council within the next two to three months, which will enhance global recognition of Pakistan's olive industry. The minister reiterated that farmers are the backbone of the country and assured that the government will extend all possible support to them. He expressed confidence that olives have become a strategic crop for Pakistan and that the country's journey towards becoming an "olive hub" is progressing rapidly.



Shenzhen to support B2B China & Pak initiatives

ISLAMABAD: The Longhua International Cooperation Center, Shenzhen will support B2B initiatives between China and Pakistan, it was decided in Shenzhen on Friday. The meeting was held between Muhammad Imran, Trade & Investment Cancellor from Consulate General of Pakistan, Guangzhou, China and Guo Ziyu (Xavier Gui), Director of Longhua International Cooperation Center & Head of International Cooperation Operations at Longhua International Cooperation Center (LICC) in Shenzhen, China. The representatives of the relevant Shenzhen government departments in liaising on economic and trade were also present. The meeting was arranged in connection with the grant of membership of LICC to Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI), Lahore, Pakistan. David Chu, CEO, Precise Development (HK) Limited arranged this collaboration, said a press release issued here. Imran was briefed about the operations of LICC where he appreciated the collaboration of LICC with many countries of the world. He discussed the opportunities for trade and investment in Pakistan for the Chinese enterprises and sought support of the center for collaboration based on win-win cooperation. It is worth mentioning that from Pakistan PCJCCI becomes the first organisation to become a member of such B2B Cooperation, initiated by the Government of People's Republic of China.—APP

Dubai hosts sustainable bio international forum

DUBAI: The Sustainable Bio International Forum, hosted by Dubai on Friday under the theme "From the UAE to a Greener World", discussed the future of sustainable bioenergy and its role in supporting a low-carbon circular economy. The forum brought together decision-makers, experts, academics, and industry leaders from around the world to explore innovative biofuel solutions, including sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), marine fuel, and renewable transport fuels, while encouraging young scientists to advance scientific research in this field. The forum was held under the patronage of the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MoEI), and jointly organised by the Association of Arab Universities and the Yousuf Award for Young Scientists. Eng. Saif Ghubash, Assistant Undersecretary for the Petroleum, Gas, and Mineral Resources Sector at the MoEI, affirmed that the UAE has made sustainability a key pillar of its national agenda, setting an ambitious goal to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 through advanced initiatives to reduce emissions, expand clean energy projects, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. He explained that bioenergy represents an important pathway in the future energy mix, particularly sustainable aviation fuel and low-carbon fuels, noting that the UAE was among the first in the region to test flights powered by SAF in collaboration with national companies.—Agencies

Series of Israeli strikes hit Lebanon

BEIRUT: A series of Israeli strikes hit south and east Lebanon on Friday, state media reported, as Israel's army said it was targeting Hezbollah sites, the latest such raids despite a year-old ceasefire. Lebanon's state-run National News Agency (NNA) reported strikes in around a dozen locations, including up to around 30 kilometers (20 miles) from the Israeli border, citing at times "heavy raids." Israel has kept up strikes on Lebanon despite a November 2024 ceasefire that was supposed to end more than a year of hostilities with the Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah, and has also kept troops in five areas it deems strategic. The Israeli military said in a statement that its forces "struck a training and qualification compound" used by Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force where operatives "underwent shooting exercises and additional training on the use of various types of weapons." The army also "struck additional Hezbollah military infrastructure in several areas in southern Lebanon.—APP

Briefs

Pak urges
bold global
climate
action at
UNEA-7

Climate minister says action has shifted from moral choice to survival imperative for countries like Pakistan

DNA

FEDERAL Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Musadik Malik delivered a forceful call for global climate justice at the Seventh Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) in Nairobi, warning that the world can no longer afford half-measures in the fight against environmental degradation. Speaking before representatives of all 193 UN Member States, he stressed that climate action has shifted from a moral choice to a survival imperative, especially for vulnerable countries like Pakistan that are already shouldering disproportionate human and economic losses. Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Musadik Malik attended the Seventh Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Rainfall, snow
expected
in KP, GB

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Friday forecasted rain-thunderstorm and snowfall in the western and northern parts of the country over the weekend. "A shallow western disturbance is likely to approach western parts of the country on 12 December night," it stated in its latest weather update, posted on X. Under the influence of the weather system, light to moderate rain-thunderstorm with snowfall over the hills is expected in several areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan

