LAHORE - KARACHI - ISLAMABAD

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# Daily Islamabad POST

Thursday, November 12, 2026

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## Deputy PM reviews arrangements for the SCO summit

Detailed News On Page-01

## Japan envoy opens water pump in KP

Detailed News On Page-02



## Minister calls for diversifying major exports

Detailed News On Page-04



### Terrorists acts

# Ex. Afghan army man arrested in KP

Arrested suspect hails from Mangryal village in Afghanistan's Paktia province, says police officer

DNA

PESHAWAR: Security forces arrested a former Afghan National Army (ANA) member in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Tirah area for allegedly carrying out terrorist activities in Pakistan, Additional Inspector General (AIG) Abbas Ahsan said.

Addressing a joint press conference on Wednesday, the AIG and Regional Development Council spokesperson Mehmood Jan Babar shared details about the high-profile terrorist.

Babar said the security forces arrested the suspect, identified as Hikmatullah alias Hamza, on November 7 following a tip-off from intelligence sources. He said the arrested suspect had contacts with terrorists across the border as well as inside the country. He added that Hikmatullah had also worked with the Gul Bahadur group.

The AIG said further measures were being taken against drone attacks by terrorists. He said anti-drone systems would be installed within the next six months. The arrested suspect hails from Mangryal village in Afghanistan's Paktia province, the police officer said. Pakistan has witnessed a sharp rise in cross-border terrorist incidents, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in 2021.

Pakistan recorded its highest monthly number of militant attacks in 12 years during September 2026. Islamabad has repeatedly urged Kabul to prevent its territory from being used by militant organisations to carry out attacks inside Pakistan. Pakistan maintains that the Afghan Taliban regime has failed to take effective action against groups responsible for attacks on Pakistani security forces and civilians. Despite multiple rounds of talks, Islamabad and Kabul have yet to resolve

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## *DSP among 12 policemen injured in firing*

Fitna al Khawarij and criminals behind ambush on police party in Kohat, say officials

News Desk

**KOHAT: At least 12 policemen were injured in firing during an operation against illegal gold mining in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kohat district, police said on Wednesday. The incident took place in the Darbukach area, within the limits of Gumbat police station, where the operation against illegal gold mining on the River Indus was underway, the police added. Police said terrorists belonging to Fitna al Khawarij and criminal elements ambushed the police party. They added that illegal gold mining in the area had been continuing because of a nexus between terrorists and criminals. Those injured include DSP Haider Zaman and Gumbat SHO Ayaz Afridi. The injured were shifted to the hospital. Police said armed men also set a police mobile on fire. They added that an exchange of fire between the police and**

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## Dar reviews plans for SCO summit

Saifullah Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar chaired a meeting in Islamabad today to review preparations for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council of Heads of State Summit.

Pakistan will host the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council of Heads of State Summit next year. On this occasion, he underscored that the SCO Summit presents an important opportunity to advance multilateral partnerships and regional cooperation.

The Deputy Prime Minister directed all stakeholders to ensure sustained and smooth coordination for all preparations. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Bajwa, Acting Foreign Secretary, National Coordinator SCO, and senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were present on the occasion.

## 300 schools in Italy evacuated

News Desk

MILAN: Italian authorities evacuated some 300 schools across Italy on Wednesday after receiving an emailed bomb threat, the latest disruptions affecting European institutions following hoax bomb threats against airlines and broadcasters in recent weeks. Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni said in a statement that there was no indication of any "concrete danger" to Italian schools and said the threats appeared aimed at "generating alarm and concern."

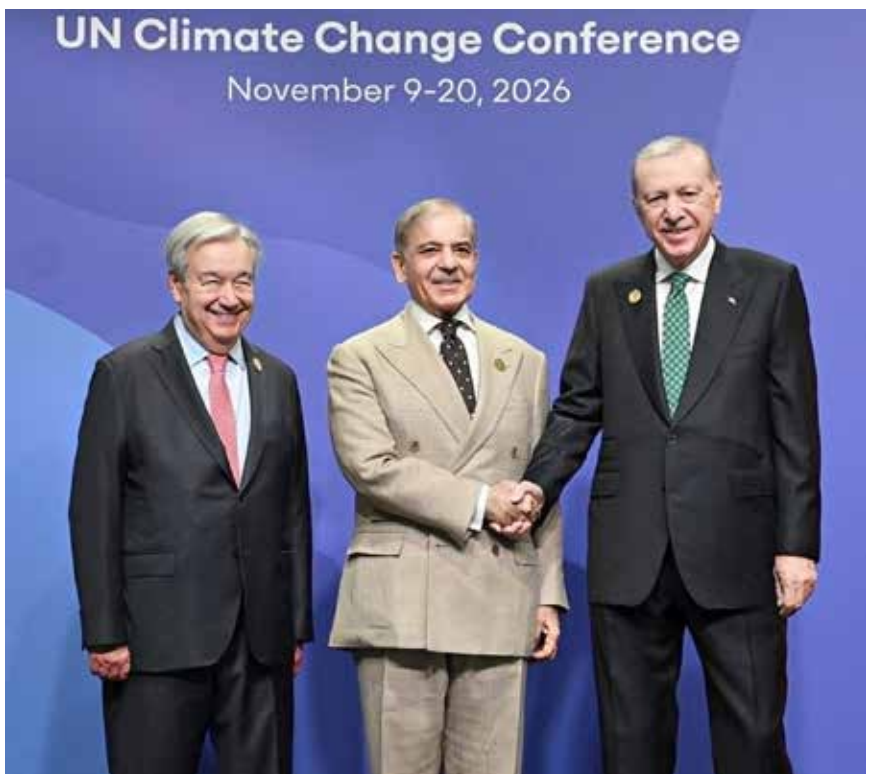
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## PTI lawyers meet Imran Khan

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Lawyers representing the PTI met party founder and former prime minister Imran Khan on Wednesday, a day after the Islamabad High Court (IHC) issued orders allowing the meeting. On Tuesday, the IHC, while hearing appeals filed by Imran and his wife, Bushra Bibi, against their convictions in the £190 million reference, directed authorities to facilitate meetings between Imran and his legal team. PTI lawyer Awais Younus Chaudhry, speaking to Dawn, said Barrister Salman Safdar and Advocate Latif Khosa held a meeting with Imran.

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**ANTALYA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres receives Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif upon his arrival at the venue of the Leaders' Summit of the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at Antalya, Türkiye on 11 November 2026. – DNA**

### At COP31

# PM highlights Pak revolution in solar tech

**He affirmed that Pakistan fully supports the '35-by-35 Global Electrification Pledge', wherein countries agree to aim to increase electricity's share of total final energy consumption to around 35 per cent by 2035 in line with global climate objectives**

Centreline Report

ANTALYA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday highlighted Pakistan's solar power boom at the COP31 in Turkiye, where world leaders gathered to discuss joint solutions to combat climate change.

This year's summit focuses on transitioning toward a low-carbon future. Delegates from nearly 200 countries are meeting in the Mediterranean resort city of Antalya as global greenhouse gas emissions show little sign of falling and wars, inflation and other crises compete for political attention. Addressing a high-level dialogue on clean energy transition,

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistan, Iran hold important meeting

DNA

**ANTALYA: Pakistan and Iran have agreed to work closely in support of regional peace, security, and prosperity. This understanding was reached during a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of the Leaders' Summit of COP31 in Antalya, Turkiye, today [Wednesday].**

Continued on Page 06

## Briefs

### US envoys to meet Putin, Zelensky

News Desk

ABU DHABI: US envoys will meet separately with Russia's Vladimir Putin and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday as they seek to seize "openings" from two days of talks in Abu Dhabi on ending the Ukraine war. Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner will travel first to Moscow to meet the Russian president, before flying to to Dublin — where Zelensky will attend European meetings — to debrief the Ukrainian leader. The countries agreed in Abu Dhabi to a major prisoner exchange — the "biggest" ever, according to Kushner — though no side gave any figures. But the talks — the first since February, when the US war in Iran halted diplomacy — also revealed deep splits over the role Europe should play in future talks.

### Iran hits out at US for $ 20m award

News Desk

TEHRAN: Iran hit out at the United States' $20 million reward for information on its nuclear programme on Wednesday, calling it "repugnant and regrettable". Tehran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi urged the International Atomic Energy Agency and the UN Security Council to condemn the reward, which was announced last week. Last Friday, the US military said up to $20 million and "possible relocation" were available for information about the programme's "facilities, equipment, and associated personnel". "The Islamic Republic of Iran calls upon the UN Secretary-General, the Security Council, and the Director General of the IAEA to condemn this repugnant announcement explicitly and unequivocally".

## *ADB approves disaster financing for Pakistan*

**The lending agency said the second subprogramme of the Climate and Disaster Resilience Enhancement Programme supported reforms aimed at strengthening disaster preparedness and risk management, as well as integrating resilience measures into Pakistan's development planning and investment, to reduce the impact of future disasters**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Wednesday approved contingent disaster financing (CDF) facilities up to $500 million for Pakistan to withstand disasters and facilitate disaster response. In a statement, the Manila-based lending agency said the funds will provide prompt budget support following eligible disaster events to help reduce the resulting economic and fiscal impacts.

"Floods, earthquakes, and other disasters cause Pakistan an estimated $2 billion in annual average losses," ADB noted, further recalling, "2022 floods alone caused $14.9bn in direct damage and $15.2bn in economic losses, pushing as many as $9.1m people into poverty."

"Poor and rural communities have less capacity to recover, while women and girls are disproportionately affected."

The lending agency said the second subprogramme of the Climate and Disaster Resilience Enhancement Programme supported reforms aimed at strengthening disaster preparedness and risk management, as well as integrating resilience measures into Pakistan's development planning and investment, to reduce the impact of future disasters. "The programme also strengthens Pakistan's disaster risk financing framework and improves the availability of financing following disaster events," the statement added.

"When disaster strikes, it is often the most vulnerable communities that are hit hardest. Investing in preparedness can help protect lives and livelihoods, reduce economic losses, and safeguard the development gains Pakistan has worked hard to achieve," ADB Country Director for Pakistan Emma Fan was quoted as saying.

"This programme will support the country in implementing critical reforms to ensure a more resilient future." It added that the programme was in accordance with "Pakistan's priorities for managing disaster risks and with ADB's commitment to supporting resilience initiatives across Asia and the Pacific."

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# Imran taken to Pims overnight for check-up

Jailed PTI founder was administered anti-VEGF injection in his eye, says Pims admin

Staff Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former prime minister Imran Khan was taken from Adiala jail to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) in Islamabad late at night for a medical examination, hospital administration said on Wednesday. According to an official statement issued by the Pims administration, jailed Imran was brought to the hospital from Adiala jail during the night between November 10 and 11. The statement said that the examination included a follow-up treatment for his eyes.

On the recommendation of an eye specialist, the PTI founder was administered an anti-VEGF injection in his eye, with the procedure carried out by the ophthalmology department's team. The hospital administration said that all of Imran's vital medical indicators were found to be within normal limits during the examination. It further said that the former prime minister's overall physical condition was satisfactory and stable. Sources said Imran was taken to

Continued on Page 06

## ATC issues arrest warrant for Afridi

Staff Report

**PESHAWAR: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Wednesday reissued arrest warrants for non-functional Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi and a PTI activist in the Radio Pakistan attack case. The case relates to the attack, vandalism and arson at the Radio Pakistan Peshawar building during the May 9-10, 2023 unrest. Judge Wali Muhammad Khan also extended interim pre-arrest bail for PTI leaders and former provincial ministers Taimur Saleem Jhagra and Kamran Bangash, as well as the party's Peshawar president Irfan Saleem, until November 17. The three appeared before the court on Wednesday along with their counsel, Ali Gohar**

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## Vaccination to protect 2.9m girls against cervical cancer

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has launched a province-wide vaccination campaign to protect girls against cervical cancer, under which approximately 2.9 million girls aged 9 to 14 will be vaccinated free of charge.