62ND NATIONAL DAY OF KENYA



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Bilal Azhar Kayani State Minister for Finance, Lt. Gen ® Peter M. Njiru, High Commissioner of Kenya and others cutting cake to celebrate the 62nd National Day of Republic of Kenya, at Islamabad Serena Hotel. DNA

Pakistan, ADB Sign \$257m
deals for Punjab development

They expressed government of Punjab's commitment to effectively utilize the financing for successful and timely completion of the two programs

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) here on Friday signed two major financing programmes worth US\$257 million aimed at improving the education and health sectors in Punjab. The programmes include the Responsive, Ready, and Resilient Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) Secondary Education in Punjab Programme amounting to USD 107 Million (including USD 7 Million grant of ADF) and ii) Punjab Nursing and Health Workforce Reform Program amounting to USD 150 Million.

According to press release, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Muhammad Humair Karim appreciated the ADB's role as a trusted development partner and its continued support to Pakistan to complement its development initiatives.

The Secretary appreciated ADB's financial support to these critical programs on concessional terms, which would significantly contribute to long-term and sustainable social growth, address the vital educational needs and health services requirement of the Punjab Province. Besides, he acknowledged the efforts of the government of Punjab and emphasized on timely and effective utilization of the financing. He said that STEM Secondary Education Program aims to transform the learning environment and ensure inclusivity across the province between 2026-2030.

Punjab Nursing Program focuses on expanding the pool of qualified nurses and improve health service delivery across the province. Three centers of excellence will also be established in Lahore, Multan, and

Rawalpindi under this Program.

Speaking on the occasion, ADB Country Director, Ms. Emma Fan expressed appreciation for government of Pakistan's strong commitment to these programs. She emphasized the significance of these two transformational programs on human development in critical sectors of education and health in Punjab.

She added that both programs are result-based and shall help in improving the ecosystem in both education and health sector. The Secretary, School Education Department and Secretary, Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department Punjab highlighted benefits of the two programs and appreciated ADB. They expressed government of Punjab's commitment to effectively utilize the financing for successful and timely completion of the two programs.

Meanwhile, The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved \$400 million in financing for a new project to provide safely managed water, sanitation and basic hygiene services, and help improve the institutional and financial performance of local urban administration in Punjab province.

The Punjab Inclusive Cities Program (PICP) would support the improvement and rehabilitation of water supply networks, sewerage systems, and wastewater treatment plants, provide stormwater drainage, and enhance the capacity of local governments to sustainably deliver services and increase revenues in 16 secondary cities in Punjab. The program, according to a news release, would also support the improved performance of solid waste management systems in Punjab, including for sanitary disposal of waste.

Vawda
claims ex-ISI
chief going to
testify against
Imran Khan

Khawaja Asif alleges May 9 events were former ISI chief and PTI founder's "joint plan"

SENATOR Faisal Vawda claimed on Thursday that court-martialled former ISI chief Lt Gen (retd) Faiz Hamid was going to testify against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, which would intensify legal troubles for the latter.

Vawda, a former PTI leader, made the claims while speaking on Geo News programme "Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Sath", said that Hamid will also present evidence against the incarcerated ex-premier.

The Field General Court Martial (FGCM) sentenced the former top spy to 14 years of rigorous imprisonment earlier today "on four charges related to engaging in political activities, violation of the Official Secret Act," according to the Inter-Services Public Relations. He insisted the PTI founder appeared firmly "caught in the legal squeeze" stemming from the May 9 cases, warning that the process would intensify.

The May 9 events refer to the 2023 riots that were triggered by the arrest of PTI founder from the premises of Islamabad High Court (IHC) in a graft case. During the protests, the miscreants targeted the civil and military installations, including the Corps Commander's House in Lahore and the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi. - AFP

US to deny
tourists visa
applications
aimed at 'giving
birth to secure
citizenship'

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States' embassy in India has said that it will deny tourist visa applications if its consular officers believe that it is primarily aimed at giving birth in the country to secure US citizenship for a child. "This is not permitted," the US embassy in New Delhi said in a post on X.

The move, as reported by the Gulf News, adds to uncertainty for Indian visa holders which have so far caused unease among professionals accounting for over 70% H-1B approvals and nearly 90% H-4 visas with work authorisation. The US embassy in India has rescheduled visa interviews with some applicants given fresh appointment dates extending to mid-2026. The Trump administration, back in September, proposed that would rework the H-1B visa selection process to favour higher-skilled and better-paid workers, according to a related Federal Register notice, a move that follows a White House proclamation on Friday introducing a \$100,000 fee for the visas.