According to the Health Department, the campaign would continue until November 24 and would cover girls enrolled in public and private schools and religious seminaries, as well as those who are out of school.

The overall target includes approximately 1.6 million school-going girls and 1.3 million out-of-school girls. In Peshawar alone, the authorities have set a target of vaccinating 374,000 girls.

Special vaccination sessions will be organised at educational institutions, while dedicated teams will visit different localities and villages to reach girls who are not attending school.

Mobile vaccination teams will also provide the facility in remote areas, while vaccines will remain available at government health centres. According to medical experts, cervical cancer is primarily caused by infection with the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), certain strains of which can cause cervical cancer if they persist in the body for an extended period. – **APP**

## Punjab CM opens cardiac facility at Jhelum DHQ

LAHORE, Nov 11 (APP): Punjab Chief Minister(C-M),Maryam Nawaz on Wednesday inaugurated a cardiac catheterisation laboratory (Cath Lab) at the District Headquarters Hospital in Jhelum,saying patients would no longer have to travel to other cities for cardiac treatment.

During her visit, the CM inspected the wards,-semi-modular unit and operation theater and checked the quality and expiry dates of medicines and injections,said a handout issued here.She also witnessed a live angiography procedure from the control room and met patients recovering after angioplasty. A Dubai-based driver,Shehzad Naveed told the chief minister that he had returned to Pakistan for free cardiac treatment after developing a heart condition. – **APP**

**Public Notice**

The public is informed that the Serial / Certificate Number **901187** Roll Number **189233** DAE Mechanical Technology Second Annual 2018 issued in my name by Punjab Board of Technical Education Lahore has been lost somewhere. If anyone finds it, please send it to the following address. Name: **Umar Waheed Parentage Gul Waheed** Address: **House No. 230/10, Street No. 08, Bakra Mandi, Allama Iqbal Road, District Rawalpindi.**

# Shuichi opens Water Supply System in Mansehra

Ambassador Akamatsu reaffirmed Japan's commitment to supporting the sustainable development of Pakistan and expressed his hope that this water supply system would serve as a lasting symbol of friendship between Japan and Pakistan

**DNA**



ISLAMABAD: Akamatsu Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, attended the inauguration ceremony for "The Project for the Installation of Water Supply System in Village Bakki, Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa". The project was implemented by Friends Welfare Association (FWA) Pakistan, a non-governmental organization dedicated to supporting vulnerable communities in Pakistan through education, healthcare, WASH facilities, and community development.

The Government of Japan, through its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Program, provided financial assistance of USD 59,764 for this project. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Mr. Sardar Shahjehan Yousaf, Member of the Provincial Assembly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr. Asad Mehmood Lodhi, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Mansehra, along with officials of the Embassy of Japan, representatives of FWA, members of the local WASH Committee, and community members. FWA has successfully completed the construction of the Gravity Flow Water Supply System, including 6,013 meters of galvanized iron main supply pipes and a water intake tank. FWA and the local community also contributed additional resources for excavation work, local transportation of materials, and water quality testing to ensure a safe and reliable water supply. To support the long-term sustainability of the project, FWA also established a 20-member WASH Committee and provided its members with training in water quality management, hygiene promotion, and the operation and maintenance of the system.

This project responds to the critical need for clean water in Village Bakki, where residents, especially women and girls, have faced significant daily hardships in collecting water. The newly installed system provides safe drinking water to over 6,000 residents, contributing to improved health, reduced burdens of water collection, greater educational opportunities for children, and an improved quality of life for the entire community. In his address at the ceremony, Ambassador Akamatsu congratulated FWA on the successful completion of the project and emphasized that access to safe water is essential to improving people's lives and supporting sustainable development of society. He highlighted that improved access to safe water would reduce the daily burden of water collection, particularly for women and girls, create greater educational opportunities for children, improve quality of life, and contribute to better health for the entire community. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of proper maintenance to ensure the long-term sustainability of the water supply system. Ambassador Akamatsu reaffirmed Japan's commitment to supporting the sustainable development of Pakistan and expressed his hope that this water supply system would serve as a lasting symbol of friendship between Japan and Pakistan.

## Digital tracking to strengthen parliamentary oversight

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday proposed a series of reforms to strengthen parliamentary oversight, including time-bound audits, digital tracking of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) directives, professional research support and performance-based accountability of government departments.

Addressing an event titled "Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight – Public Accounts Committee" here, he called for Parliament, the Auditor General of Pakistan and the Finance Division to agree on a clear target of presenting audited reports to the PAC within 12 months of the end of each financial year.

He proposed making real-time and risk-based audits of major development projects a regular practice rather than an exception, while ensuring that every PAC directive carried a clearly defined deadline for compliance.

The minister also proposed establishing a digital compliance-tracking mechanism linking the PAC Secretariat with the Auditor General's office, supported by a dashboard showing the status of departmental compliance with committee directives.

He said Principal Accounting Officers (PAOs) repeatedly ignoring PAC directives should face consequences in their performance evaluations, with their Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) reflecting how seriously they followed the committee's recommendations.

Stressing the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of parliamentary oversight, he proposed establishing permanent professional research wings within the PAC, comprising analysts, accountants and data experts.

He said development partners, including UNICEF, could support the initiative through institutional training, technical assistance and provision of necessary tools, while Parliament and its institutions should also invest in building their own capacities.

Ahsan Iqbal further called for a shift from merely financial auditing towards greater emphasis on efficiency and performance audits, particularly of major social sector programmes. He said the Auditor General should give equal importance to assessing the actual performance and outcomes of key social sector initiatives, while the PAC should accord special attention to their results.

Referring to child-focused development, he said annual audit findings could provide a strong basis for reviewing the performance of social sector programmes, with technical support from UNICEF.

The minister also proposed strengthening coordination between the Auditor General's office, Planning Commission and the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) to ensure that audit findings informed development planning and budgetary decisions.

He stressed that repeated failures and shortcomings in projects should be thoroughly audited before fresh allocations were approved, adding that audit findings must help determine whether projects were delivering the intended results and deserved further budgetary support.

Highlighting the country's human development challenges, Ahsan Iqbal said around 40 per cent of the population was being left out of the development process, undermining Pakistan's ability to harness its demographic dividend.

He said a large population could become an economic asset only when people were healthy, educated and equipped to contribute to national development.

He stressed that stunting should be treated as a national emergency, while achieving at least 90 per cent literacy was a necessary condition for national development.–**APP**

## *AI to become $4.8tr global economy by 2033: Shaza*

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday said artificial intelligence (AI) would become a $4.8 trillion global economy by 2033, stressing the need for Pakistan to prepare its workforce with emerging digital skills. Addressing the Margalla Dialogue, she said AI would not necessarily eliminate jobs but would change their nature, making new skills essential for employment. People equipped with AI-related skills would enjoy a significant productivity advantage over those without them. The minister said a person using AI could be up to 100 times more productive than another individual with similar skills who did not use the technology. Highlighting Pakistan's progress in digital infrastructure, she said internet speeds had increased by 60 per cent over the past two and a half years. Internet data capacity had also increased by two terabits per second, while the country's total live internet capacity currently stood at around seven terabits, she added. She said Pakistan had added three international submarine cables, while a spectrum auction of 480 megahertz had increased the country's spectrum capacity from 274 to more than 750 megahertz.–**APP**

## Sindh Labour Dept to establish registration Helpdesk at SITE

KARACHI: In a move aimed at simplifying worker registration and improving industrial labour services, the Sindh Labour Department will set up a dedicated 'Labour Registration Helpdesk' at the S.I.T.E. Association of Industry every Tuesday and Thursday, Secretary Labour Sajid Jamal Abro announced during his visit to the association at the suggestion of SAI president Abdul Hadi. He was accompanied by the SESSI Commissioner, Director Labour Sindh, Joint Director Labour and other senior officials.

Responding to a query from a participant, Abro urged industrialists to report any officer demanding money for registration and invited association members to utilize the S-BOSS platform for the process.

On healthcare, the secretary said efforts were underway to upgrade services at the Kulsumbai Valika Social Security S.I.T.E. Hospital under a public-private partnership model. He assured that a "notable change" in service delivery would soon be visible and invited association members to revisit the hospital to witness the improvements.

Referring to the HIV outbreak at Valika Hospital last year, Abro said a number of actions had been taken against those found responsible. A committee had been formed under the Chief Secretary Sindh, while an endowment fund of PKR 2 billion had been created. Families of affected children are being paid PKR 40,000 per month to meet their daily expenses, and this financial assistance will continue for years.

Earlier, in his welcome address, SITE President Abdul Hadi expressed confidence that the Secretary Labour, being an experienced professional, would help resolve issues faced by association members relating to the Labour Department. He said the five departments falling under the Labour and Human Resources Department should be clubbed together to achieve the goal of ease of doing business.–**APP**

**ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT COMPANY (EIDMC)**

**HIRING OF TECHNICAL SERVICES UNDER OPEN FRAMEWORK AGREEMENTS FOR POWER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

The **Energy Infrastructure Development and Management Company (EIDMC)** invites applications for prequalification of technical firms for Power Infrastructure Projects, with a view to issuing subsequent Invitations to Bid and entering into Open Framework Agreements with successful bidders. Each category listed below shall constitute a separate prequalification process with a distinct EPADS reference number.

| Sr. | Category | Area of Services | EPADS Reference No. | EPADS Link for Pre-Qualification Document | Submission Deadline | Date and Time of Opening |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | A | Project Development & Advisory Services | FFW10114 | https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/framework-agreements/10114 | 03 December 2026 at 10:00AM | 03 December 2026 at 10:30AM |
| 2 | B | Technical Studies | FFW10980 | https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/framework-agreements/10980 | 03 December 2026 at 10:00AM | 03 December 2026 at 11:00AM |
| 3 | C | Engineering & Design | FFW10986 | https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/framework-agreements/10986 | 03 December 2026 at 10:00AM | 03 December 2026 at 11:30AM |
| 4 | D | Procurement Transaction & Contract Management | FFW10989 | https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/framework-agreements/10989 | 03 December 2026 at 10:00AM | 03 December 2026 at 12:00PM |
| 5 | E | Project Management Delivery | FFW11001 | https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/framework-agreements/11001 | 03 December 2026 at 10:00AM | 03 December 2026 at 12:30PM |
| 6 | F | Surveying | FFW11004 | https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/framework-agreements/11004 | 03 December 2026 at 10:00AM | 03 December 2026 at 01:00PM |
| 7 | G | Soil Investigation | FFW11007 | https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/framework-agreements/11007 | 03 December 2026 at 10:00AM | 03 December 2026 at 02:00PM |
| 8 | H | Environmental, Social, Land & Safeguards | FFW11010 | https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/framework-agreements/11010 | 03 December 2026 at 10:00AM | 03 December 2026 at 02:30PM |

Interested applicants may obtain further information from the Energy Infrastructure Development and Management Company (EIDMC) through EPADS v2.0 during office hours. Applications for each category, prepared in accordance with the respective Prequalification Documents, must be submitted electronically through EPADS v2.0 by the deadline specified in the table above. Applications shall be opened electronically on the corresponding dates and times indicated in the table. **Manual submissions shall not be accepted.**

A firm shall not apply in the same category both individually and as a JV member, or as a member of more than one JV. For applicants seeking more than one category, technical experience and key-expert capability should be demonstrated and assessed for each applied category as per given criteria.

**Grievance Redress Mechanism:** Any grievance arising during the procurement process shall be addressed in accordance with Rule 65 of the Public Procurement Rules, 2026, through the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) constituted by EIDMC.

Vendors who have not yet registered on **EPADS v2.0** may complete their registration at https://vendors.epads.gov.pk/. Guidance regarding registration and bid submission is available on the portal.

PID(I) 4316/26

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PROCUREMENT EIDMC**
**EIDMC, Office No. 103, 1st Floor, Evacuee Trust Complex, F-5/1, Islamabad**
**(051-9205320, 370-180-0231 Email: procurement@eidmc.gov.pk)**

# 30th CNS open golf championship 2026 opened

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Guest appreciated the healthy participation of golfers from all across the country and their three decades bond with the tournament highlighting their commitment with the golfing circuit

**DNA**




KARACHI: The opening ceremony and media brief of 30th Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Open Golf Championship 2026 was held at Karachi Golf Club (KGC). The championship is scheduled from 11 to 15 Nov 2026. Commander Karachi and President KGC, Vice Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi, graced the occasion as Chief Guest and formally inaugurated CNS Open Golf Championship 2026.

The Golf Championship will be played in Professionals, Senior Professionals, Junior Professionals, Ladies Professionals, Senior Amateurs, Junior Amateurs, Ladies Amateurs, Veterans and Pro-Amateurs categories.

A large number of professional golfers from across the country are participating in the tournament. There are awards and cash prizes in various categories including special prize for 'Hole in One'.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Guest appreciated the healthy participation of golfers from all across the country and their three decades bond with the tournament highlighting their commitment with the golfing circuit.

The ceremony was attended by sponsors, golfers and media representatives.

Islamabad POST
METROLITE
Thursday, November 12 , 2026

## National Days and Armed Forces Days

**NOVEMBER**

Nov 01/Algeria
National Day

Nov 04/Italy
Armed Forces Day

Nov 07/Russian Federation
Socialist Revolution

Nov 09/Cambodia
National Day

Nov 11/Poland
Independence Day

Nov 14/Jordan
Birthday of King Hussein

Nov 15/Belgium
Kings Day

Nov 15/Brazil
Republic Day

Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
National Day

Nov 18/Oman
National Day

Nov 18/Morocco
Independence Day

Nov 21/Bangladesh
Armed Forces Day

Nov 22/Lebanon
Independence Day

Nov 25/Suriname
National Day

Nov 28/Mauritania
National Day

Nov 28/Albania
Flags Day



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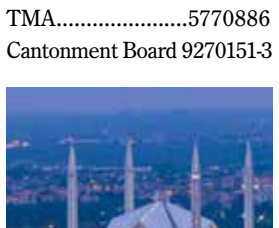
## Hospitals

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MH.....561116
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DHQ.....5556311-4
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Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



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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

# Chairman CDA holds open kutcheri in Park Enclave

### Chairman CDA Sohail Ashraf directed that the sanitation system in Park Enclave be improved under modern solid waste management services, and that work be carried out regarding the repair of a boundary wall to improve security in Phase One



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Sohail Ashraf held an open kutcheri in Park Enclave on Wednesday. Member Estate Muhammad Zaman Wattoo, Member Building Asmat Sharif Dhillon, Member Environment Abdullah Khurram Niazi, relevant Director Generals, other relevant senior officers as well as a large number of citizens participated in the event. The purpose of holding the open kutcheri was to listen to the suggestions and issues of the allottees and residents of Park Enclave. On this occasion, the residents of Park Enclave placed before Chairman CDA their issues relating to the repair of boundary wall, sanitation system, public parks, security, electricity supply in Park Enclave Phase Two and Three and other basic facilities. Chairman CDA Sohail Ashraf directed that the sanitation system in Park Enclave be improved under modern solid waste management services, and that work be carried out regarding the repair of a boundary wall to improve security in Phase One. On the identification of the issue of the remaining work on Park Enclave's central mosque and the parking problem, Chairman CDA directed that the construction work of the mosque be completed and the parking issue be resolved immediately. Chairman CDA said that the BUP issue present in Park Enclave will also be resolved soon. He directed that the electricity supply issue in Phase Two and Three be resolved on a priority basis. He directed that the remaining development work in Phase Three be completed soon and said that issues related to sewage, water supply and up-gradation of parks should also be resolved on a priority basis. Chairman CDA Sohail Ashraf directed that the handing over of possession of plots be ensured through a QR Code. He directed that the process of giving possession in Park Enclave be made transparent and easy. Chairman CDA said that the commercial areas of Park Enclave be developed entirely on modern lines. He said that modern and beautiful street lights be installed on a permanent basis on the boulevard (service) road. He said that to improve the governance model of Park Enclave, a committee comprising residents be formed which could suggest solutions to various issues and matters. On this occasion, the citizens expressed special thanks to Chairman CDA and the administration for holding the open kutcheri. Chairman CDA said that issues in all phases of Park Enclave will be resolved on a priority basis so that the provision of the best facilities to the residents can be ensured.—**DNA**

## Police nab five robbers wanted

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have busted the notorious Kalu Gang involved in armed robberies across Islamabad and Rawalpindi, arresting five of its members and recovering stolen valuables worth hundreds of thousands of rupees, cash, mobile phones, a motorcycle and four pistols used in criminal activities.An ICT Police official told on Wednesday that the Industrial Area Police Station carried out the operation against the gang, whose members were allegedly involved in a series of armed robberies and street crimes in the twin cities. He said the arrested suspects were identified as Saqlain, Abdul Rehman, Qaiser, Hashim and Muhammad Ali. The official said the suspects had previous criminal records and were wanted by police in dozens of cases registered in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. He said the gang members allegedly targeted citizens at recreational spots, metro stations and streets, depriving them of cash, mobile phones and other valuables at gunpoint. During the operation, police recovered stolen property worth hundreds of thousands of rupees, cash, valuable mobile phones, a motorcycle used in the robberies and four pistols along with ammunition.
The official said further investigation was underway to establish the suspects' involvement in other criminal activities and complete the necessary legal proceedings. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza said the arrested suspects would be challaned before the court on the basis of solid evidence.—**APP**

# ICCI assures full support for PWDs eco empowerment

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE) have agreed to strengthen institutional collaboration to create greater opportunities for students with special needs through vocational training, internships and employment in the trade and industrial sectors.
This understanding was reached during the visit of a delegation from the Directorate General of Special Education, led by Muhammad Amir, Director Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons (VREDP), at the Chamber House on Tuesday. Welcoming the delegation, ICCI President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia reaffirmed the Chamber's commitment to promoting inclusive economic participation and facilitating the integration of specially-abled individuals into the mainstream workforce. He assured the delegation that ICCI would extend its platform and institutional support to connect trained students with relevant business organisations, industrial units and market opportunities. The ICCI President also accepted an invitation to visit the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons facility to personally observe the training programmes, vocational facilities and rehabilitation services being provided to students. ICCI Vice President Mohammad Ashfaq Hussain Chatha appreciated the initiatives undertaken by the Directorate for the education, training and rehabilitation of students with special needs. He assured the delegation of the Chamber's fullest cooperation in creating practical employment opportunities and strengthening linkages between vocational institutions and the private sector. Speaking on the occasion, Muhammad Amir, Director VREDP, emphasized that market-oriented skills development was essential to preparing students for meaningful employment and economic self-reliance. He sought ICCI's cooperation in identifying employment avenues and aligning vocational training programmes with the evolving requirements of trade and industry.
To ensure effective coordination and sustained engagement between the two institutions, ICCI Executive Member Abbas Hashmi and Ms. Farah Hafeez, Deputy Director NTCSP, were nominated as focal persons.
Sharing his views, ICCI Executive Member Abrar ul Haq said that the Chamber would be pleased to facilitate direct linkages between DGSE and various market associations, enabling students to utilise their technical skills in suitable business and industrial environments. He stressed that closer engagement with the private sector could help transform vocational training into sustainable employment opportunities. The DGSE delegation also included Dr. Sajida Mehmood, Director Special Education, and Asad Ali, Deputy Director VREDP, while ICCI Executive Member Syed Imran Bukhari and former Executive Member Chaudhry Mohammad Ali also participated in the discussions.
Other participants included ICCI Executive Members Mohammad Sohail Chaudhry and Zohaib Arshad Malik, former Executive Member Waseem Chaudhry and other representatives.—**APP**

## FIA nabs suspect in UK work visa fraud

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone has arrested a suspect for allegedly collecting £34,000 and Rs 465,000 on the promise of arranging a UK work visa for his own nephew to work as a mason, but failing to fulfil the commitment and withholding part of the amount. According to FIA Islamabad Zone on Wednesday, the Anti-Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC) Islamabad arrested the accused, identified as Syed Majid Hussain, during an operation in the federal capital. The complainant alleged that the accused had promised to arrange a UK work visa for his nephew, Nauman Ali, for employment as a mason and received £34,000 and Rs 465,000 for the purpose. The FIA said the suspect subsequently returned £25,500 but allegedly failed to refund the remaining £8,500 and Rs 465,000.—**APP**

# AI, emerging technologies reshaping warfare, governance

ISLAMABAD: Experts at the Margalla Dialogue on Wednesday highlighted the growing influence of artificial intelligence (AI), advanced communication systems, semiconductors and digital platforms in transforming modern warfare and economic competition. Speaking at Forum C, titled "Technology and the Transformation of State & Society", held on the second day of the dialogue under the theme "Global Order in Transition: Navigating Strategic Uncertainty", they said technological capabilities were increasingly becoming a source of geopolitical power, while countries needed to balance innovation with national security, technological resilience, accountability and public trust. Brigadier Dr Raashid Wali Janjua, SI (M) (Retd), Director, Research and Analysis at the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), said artificial intelligence, advanced communication systems, and data-processing technologies are fundamentally transforming modern warfare, making it faster, more precise, and increasingly lethal. Speaking on "The Changing Face of War in the Information Age", he said future combat capabilities would largely depend on three key technological areas: advanced communication networks, AI-enabled data processing and analysis, and automated targeting systems. He explained that satellite communications, software-defined radios and tactical data links were strengthening battlefield connectivity, while artificial intelligence and machine learning were accelerating target identification and decision-making through automated target recognition, smart munitions and loitering weapons. Referring to conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, Dr Janjua highlighted the growing use of drones, autonomous systems and AI-assisted targeting. He said civilian infrastructure, technology companies and ordinary citizens were also becoming increasingly exposed to the consequences of modern warfare. Mr Daniel Castro, President of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, USA, said technological capabilities, including artificial intelligence, semiconductors, cloud computing and digital platforms, were increasingly determining economic power, national security and geopolitical influence. He said these technologies were reshaping international competition, trade, and relations between governments and private technology companies, while raising important questions about control, access, and regulation. Castro observed that advanced AI capabilities were increasingly concentrated in a small number of technology companies. Their technical expertise, he said, was essential for governments in areas such as scientific research, cybersecurity, intelligence and national defence. Highlighting the importance of an open global digital economy, Castro said it enabled entrepreneurs and small businesses to access international markets, provide services across borders and benefit from advanced computing infrastructure. He said countries such as Pakistan needed to benefit from global technological progress while developing their domestic capabilities. Akira Igata, Project Lecturer at the Economic Security Intelligence Lab, Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology (RCAST), University of Tokyo, Japan, said countries needed to balance the productivity benefits of artificial intelligence with national security, technological resilience and strategic autonomy to remain competitive in the changing global economy.—DNA