Trump "frustrated"
with Kyiv, Moscow
over talks on war

KYIV: US President Donald Trump is "extremely frustrated" with Russia and Ukraine, his spokeswoman said on Thursday, as Kyiv said Washington was still pushing it to make major territorial concessions as part of its plan to end the nearly four-year war. "The president is extremely frustrated with both sides of this war," Karoline Leavitt told reporters. "He doesn't want any more talk. He wants action. He wants this war to come to an end." Earlier Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky made remarks that appeared to show little had changed in Washington's core position on how the conflict should end since it sent a 28-point plan to Kyiv and Moscow last month that heavily favoured Russia. Zelensky said that Washington was still pushing it to cede land to Russia as part of an agreement to end the war that started with Moscow's February 2022 invasion. Washington wants only Ukraine, not Russia, to withdraw its troops from parts of the eastern Donetsk region, where a demilitarised "free economic zone" would be installed as a buffer between the two armies, Zelensky told reporters, including from AFP. Under the latest US plan, Moscow would also stay where it is in the south of the country, but pull some of its troops out of Ukrainian regions that Russian President Vladimir Putin has not claimed to have annexed in the north. - Agencies

Pakistan assures IMF of farm input
tax hikes, cuts in uplift schemes

Govt vows to fully deregulate sugar sector, continue tariff adjustments in power sector

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has committed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that it will raise tax rates on fertilisers, pesticides and sugary products, and move selected items to the standard 18% GST slab. These steps form part of Islamabad's bid to successfully complete the second review and unlock the third \$1 billion tranche under the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF), as well as the first \$200 million tranche from the \$1.4 billion Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF). Further details of the IMF's report on Pakistan's economic performance have been released, with the Fund saying Pakistan has achieved most of the targets under the loan programme.

In its recently released staff report, the IMF projected that the balance of payment gap will continue to widen from the current fiscal year, reaching \$3.253 billion by 2029-30, after the existing programme concludes. This projection signals that Pakistan may require another IMF programme in the near future. The staff report says that contingency measures provide an important safeguard against fiscal risks. If revenue were to fall short of expectations by the end of December 2025, the Pakistan authorities plan to adopt additional measures to safeguard the fiscal targets, including increasing excises on fertilisers and pesticides by five percentage points, introducing excises on high-value sugary items, and broadening the sales tax base by moving select items to the standard rate. They are also prepared to reduce or postpone spending in response to lower revenues. The government has also assured the Washington-based lender that it will fully deregulate the sugar sector, continue tariff adjustments in the power sector and reduce system losses and cut costs. A nationwide installation of point-of-sale systems for 40,000 large retailers will be completed over the next two years, while all four provinces will move toward harmonised sales tax procedures.

Pakistan, Iraq boost security
cooperation, improve
Pilgrim Facilitation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control, Mohsin Naqvi, held an important meeting with his Iraqi counterpart, General Abdul Ameer Al-Shammari, during which both sides discussed measures to enhance bilateral relations and improve facilities for Pakistani pilgrims traveling to Iraq. The two ministers held a detailed exchange of views on strengthening cooperation between the interior ministries of both countries on a sustainable and effective basis. They agreed to deepen coordination to ensure smooth arrangements for pilgrims as well as progress in broader security matters.

The Iraqi Interior Minister highly appreciated Pakistan's recent steps to formally organize and regulate pilgrim groups, calling the efforts "commendable" and noting that such effective measures were taken for the first time under the current administration. He assured that all pilgrims included in the list provided by Pakistan's Ministry of Interior would be allowed entry into Iraq. Mohsin Naqvi emphasized that pilgrims traveling to Iraq would not be permitted to overstay beyond the specified period, adding that relevant institutions of both countries would remain in close contact to ensure compliance and smooth coordination. Both ministers also agreed to further strengthen cooperation in security matters, counterterrorism, prevention of human trafficking, and the exchange of information through a joint mechanism. Minister Naqvi expressed gratitude to the Iraqi government and people for their continued cooperation and traditional hospitality towards Pakistani pilgrims. He reaffirmed that the safety, dignity, and facilitation of Pakistani pilgrims remain the top priority of the Government of Pakistan. Iraqi Interior Minister General Al-Shammari announced that he would soon visit Pakistan to finalize a joint plan aimed at enhancing pilgrim facilitation, security cooperation, and bilateral ties.

DECEMBER 2025

Pakistan's Premier News &
Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:

www.centrelines.com.pk

www.dnanews.com.pk

www.islamabadpost.com.pk



@Postislamabad/ @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

Islamabad POST

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-8488394