آئل اینڈ گیس ریگولیٹری اتھارٹی
حکومت پاکستان
Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority
Government of Pakistan

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

**Notice of Public Hearing by the Authority to consider Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL)'s Review of Estimated Revenue Requirement / Prescribed Price for F.Y. 2026-27**

Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (the petitioner) filed a petition before the Authority on October 15, 2026 under Section 8 (2) of the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority Ordinance, 2002, read with Rule 4(3) of the Natural Gas Tariff Rules, 2002, for Review of its Estimated Revenue Requirement / Prescribed Price for FY 2026-27 and subsequently amended the same on October 28, 2026. The petitioner has claimed total estimated revenue requirement, net of revenues at Rs. 467,933 million, including Rs. 437 million on account of LPG Air-mix subsidy and Rs. 43,685 million as a recoupment of prior year shortfall/stock of circular debt as per Federal Cabinet decision dated June 30, 2024 for system gas business.
The cost of gas is linked to the international prices of HSFO and Crude Oil in accordance with the agreements signed between the Federal Government and the gas producers. The breakup of projected prescribed price as claimed by the petitioner is tabulated below:

| Particulars | FY 2026-27 The Petition |
|---|---|
| **Projected Sales Volume (BBTU)** | **273,261** |
| | **(Rs. in million)** |
| Cost of gas | 371,093 |
| Cost of system gas sold as RLNG | (41,243) |
| Operating Cost and Others | 51,456 |
| UFG Adjustment | (750) |
| Depreciation | 29,560 |
| Return on Assets | 40,772 |
| Other Operating Income | (27,076) |
| Subsidy for LPG Airmix Project | 437 |
| Recoupment of prior year shortfall | 43,685 |
| **Total Estimated Revenue Requirement, net of revenues** | **467,933** |
| **Average Prescribed Price FY 2026-27 (Rs./MMBTU)** | **1,712.40** |
| **Current Average Prescribed Price (Rs./MMBTU)** | **1,712.40** |
| **Increase in Average Prescribed Price for FY 2026-27** | **-** |

Besides above, the petitioner has claimed RLNG cost of service at Rs. 60,147 million (Rs. 471.16 per MMBTU) for FY 2026-27.
Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority invites all interested/affected persons including gas consumers and general public to furnish their comments, suggestions and intervention requests. All correspondence in this connection may be addressed to Senior Registrar, OGRA and should contain the names and addresses of interveners.
All interveners must indicate the manner in which they are likely to be affected by determination of the Authority in this case. Intervention request should be accompanied by an affidavit verifying the contents of the intervention, intervention fee of Rs.500/- (must be deposited through OGRA online payment system available on its website) and authority letter, if representing an organization.
Copy of the petition is available on OGRA's official website which can also be obtained on payment of prescribed charges of Rs. 2/- per page from the office of Senior Registrar, OGRA, Islamabad. For any information required from the petitioner, please contact:

**Ms. Kanwal Wazir,**
**General Manager (RA),**
**Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited,**
**21-Kashmir Road, Lahore**
**Ph No. 042-99201306**
**Fax: 042-992-4424**

OGRA decided to hold a Public Hearing in the subject case according to the date, time and venue mentioned below:

Date : **November 30, 2026 (Monday)**
Time : **10:30 a.m.**
Venue 1 Ramada Hotel, **Lahore**
2 OGRA Head Office, Sector G-10/4, **Islamabad.** **(Through Zoom Link)**
3 OGRA's Regional Office, 2nd Floor, Sarhad Chamber of Commerce & Industry, G.T. Road, **Peshawar.** **(Through Zoom Link)**

All parties to the proceedings, stakeholders, general public and interested / affected persons are hereby informed of the above proceedings **OR** may contact Senior Registrar OGRA through below mentioned email in order to attend the public hearing through **Zoom Link Application** as well.

**Senior Registrar,**
**OIL & GAS REGULATORY AUTHORITY**
**OGRA Office,37-Mauve Area, Service Road, South Sector,G-10/4, Islamabad.**
**Phone: 051-9108889, 051-9108890-98 (Ext-123, 154)**
**Email: registrar@ogra.org.pk, Website: www.ogra.org.pk**

Public Service Message
گیس لیکیج جان لیوا حادثات کا سبب بن سکتی ہے احتیاطی تدابیر یقینی بنائیں اور حادثات سے بچیں۔
PID(I)4315/26
URAAN PAKISTAN

Islamabad POST
Thursday, November 12 , 2026

## Briefs

### OGDC announces gas and condensate discovery

ISLAMABAD :Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDC) on Wednesday announced a significant gas and condensate discovery at its Bitrisim Northwest-1 exploratory well, located in Khairpur district of Sindh. During testing, the well yielded 12.8 million standard cubic feet per day (MMSCFD) of gas and 175 barrels of condensate per day.

OGDC is the operator of the Bitrisim Exploration License with a 95% working interest, while Government Holdings (Private) Limited (GHPL) holds the remaining 5 percent.

Bitrisim Northwest-1 exploratory well was spudded on August 21, 2026, and drilled to a total depth of 3,732 metres in the Sembar Formation. Based on the interpretation of well logs, a Drill Stem Test (DST) was conducted in the Basal Sands of the Lower Goru Formation, confirming the discovery. OGDC is expediting the necessary activities to connect the well to the national gas gathering system on a fast-track basis to enable early monetisation of the discovery. The discovery will enhance OGDC's hydrocarbon reserves base and contribute to Pakistan's energy security by helping bridge the growing gap between energy demand and supply through the development of indigenous resources._**APP**

### Polio integrated immunization service delivery reviewed

ISLAMABAD: A National Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) review meeting was held here to assess progress, address implementation gaps and strengthen coordination among national immunization partners to improve vaccination coverage in high-risk and underserved communities.

The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication Ayesha Raza Farooq, with National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) National Coordinator Muhammad Anwar ul Haq as co-chair. The meeting was attended by members of the NEOC National Core Group, Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI), National ISD Task Team and representatives of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), UNICEF, World Health Organization (WHO), Gavi and the Gates Foundation. During the meeting, Ayesha Raza Farooq directed that vaccinators supported under the ISD initiative use the National Electronic Immunization Registry (NEIR) to record vaccination activities and ensure systematic identification and follow-up of zero-dose and under-immunized children. Discussions also focused on aligning partner investments with national immunization priorities, improving coordination between the Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) and Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), and using the ISD Dashboard for evidence-based planning, monitoring and accountability. The Prime Minister's Focal Person appreciated the efforts of the National ISD Task Team and stressed the need for regular monitoring.–**APP**

### Dialogue held to strengthen tobacco control measures

ISLAMABAD: District Health Officer Islamabad Dr. Syeda Rashida Batool participated as guest of honour in a multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on Graphic Health Warnings (GHWs) on tobacco products and Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship (TAPS) regulations, organized by the Human Development Foundation (HDF). The dialogue focused on strengthening tobacco control measures, expanding the coverage of graphic health warnings on tobacco products and promoting coordinated efforts to protect communities, particularly young people, from the harmful effects of tobacco and nicotine products.–**APP**



**ISLAMABAD: A beautiful view of chrysanthemums blooming along Constitution Avenue.**

# SME, export diversification key to economic growth

He said the government was working to simplify procedures and remove regulatory hurdles that prevented a wider range of businesses from accessing existing export support facilities. Sharing the findings of consultations with around 50 SME exporters, held on the Prime Minister's direction, Bilal Azhar Kayani said most participants had identified access to finance, rather than energy costs, as their major concern

ISLAMABAD :Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani on Tuesday said expanding exports, improving access to finance for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), enhancing productivity and addressing structural bottlenecks were essential for achieving sustainable economic growth.

Addressing a special forum on "Economic Security: Pakistan's Economic Bottlenecks – Diagnosis and Prescription", he said exports remained the only sustainable source of earning foreign exchange and stressed the need to diversify export products, explore new markets and strengthen existing export sectors.Referring to the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), he described it as an effective mechanism for supporting exporters by allowing duty-free imports of inputs used in goods meant for export. However, he said the scheme's outreach remained limited, as fewer than 1,000 out of an estimated 10,000 SMEs were benefiting from it. He said the government was working to simplify procedures and remove regulatory hurdles that prevented a wider range of businesses from accessing existing export support facilities. Sharing the findings of consultations with around 50 SME exporters, held on the Prime Minister's direction, Bilal Azhar Kayani said most participants had identified access to finance, rather than energy costs, as their major concern. He said these were established exporters, some of whom had been operating for years, but continued to face difficulties in obtaining financing that was already available under existing schemes. He said the Prime Minister had made improving access to finance a priority and was engaging banks to assess their performance in extending credit to SMEs, small farmers and low-cost housing projects. Emphasising the importance of private-sector consultation, he said policymaking should not be conducted in silos and that businesspeople who dealt with regulatory and operational challenges on a daily basis should be involved in designing economic policies.

He said recommendations from private-sector-led working groups had contributed to several tax measures announced in the recent budget, including the elimination of super tax for businesses earning between Rs150 million and Rs500 million, a two per cent reduction for businesses earning above Rs500 million and the removal of super tax on exporters. He added tax relief had also been provided to salaried individuals. Referring to reforms in the Export Development Fund, he said the government had accepted recommendations to place its management under private-sector leadership and abolish the export development surcharge. He said the fund's board was now led by exporters, with 89 exporters represented on it. The minister also stressed the need for better coordination between federal and provincial governments to improve the utilisation of development funds, saying combined federal and provincial development spending exceeded Rs4 trillion. Highlighting the link between education and economic productivity, he said improvements in the education system were necessary to develop a skilled workforce and achieve long-term economic gains. He also underscored the importance of empowering local governments, saying decisions and resources should be available closer to citizens to address local issues effectively. Bilal Kayani said better governance required improving the capacity and quality of public officials, ensuring respectful and informed interaction with citizens and reducing discretionary powers in the implementation of policies and government schemes.–**DNA**

# MDCAT results declared valid, admissions to proceed

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly Standing Committee on National Health Services on Wednesday declared MDCAT 2026 results valid and directed universities to proceed with admissions without delay, recommending reduction of the results' validity period from three years to one year from the next academic year. The decision was taken during a meeting of the committee, chaired by Dr. Mahesh Kumar Malani, MNA, at Parliament House, where the overall conduct and results of MDCAT 2026 were reviewed in the presence of vice chancellors of the universities that conducted the examination. The vice chancellors informed the committee that no major irregularity or serious issue affecting the overall credibility of the examination had been reported. They said that complaints primarily concerned question papers and answer keys, which had been examined and resolved by the respective universities. The committee was also informed that a six-member team of the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC), which visited the Sukkur IBA examination centre, had not reported any serious irregularity. After reviewing the explanations provided by the universities and the PM&DC team, the committee decided that the MDCAT 2026 results should stand valid, observing that students should not face further uncertainty in the absence of any substantiated major irregularity. The committee also directed the Ministry of National Health Services to reduce the validity period of MDCAT results from three years to one year, effective from the next academic year, to help address the issue of vacant seats in medical and dental colleges. The minister agreed to the direction. The committee further stressed that question papers should be made available to students after future examinations to ensure transparency and facilitate the resolution of genuine complaints. Taking notice of reports of excessive fee collection by private medical colleges, the committee directed PM&DC to strengthen its regulatory oversight and take strict action against institutions charging fees beyond the approved limits. The committee was informed that the prescribed minimum fee stood at Rs1.8 million, while 35 institutions had been allowed enhanced fees on the basis of audit reports, with the maximum reaching Rs2.1 million for some institutions following approval by the council. It sought a complete list of institutions granted fee enhancement, relevant audit reports and copies of court orders concerning the matter. PM&DC was also directed to provide an updated list of colleges charging fees beyond the prescribed limits and impose maximum penalties on violators. The committee expressed concern over reports that students were being harassed and, in some cases, prevented from attending classes for failing to pay additional charges. It directed PM&DC to ensure that no institution increased fees without prior approval. Reviewing the nursery fire incident at PIMS Mother and Child Hospital on August 26, 2026, the committee was informed that two committees had been constituted to investigate the incident and propose institutional reforms. The Ministry informed the committee that reports had been submitted to the Prime Minister and work on all 34 recommendations was underway, with progress being reviewed fortnightly at the Prime Minister's level. Regarding the expansion of Polyclinic Hospital, the committee sought an update on the ongoing 400-bed hospital project and stressed that it should be completed within the stipulated timeframe. The committee also decided to invite the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to its next meeting to discuss concerns raised by the Pakistan Medical Association regarding doctors engaged in private practice. Discussing the Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA), the committee called for expediting the constitution and operationalization of its board. It was informed that the matter was pending before the Prime Minister.–**APP**

# PMIF26 to begin in Islamabad today

ISLAMABAD: The two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 (PMIF26) will begin in Islamabad on Thursday, bringing together global mining executives, investors, policymakers, financial institutions and technical experts to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's vast mineral sector and strengthen the country's links with international mineral supply chains. Scheduled for November 12–13, the forum is being organised by the government of Pakistan and endorsed by the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), with the Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDC) as its founding partner. The event aimed to build on the momentum of PMIF25 by deepening international engagement, highlighting policy reforms and opening new avenues for investment, exploration, processing and sustainable mining. The opening day, November 12, will focus on financing early-stage exploration, developing a future-ready mining workforce and promoting women's participation in the sector. Participants will also examine next-generation mining projects, including discoveries under active licences, antimony developments and strategies for bringing projects into production. A session titled "Strengthening Geological Survey Collaboration: Unlocking Pakistan's Mineral Potential" will discuss how collaboration, data sharing and technical partnerships can improve geological knowledge, reduce exploration risks and support investment in Pakistan's mineral sector. Another session will examine the importance of developing local capabilities in Pakistan's mining sector as international capital flows into Reko Diq and other projects. The session will outline the National Minerals Capability Development Programme and various initiatives spearheaded by state-owned enterprises. The presentation will be followed by a certificate distribution ceremony for graduates of the programme's first two cohorts. The second day, November 13, will feature a government dialogue on building investor-ready mining jurisdictions. Officials from different countries will discuss policy reforms, value creation, regional collaboration, local content, skills development and long-term industrial growth. Strategic announcements across Pakistan's mineral value chain are also scheduled.–**DNA**

### Bari Imam House case CDA seeks vacation of stay order

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has termed the building known as Bari Imam House an encroachment, stating that no such building exists in official records, and has requested the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to vacate its stay order in the case.

The Authority has filed a miscellaneous application along with its reply in the pending case, seeking vacation of the interim relief granted by the court.

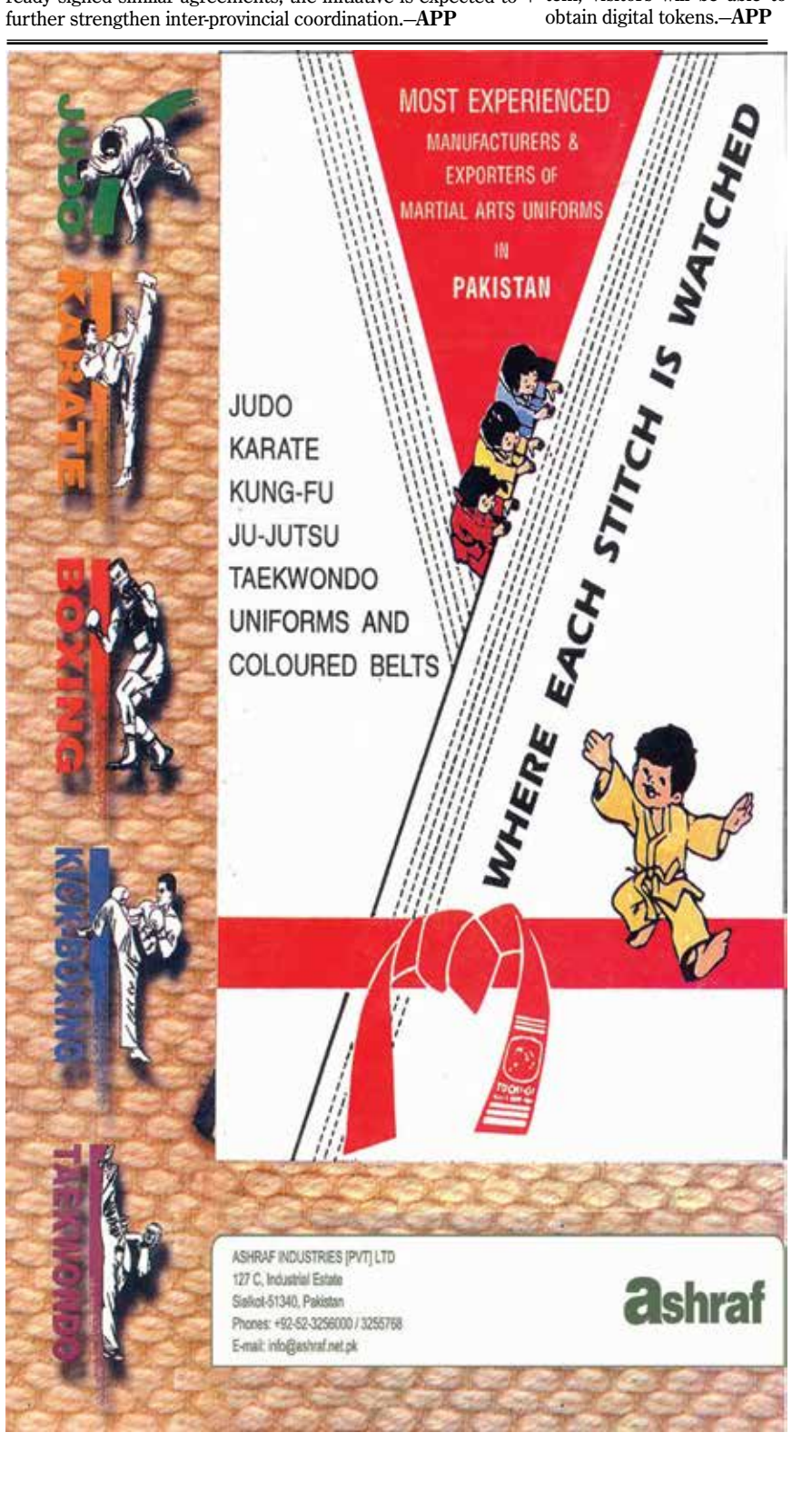
According to the CDA, the land in Noorpur Shahaan had already been acquired in the past and compensation had been paid to its owners. The Authority stated that the land comprising the Bari Imam shrine was separately recorded in official revenue records under different khasra numbers, while the building referred to as Bari Imam House had no connection with the shrine's premises. In its reply, the CDA maintained that merely naming a building Bari Imam House or associating it with the shrine did not confer any legal right upon the applicant over the land. It further stated that, according to the location and revenue records, Bari Imam House and the Bari Imam shrine were two separate sites. The authority argued that the applicant had no legal authority to occupy or use the land on which Bari Imam House was situated.–**APP**

### IBCC launches Digital Queue Management System

ISLAMABAD: The Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC) on Wednesday inaugurated a Digital Queue Management System (QMS) at its Islamabad Secretariat to streamline public service delivery across all six centres through digital tokens, QR-based queue tracking, real-time waiting updates, SMS and WhatsApp notifications, in a move aimed at reducing waiting times, improving transparency and making services more accessible to students and applicants. The system was inaugurated by Hassan Saqlain, Additional Secretary at the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, alongside Dr Ghulam Ali Mallah, Executive Director of IBCC. Developed on the directives of Federal Secretary Nadeem Mahbub, the initiative marks a significant step towards digitising IBCC's public-facing services and reducing the need for applicants to physically visit its offices Under the new system, visitors will be able to obtain digital tokens.–**APP**

### *DRAP, Punjab sign MoU to boost drug regulatory system*

ISLAMABAD: The DRAP and the Government of Punjab have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen regulatory coordination, harmonize practices and ensure consistent implementation of therapeutic goods regulations across the country. The agreement aims to promote a unified, standardized and coordinated NRS in line with the World Health Organization's Global Benchmarking Tool (WHO GBT) framework. With Punjab joining other provinces that have already signed similar agreements, the initiative is expected to further strengthen inter-provincial coordination.–**APP**



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# Political demise of Netanyahu

**Osama Al-Sharif**

COMMENTATORS have declared Benjamin Netanyahu to be finished many times over the past two decades and yet he has always made a comeback. This time, the calculus could be different. In the space of a week, Israel's longest-serving prime minister suffered two electoral blows. At home, his bloc won 53 seats in the 120-seat Knesset and lost its majority, while in the US, the Republican Party he bet on suffered a sweeping midterm defeat.

With no realistic path to forming a government, Netanyahu's chances of preventing his opponent, former general Gadi Eisenkot, from becoming the next prime minister appear slim. His best bet would be to survive and bide his time, hoping Eisenkot's partners' internal squabbling will make any government short-lived and lead to early elections next spring. In Washington, US Vice President J.D. Vance said the Iran war cost Republicans votes and he listed changing America's relationship with Israel among voters' demands. President Donald Trump acknowledged the war hurt his party, while defending it. US officials believe Netanyahu is to blame for convincing Trump to attack Iran. As Americans voted, Trump announced an end to $4 billion in annual aid from 2027, because "they don't need it." He called it a deal with Netanyahu, yet the Israeli prime minister's spokesperson said they were unaware of the details.

Shaken by the election results at home, Netanyahu tried to discredit the outcome. He claimed the Palestinian-led parties, which won a whopping 19 seats, "stole" the election, though Israel's election commission found no irregularities. Factions representing 67 lawmakers recommended Eisenkot, against 46 for Netanyahu, and President Isaac Herzog gave Eisenkot the mandate on Sunday. His task is hard but not impossible. He has 28 days, extendable by 14, to assemble rivals who agree on little except that Netanyahu must go. If he succeeds, Netanyahu loses the premiership and the leverage to prevent an independent inquiry into Oct. 7, meaning he is likely to be blamed for the worst security breach in Israel's modern history.

Eisenkot has 28 days, extendable by 14, to assemble rivals who agree on little except that Netanyahu must go To understand why this moment may be different for Israel, consider what Netanyahu has built since his meteoric rise to power. He took over the Likud party in 1993 on a platform of dismantling the Oslo Accords and he spent the next two years campaigning against the peace plan. Critics, including the family of slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, hold that he fed the climate of incitement against Rabin, who was assassinated in 1995 by an Israeli extremist. Netanyahu won the premiership months later and has spent three decades blocking a Palestinian state, despite a conditional nod to the idea in 2009. Since then, he has dedicated his political capital to discrediting the Palestinian Authority, expanding settlement building as a prelude to full annexation, inciting against Iran and promoting a new Middle East in which Israel is crowned as a hegemon. His boldest move was to bring the far right from the margins to the center of Israeli politics when he formed his coalition government in 2022.




As for Iran, Netanyahu's obsession goes as far back as the 1990s. He had lobbied the US Congress against the 2015 nuclear deal and later pressed Trump to abandon it, which he did in 2018. In February, he reportedly pitched Trump on a strategy of eliminating Iran's nuclear capabilities, even though Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard testified in March that Iran was not rebuilding the enrichment capacities destroyed the year before. Trump's war of choice is yet to deliver the promised result while creating a global energy crisis that has hit American consumers and helped build the surge the Democrats needed to create last week's blue tsunami. Netanyahu's grand vision sees a region in which Israel dominates by force, with weakened rivals and the Palestinians left out Buoyed by military successes in Gaza, southern Lebanon, the Syrian Golan and Iran, Netanyahu's regional designs grew larger. Since the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas, Netanyahu has spoken repeatedly of a "new Middle East." In March, he told his Cabinet, "We are forging a new Middle East here" — one that is founded on Israel's military superiority rather than Shimon Peres' version of regional collaboration. His grand vision sees a region in which Israel dominates by force, with weakened rivals and the Palestinians left out. The Abraham Accords have become a tool to achieve that vision.

Having spent years casting Iran and its Shiite allies as the region's chief menace, he has now amplified a new threat. In February, he announced a "hexagon" of alliances to counter both the radical Shiite axis and what he called an "emerging radical Sunni axis." In October, when asked whether he would rule out preemptive strikes on Turkiye, he said: "We're not about to capitulate to an extreme Sunni axis, which Turkiye leads." Analysts say Pakistan, which has a defense pact with Riyadh and close ties with Ankara, is likely part of the grouping he has in mind. Netanyahu's game plan is simple enough: keep Israelis on alert by parading enemies, justifying a permanent state of emergency in which he becomes indispensable as Israel's only protector. But a weary Israeli electorate has now voted for an opposition camp that wants him removed, held accountable and replaced by someone who can begin the near-impossible job of repairing Israel's standing worldwide, which has been damaged by the Gaza war, the Iran campaign and a far-right government many allies no longer trust and are now ready to sanction. Netanyahu's defenders will make their case for keeping him in power.

But one thing is clear. Netanyahu has overseen dramatic change in Israel's political DNA over the decades: the left is no more, the extremists hold sway and the center has moved even further to the right. Today, the majority of parties are against a Palestinian state and all are in favor of permanent security control over the West Bank and Gaza. Moreover, Netanyahu has passed the controversial Jewish "nation-state" law and was close to undermining the independence of the High Court, which has oversight over the government. Today, his goal is to prevent Arab parties from having any role in government — a goal shared by the extremists. During his long career, Netanyahu, now 77, has survived trials, protests and defeats. But today, Washington wants to keep a distance from him while a Knesset majority wants him gone. If Eisenkot builds a government, even a short-lived one, Netanyahu's ordeals will mount and the master of political survival may run out of escape routes.

# Trump's Iranian Retreat and America's Economic Reckoning

**Qamar Bashir**



Iran's energy exports have become the principal target. Reuters reported that the American naval blockade had prevented fresh Iranian crude shipments from reaching China through the Strait of Hormuz, interrupting a vital source of foreign currency. Washington apparently calculates that depriving Tehran of petroleum revenues, restricting imports and exhausting financial reserves will progressively undermine the government's capacity to administer the country. The ultimate expectation appears to be that economic hardship will generate...

DONALD Trump's declaration that the military war against Iran is effectively over marks a stunning reversal in American strategy and a profound political embarrassment for a president who entered the conflict expecting military supremacy to deliver strategic submission. After months of confrontation, enormous economic disruption and mounting domestic opposition, Washington is discovering that military superiority cannot automatically translate into political victory. Iran has survived the assault, its governing system remains intact, and the objectives of the American-Israeli campaign remain unfulfilled. What began as an ambitious attempt to reshape the Middle East has now become a struggle to rescue American credibility while containing the political and economic consequences at home.

On November 9, Trump acknowledged that further military action against Iran appeared unnecessary, although American forces remained prepared to resume operations. His declaration followed discussions with Qatar's prime minister and renewed diplomatic efforts to establish a negotiated settlement. Trump maintained that Iran must never acquire nuclear weapons, suggesting that negotiations could provide assurances without further military confrontation. His announcement did not constitute a formal peace agreement, but it unmistakably signalled Washington's retreat from the expectation that additional military force would produce the desired political outcome. The Washington Post +1 Yet the abandonment of major military operations does not mean the abandonment of American pressure. Instead, Washington is shifting the battlefield from military installations to Iran's economic foundations. Secretary of State Marco Rubio openly acknowledged on November 10 that sanctions and the naval blockade were inflicting extraordinary economic damage, making further major combat operations unnecessary. His explanation exposed the emerging strategy: achieve through economic strangulation what military confrontation failed to accomplish. Investing.com +1

Iran's energy exports have become the principal target. Reuters reported that the American naval blockade had prevented fresh Iranian crude shipments from reaching China through the Strait of Hormuz, interrupting a vital source of foreign currency. Washington apparently calculates that depriving Tehran of petroleum revenues, restricting imports and exhausting financial reserves will progressively undermine the government's capacity to administer the country. The ultimate expectation appears to be that economic hardship will generate domestic unrest and eventually accomplish the regime change that military intervention could not deliver. Yahoo Finance +1

This strategy, however, carries an unmistakable contradiction. A military campaign justified partly through claims of liberating Iranians is being replaced by economic measures that threaten the livelihoods of ordinary Iranian families. Financial deprivation, shortages and unemployment do not distinguish between governments and populations. Washington may hope that economic suffering will translate into political rebellion, but Iran's continued institutional survival demonstrates that such calculations cannot guarantee the desired outcome. The political repercussions are equally visible in Israel. Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition lost its parliamentary majority in the October 27 election, and President Isaac Herzog subsequently entrusted opposition leader Gadi Eisenkot with attempting to form a government. Israel's newly elected parliament was sworn in on November 10, although coalition negotiations remained unresolved. Netanyahu's diminished political position represents another major reversal for the leadership associated with the confrontation against Iran. Reuters +1

Across the Atlantic, the American electorate has delivered its own verdict. Democrats captured both chambers of Congress in the November midterm elections, dramatically weakening Trump's political authority. The war's economic consequences, particularly higher energy prices and mounting public frustration, contributed to Republican losses. Vice President JD Vance directly attributed the electoral defeat to the war, while Trump himself acknowledged its political cost. euronews +1

The transfer of congressional power threatens an uncomfortable period of investigations, oversight hearings and intensified scrutiny of the administration's decisions, military expenditures and allegations of misconduct. A president who expected foreign military success to strengthen his political position must now confront an opposition empowered to examine the consequences of his policies.

For Trump, the writing on the wall should be unmistakable. America's greatest challenges are no longer confined to distant battlefields. They exist within its own cities, highways, railway networks, deteriorating public infrastructure and increasingly unaffordable household budgets. The American Society of Civil Engineers awarded national infrastructure a C grade in 2025 and identified a staggering $3.7 trillion investment shortfall. These are the foundations upon which national productivity, competitiveness and prosperity ultimately depend. ASCE +1

More disturbing is the economic structure that increasingly rewards financial intermediation while leaving millions of workers struggling to meet basic expenses. Banks, insurance corporations, mortgage lenders, credit card companies, healthcare providers, telecommunications businesses and utilities extract substantial portions of household earnings through interest, premiums, fees and recurring charges. Many of these services are indispensable, but their pricing structures deserve scrutiny when corporate profitability expands alongside household financial insecurity.

The Federal Reserve's latest household survey revealed that 16 percent of American adults had failed to pay all their bills during the preceding month, while 26 percent had avoided medical expenses because of cost. These figures expose the contradiction between America's extraordinary aggregate wealth and the daily insecurity experienced by substantial sections of its population. May 2026

The problem becomes particularly visible in working households. Parents work extended shifts, spouses seek additional employment, and young adults contribute earnings toward family expenses. Yet mortgage payments, automobile insurance, medical coverage, utilities, groceries and credit card obligations consume much of their income. Those performing the essential work of production, transportation, construction, agriculture, retail and public services frequently discover that their wages cannot guarantee financial stability. The concentration of wealth makes this imbalance even more troubling. Federal Reserve distributional data show that the wealthiest one percent of American households controlled approximately 31.6 percent of national household wealth in early 2026, while the bottom half possessed barely 2.5 percent. Such concentration raises fundamental questions about whether the economic rewards generated by millions of workers are being distributed equitably. Count The Zeros +1

The Census Bureau's 2025 Supplemental Poverty Measure placed poverty at 13.1 percent, a particularly disturbing figure for the world's largest economy. Behind these statistics are families confronting difficult choices between food, healthcare, housing and debt repayment. The persistence of such hardship amid extraordinary national wealth demands structural reform rather than political rhetoric. Census.gov America must therefore reconsider an economic arrangement in which financial institutions and dominant corporations can accumulate enormous wealth while workers struggle to retain a reasonable share of their earnings. Affordable healthcare, fair insurance pricing, reasonable credit costs, stronger wages, competitive markets and renewed infrastructure investment should become national priorities. Economic prosperity must be measured not merely through corporate earnings and stock market valuations but through the living standards of those whose labour sustains the economy.

The lesson of Iran extends far beyond the Middle East. A nation cannot indefinitely substitute military expenditure for domestic investment, financial privilege for productive competitiveness, or corporate enrichment for social prosperity. Trump now faces a historic choice: continue pursuing coercive policies abroad while economic inequalities deepen at home, or undertake the fundamental restructuring necessary to restore prosperity to working Americans. Iran has exposed the limitations of American military power. The midterm elections have exposed the limitations of Trump's political authority. America's widening economic divisions expose something potentially more consequential: the vulnerability of a system that increasingly concentrates wealth among those who control capital while millions who create and sustain that wealth struggle to survive. Unless Washington redirects its priorities from foreign confrontation toward domestic reconstruction, fairer economic distribution and productive investment, the decline it fears abroad may ultimately be accelerated by the injustices it refuses to confront at home.

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**Former MD, SRBC | Michigan, USA**

# Ukraine and the Return of Great-Power Politics

**Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer**



The concern is not simply about NATO's military deployments. It is also about the political principle underpinning Europe's post-Cold War order. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, countries in Central and Eastern Europe have sought closer political, economic and security relations with Western institutions. Their decision to join NATO and European...

THE prospect of a broader security agreement between the United States and Russia has opened a new debate about the future of European security. What initially appeared to be an effort to end the war in Ukraine is now raising questions about NATO's position, Europe's strategic autonomy and Russia's ambitions to regain influence over the countries that once formed part of its political and strategic neighbourhood. The controversy intensified after US President Donald Trump met Russian presidential envoy Kirill Dmitriev at the White House on November 5. Trump suggested that an agreement with Moscow could extend beyond Ukraine and involve the wider European continent. Although he offered few details, his remarks immediately attracted attention in European capitals. The possibility that Washington and Moscow might negotiate a new security arrangement without the full participation of European governments has created considerable unease among America's traditional allies.

The proposed initiative comes at a critical moment. The war in Ukraine has fundamentally altered Europe's security environment, exposed divisions within the Western alliance and revived questions about the limits of American commitments to European defence. For Moscow, the conflict has also become an opportunity to challenge the post-Cold War security order, particularly NATO's expansion into Central and Eastern Europe. Russia has consistently argued that NATO enlargement threatens its national security. Before launching its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Moscow demanded restrictions on NATO's expansion and changes to the alliance's military presence in Eastern Europe. Its demands included a rollback of military deployments and weapons systems in countries that joined NATO after 1997. These proposals were rejected by Washington and its European allies, who maintained that sovereign states have the right to determine their own security arrangements.

The emerging American initiative has therefore raised an important question: is Washington prepared to accommodate some of Russia's longstanding security demands in exchange for an agreement ending the war in Ukraine? European governments are particularly concerned that negotiations could gradually establish a new understanding of European security based on the interests of major powers rather than the sovereign rights of individual states. Countries such as Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania regard NATO membership as the foundation of their national security. Any arrangement restricting the alliance's military presence or future expansion would have direct consequences for their strategic calculations.

The concern is not simply about NATO's military deployments. It is also about the political principle underpinning Europe's post-Cold War order. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, countries in Central and Eastern Europe have sought closer political, economic and security relations with Western institutions. Their decision to join NATO and the European Union reflected their own national preferences, not merely the strategic calculations of Washington or Brussels. Allowing Moscow a determining role in these decisions would raise serious questions about the sovereignty of smaller European states. It could also establish a precedent in which powerful countries claim special rights over the foreign and security policies of their neighbours.

For Vladimir Putin, a revised European security arrangement could provide an opportunity to secure strategic concessions that Russia has been unable to obtain through diplomatic negotiations or military pressure. Moscow may seek limitations on NATO's eastern presence, restrictions on Ukraine's future military cooperation with the West and recognition of Russian security interests in neighbouring countries. However, the American position remains less clearly defined. The Trump administration presents its initiative as an attempt to address the security concerns of all parties and create conditions for a lasting settlement. Jared Kushner, who is involved in the diplomatic effort alongside US special envoy Steve Witkoff, has identified post-war security guarantees, economic recovery and mechanisms to prevent renewed conflict as important elements of the negotiations.

The immediate test will come at the planned trilateral talks between the United States, Russia and Ukraine in Abu Dhabi on November 10 and 11. The discussions are expected to address the termination of hostilities, security guarantees, humanitarian arrangements and the future of Ukraine. European representatives are also seeking involvement, arguing that decisions affecting the continent's security cannot be taken without their participation.

There is, nevertheless, a distinction between accommodating legitimate security concerns and accepting a sphere of influence. Arms-control arrangements, military transparency, crisis communication and reciprocal reductions in tensions could contribute to European stability. Such measures would not necessarily undermine NATO or compromise the sovereignty of its members. The problem would arise if these arrangements imposed restrictions on countries that were not parties to the negotiations. Europe, meanwhile, faces an uncomfortable strategic reality. Its dependence on American military capabilities has become a subject of renewed debate. If Washington pursues a separate understanding with Moscow, European governments may accelerate efforts to strengthen their own defence capabilities and reduce their reliance on American security guarantees. This could reshape relations within NATO even without any formal change to the alliance.

Ultimately, the future of European security cannot be determined solely by an agreement between Washington and Moscow. Ukraine must have a meaningful role in decisions concerning its territory and security, while European countries must participate in negotiations affecting their collective defence. Ending the war is an important objective, but the terms of peace will matter as much as the cessation of fighting. An agreement that recognises national sovereignty and establishes reciprocal security commitments could help reduce tensions. One that divides Europe into competing spheres of influence would risk reviving the very political conditions that the continent sought to leave behind after the Cold War.

The question facing Washington is therefore not simply how to reach an agreement with Moscow, but what kind of European order that agreement would create. A settlement that ends one war at the expense of the security and independence of other countries may leave the foundations of another crisis firmly in place.

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Islamabad POST
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## Briefs

### Ex. Afghan army man arrested...

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their differences, with the issue of militant groups operating from Afghan soil remaining a major point of contention between the two sides.

### DSP among 12 policemen injured in firing

FROM PAGE 01

the militants was underway. Fresh contingents of police and security forces have reached the spot, the police added. District Police Officer (DPO) Kohat said the pursuit of the Fitna al Khawarij was continuing and the operation would go on until the last militant was eliminated. Emergency has been imposed at the District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital, Kohat, said Medical Superintendent Dr Tahir Ali Shah.

### ADB approves disaster...

FROM PAGE 01

In 2024, ADB had also approved a $500m policy-based loan to support climate change and disaster risk reduction and resilience in Pakistan. In May, a report compiled by the think tank Jinnah Institute highlighted that persistent governance failures and weak community-level systems continued to undermine Pakistan's ability to prepare for and respond to climate disasters and called for urgent reforms to build long-term resilience across vulnerable districts. The findings came in the wake of devastating 2025 floods, which submerged entire districts, displaced millions, and wiped out livelihoods, exposing critical gaps in preparedness despite years of policy frameworks, institutional reforms, and international commitments. The report argued that reliance on reactive disaster management has proven insufficient in the face of intensifying climate stress.

### Imran taken to Pims overnight...

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the hospital under tight security arrangements, with similar security measures maintained during his return to prison following the examination. PTI chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said that he learned about Imran's hospital visit from media reports. The PTI chief reiterated his demand to transfer the former premier to Shifa International Hospital as per the Supreme Court's August 18 directives and to constitute a medical board, comprising Imran's personal physician and a member of his family. "Regrettably, this order has remained unimplemented for nearly three months," he wrote in a post on X, demanding Imran be immediately shifted to Shifa Hospital for comprehensive medical examinations, necessary tests, and appropriate treatment.

### ATC issues arrest warrant...

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Durrani and Barrister Sarwar Muzaffar Shah. Advocate Ali Zaman, representing Afridi, told the court that his client's whereabouts remained unknown. He alleged Afridi had been taken away from the Chief Minister's House on Oct 11, when emergency and governor's rule were imposed in the province, but his arrest had not been formally shown on record. The defence sought more time to prepare the case. Accepting the request, the court adjourned the hearing until Nov 17. The court reissued arrest warrants for Afridi and PTI activist Amir Khan Chamkani after their earlier warrants — issued on Oct 28 — were returned unserved.

# All seven transformers positioned at Mansehra 765 kV Substation

*The final transformer was positioned on November 5, completing the placement of all seven units*



**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The Mansehra Substation Project by PowerChina has completed the positioning of all seven 765-kilovolt (kV) main transformers, marking a major step forward in the construction of Pakistan's first 765/220 kV high-capacity grid station, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday The final transformer was positioned on November 5, completing the placement of all seven units. The first unit was positioned on April 17, and the project has now moved into the equipment installation phase.

Each transformer weighs 225 tonnes. Shipments began in November 2025, and all seven units arrived at the project site over a 344-day shipment period, reflecting the logistical challenges involved in transporting the heavy equipment. To ensure safe positioning, the project team held technical sessions with supervision engineers and completed reviews of relevant documentation and test plans. Chinese specialists provided remote technical guidance, while local employees carried out operations on site in real time.

Once operational, the Mansehra Substation will play a key role in transmitting clean hydropower generated by the Dasu Hydropower Project to the federal capital's power grid. It is expected to strengthen Pakistan's electricity transmission network, facilitate the integration of hydropower into the national grid and improve grid stability. The positioning of all seven transformers marks an important step towards completing the project and strengthening Pakistan's capacity to transmit electricity from its hydropower resources.

## Khawaja declines to confirm if Australia's bowlers were aware of 2018 ball-tampering plot

**SPORTS DESK**

SYDNEY: Former Australian opening batsman Usman Khawaja has cancelled events to promote his new book, local media reported on Wednesday, after an awkward television interview in which he refused to confirm whether Australia's bowlers were involved in the 2018 ball-tampering plot in South Africa.

Batsmen Steve Smith, David Warner and Cameron Bancroft were sanctioned over the 'Sandpapergate' scandal, but Khawaja claimed in his autobiography 'Sabr' that knowledge of the plan to manipulate the ball was not confined to those three players and that the whole team should be held responsible.

Cricket Australia (CA) CEO Todd Greenberg has ruled out another investigation into the scandal, but pressure was growing on Wednesday for the governing body to reopen the case. Appearing on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's '7:30' programme on Tuesday, Khawaja was asked whether captain Pat Cummins and his fellow bowlers had prior knowledge that sandpaper was being used to change the condition of the ball.

"You've got to remember Pat Cummins is a good friend of mine, Mitchell Starc, a lot of these guys, guys on the team, other players on the team," he replied. "Shaun Marsh, Mitch Marsh, all very good friends of mine.

"I'm not here to go on a witch hunt, all I've ever wanted is for us to take accountability as a team and I don't think that's a lot to say." Fast bowler Starc denied prior knowledge of the ball-tampering on Tuesday.

Warner, who was banned from the team for a year and cast by Cricket Australia's investigation as the chief architect of the plot, threw his weight behind Khawaja on Monday and said his account was 100 per cent accurate.

Cummins said in South Africa last month that he had spoken to Khawaja about his book and was not concerned about any potential fallout. "He just basically gave me the heads-up that he's doing a book, and yeah, as always, no worries. Tell your story. It's fine," Cummins said. Khawaja said in the interview he hoped other teammates would come forward and talk about the 2018 saga honestly but he was not forcing anyone to do anything, nor calling on CA to re-investigate.

"I'm not calling for anything, I'm literally sharing my version of the truth," he added. Australian media reported Khawaja pulled out of TV and radio interviews to promote his book following the TV interview.

Khawaja and his book's publisher Penguin did not provide an immediate response to requests for comment. While Greenberg said on Tuesday there was "no compelling reason" for another investigation, there have been growing calls for CA to take another look at the scandal. Editorials in two major newspapers have called on CA to take action while The Australian newspaper urged Cummins to break his silence as the team's captain.

## Swat, Chinese universities sign MoU targeting horticultural exports

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The University of Agriculture Swat (UoAS) and China's Northwest A&F University have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on agricultural research and technology exchanges, with a focus on improving export opportunities for Pakistani horticultural products, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday.

According to an official notification, cooperation would cover production and processing technologies, quality assurance, packaging, branding and compliance with international standards to improve the export competitiveness of Pakistani produce and processed fruit products.

Other areas include livestock breeding, genetic improvement, joint research and academic exchanges. Proposed training for students, faculty members, researchers, farmers and technical personnel would cover agricultural technologies, production and processing systems, and practical industry experience. The cooperation would connect academic research with farmers and businesses through technology and product exchanges.

UoAS Vice Chancellor Prof. Dawood Jan said the partnership could help Pakistani partners explore applications for post-harvest technologies, food processing methods, cold-chain systems and quality-control solutions, while offering Northwest A&F University opportunities to expand its research in Pakistan. Pakistan's diverse climatic conditions, horticultural resources and farming practices could provide scope for collaborative research into fruit cultivation, crop improvement and sustainable agricultural production.

## De Silva, Kamindu fifties guide Sri Lanka to 221-4 in first Test against Pakistan

**DNA**

RAWALPINDI: Fifties from Dhananjaya de Silva and Kamindu Mendis helped Sri Lanka reach 221-4 at lunch on day three of the opening Test against Pakistan in Rawalpindi on Wednesday. After resuming at 114-3, De Silva was on 87 after reaching his 21st half-century, while skipper Kusal Mendis was 21 not out, leaving the tourists still 213 runs behind Pakistan's first innings 434-9 declared.

Sri Lanka lost just one wicket in the session as De Silva and Kamindu put on 91 for the fourth wicket, enjoying a stroke of fortune along the way. De Silva, on 38, flashed at a Razaullah delivery but Saud Shakeel failed to hold on a sharp chance at slip. De Silva took full advantage of the reprieve and has so far hit nine fours off 121 balls.

Kamindu completed his eighth Test fifty before edging off Mohammad Abbas to wicketkeeper Ghazi Ghori to leave Sri Lanka 155-4. Kamindu's 58 came off 131 balls with eight fours. Seamer Abbas (2-33) was the pick of the Pakistan bowlers while fellow quick Saqib Khan has taken 2-82 on his debut. Pakistan had declared their first innings at 434-9 on Tuesday after building on their overnight score of 281-5.

## Athletics Trials Set for South Asian Games 2027

The scheduled trials mark an important step towards building a competitive national athletics contingent as Pakistan intensifies preparations to host the regional multi-sport event

**OUR CORRESPONDENT**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has stepped up preparations for the 14th South Asian Games 2027, with the Athletics Committee finalising the schedule for national selection trials from November 16 to 19 to identify the country's top athletes for the national training camp ahead of the regional sporting extravaganza. According to Colonel Nabeel Ahmed Rana, Secretary of the Athletics Committee for the 14th South Asian Games, the decision was taken during a meeting of the Athletic Organising Committee, which reviewed the selection framework and preparation strategy for the upcoming Games. He said the four-day trials would provide eligible athletes from affiliated units and departments across the country an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and earn places in the national training camp.

The Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) has constituted a 17-member committee, headed by Brigadier Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, Director of the Pakistan Army's Fitness and Sports Directorate, to oversee athletics preparations for the 14th South Asian Games, which Pakistan will host in 2027. In another significant development, the Athletics Committee has recommended equipment from internationally recognised brands, including Nordic, Gill, Omega and Swiss, for athletics competitions at the Games.

The scheduled trials mark an important step towards building a competitive national athletics contingent as Pakistan intensifies preparations to host the regional multi-sport event. The selection process is expected to help identify emerging talent and strengthen Pakistan's medal prospects on home soil.

## Clean-air-drive, China's experience envisages important lessons for Pakistan: Report

Air purifiers were almost a necessity in homes and schools, while wearing face masks outdoors was common
Concerns about children's health and prolonged exposure to polluted air were part of everyday conversations

ISLAMABAD: China's experience offers important lessons for Pakistan, where air pollution has become a serious public health challenge, particularly in Lahore and other major urban centres. Every winter, smog disrupts daily life, affects schools and businesses, and exposes millions to harmful pollution levels. According to a report carried by Gwadar Pro, in one of the world's most populous capitals, air pollution had become part of everyday life, with AQI readings frequently exceeding 300 during severe pollution episodes.

Breathing clean air was a growing concern for residents, as homes and schools increasingly relied on air purifiers and face masks became a familiar sight on the streets.

At the time, people regularly adjusted their daily routines according to pollution levels. Air purifiers were almost a necessity in homes and schools, while wearing face masks outdoors was common. Concerns about children's health and prolonged exposure to polluted air were part of everyday conversations. Today, Beijing's improved air quality offers an important example of what sustained environmental action can achieve.

The transformation did not happen overnight. It followed years of government intervention, stricter environmental regulations and investment in cleaner energy, industrial technologies and urban transport. Beijing's transformation demonstrates that even a densely populated megacity can improve its air quality through sustained policies and effective implementation.

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Beijing reduced its average PM2.5 concentration by approximately 35 percent between 2013 and 2017, while the wider Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region recorded a 25 percent reduction.

During the same period, Beijing cut annual emissions of sulphur dioxide by 83 percent, nitrogen oxides by 43 percent, particulate matter by 55 percent and volatile organic compounds by 42 percent.

These improvements followed measures targeting coal consumption, industrial emissions, vehicle pollution and construction dust. China tightened industrial and vehicle emission standards, phased out outdated facilities, strengthened environmental monitoring and replaced coal-fired heating systems with cleaner energy.

It also expanded public transport, promoted electric vehicles and increased investment in renewable energy, supported by stronger enforcement and accountability.

Importantly, the clean-air campaign extended beyond Beijing. Recognising that pollution from neighbouring industrial cities also affected the capital, China adopted a regional approach covering Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei and surrounding areas. Similar programmes were introduced in the Yangtze River Delta and Fenwei Plain to address industrial emissions, coal consumption, vehicle pollution and other major sources.

In 2018, China's State Council introduced the Three-Year Action Plan for Winning the Blue Sky Defense Battle, setting pollution-reduction targets and prioritising these regions. The plan called for changes to industrial, energy, transport and land-use structures, alongside stronger environmental monitoring and enforcement.

A major intervention involved replacing coal-fired household heating with cleaner alternatives, particularly in northern China, where coal use contributed to winter pollution. According to China's Foreign Ministry, approximately 25 million rural households in Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, surrounding areas and the Fenwei Plain had shifted from coal to natural gas or electricity by the end of 2020.

China also upgraded coal-fired power plants and steel facilities to reduce emissions. By 2020, power plants with a combined capacity of around 950 million kilowatts had completed or were undergoing ultra-low-emission upgrades. Steel production capacity of approximately 620 million tonnes had also completed or entered similar transformations. Regional coordination was central to these efforts. Authorities in neighbouring provinces strengthened pollution monitoring, shared information and coordinated responses to severe pollution episodes, recognising that air pollution crosses administrative boundaries and requires joint action. – **APP**

### PM highlights Pak...

FROM PAGE 01

titled '35 by 35: Powering the Future', PM Shehbaz said: "In my country, an extraordinary transition has already taken place. "In just two years, Pakistan has added nearly 22 gigawatts of rooftop solar capacity – a quiet revolution by ordinary citizens seeking affordable power and a cleaner, more predictable future." He affirmed that Pakistan fully supports the '35-by-35 Global Electrification Pledge', wherein countries agree to aim to increase electricity's share of total final energy consumption to around 35 per cent by 2035 in line with global climate objectives. The premier recalled the recent inauguration of a "key section" of Pakistan's seventh nuclear power plant, Chashma-5, referring to its dome placement. He explained that the project will add 1,200 megawatts of clean energy to Pakistan's energy mix. "A second transformation is now underway on our roads and highways. Clean sources now provide nearly 55pc of our energy mix," PM Shehbaz declared. The prime minister then highlighted that Pakistan's newly drafted auto policy builds on the country's aim to have 30pc of its new vehicles be electric by 2030 by offering "incentives for them through lower tariffs".

### Pakistan, Iran hold important...

FROM PAGE 01

The two leaders reaffirmed the close and longstanding ties between Pakistan and Iran and underscored the need to further strengthen bilateral relations across all areas of mutual cooperation. Both leaders also exchanged views on the evolving regional situation. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed deep concern over the prolonged conflict and emphasized the need for dialogue, restraint, de-escalation, and sustained diplomatic engagement to achieve lasting peace and stability in the region. He also underscored the importance of building on the understandings reached under the Islamabad MoU of June 2026 and reaffirmed Pakistan's readiness to continue playing a sincere and constructive role in support of regional peace and stability.

### 300 schools in Italy evacuated

FROM PAGE 01

She said investigations were underway, and that she had convened a meeting of ministers for later in the day. The anonymous email also contained a threat against Meloni, according to copies obtained by Italian media including the news agency LaPresse. She did not address the personal threat in her statement, and Meloni's office had no immediate comment. Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani revealed Saturday that his personal data had been leaked to the dark web, an encrypted part of the Internet. Meloni blamed pro-Russian hackers. Minister of Education Giuseppe Valditara said 300 schools had received email threats, the news agency LaPresse reported. The ministry did not immediately return a request for confirmation.

### PTI lawyers meet Imran Khan

FROM PAGE 01

"As per orders of the court, the meeting was held to discuss under-trial cases," Chaudhry said. The lawyers remained at Adiala for four hours and left without speaking to the media or PTI lawyers, Chaudhry said. "As their cell phones are switched off, it's too early to say whether they were allowed to meet Imran together or separately and for how long," he said. Later, the party posted a video of Khosa speaking to reporters about the meeting. In the video, a smiling Khosa replied in the affirmative when asked whether Bushra Bibi was also present for the meeting. He said that discussions focused on Imran's health and the cases against him.

Islamabad POST
Thursday, November 12 , 2026

# Call for investing on emerging opportunities

## The Federal Minister highlighted the government's comprehensive reform agenda under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, aimed at improving the ease of doing business and strengthening investor confidence

GENEVA: Federal Minister for Board of Investment,Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, participated in the high-level Ministerial Roundtable titled "The Next Decade of Global Investment", at the 30th World Investment Conference (WIC 2026), organised by the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), in Geneva, Switzerland.
This brought together ministers, heads of investment promotion agencies and international stakeholders to discuss emerging trends, challenges and opportunities shaping the future of global investment.
Addressing the international gathering, the Federal Minister highlighted Pakistan's investment potential, ongoing economic reforms and commitment to establishing a transparent, competitive and investor-friendly business environment, said a release issues here on Wednesday.
He underscored that investment remains a key driver of economic growth, industrial development, employment generation and shared prosperity, emphasising Pakistan's determination to translate its economic potential into tangible investment opportunities. The Minister highlighted Pakistan's strategic geographical location at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and China, offering investors access to important regional markets and international trade routes.
He particularly emphasised the country's seaport infrastructure, including Karachi, Port Qasim and Gwadar, as important assets for regional connectivity, international trade, logistics and investment.
Highlighting priority investment opportunities, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh identified information technology and digital services, agriculture and food processing, textiles and value-added manufacturing, mining and minerals, renewable energy,
infrastructure, logistics, pharmaceuticals and tourism as key sectors offering substantial potential for international investors. He stressed that Pakistan particularly welcomes investment that strengthens industrial capacity, introduces modern technologies, develops local supply chains, enhances exports and generates quality employment. The Federal Minister highlighted the government's comprehensive reform agenda under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, aimed at improving the ease of doing business and strengthening investor confidence. He stated that more than 500 regulatory reforms had been undertaken across approximately 30 sectors in coordination with around 90 federal and provincial departments. These reforms are designed to simplify procedures, reduce compliance costs, eliminate duplication and establish a more predictable and transparent regulatory environment. Emphasising the importance of practical investor facilitation, the Minister highlighted the establishment of the Business Facilitation Centre (BFC) in Islamabad by the Board of Investment, bringing 22 federal government agencies under one roof through a one-window mechanism. He informed participants that during its first eight months, the Centre served 5,386 businesses, processed 4,555 approvals and No Objection Certificates (NOCs), facilitated investment worth PKR 5.08 billion and supported 15,680 jobs. The Centre also recorded an investor satisfaction rating of 9.8 out of 10, reflecting the effectiveness of coordinated service delivery. The Minister further highlighted Pakistan's Investment Policy 2023, which provides opportunities for up to 100 percent foreign equity participation in most sectors, subject to applicable laws and sector-specific restrictions, alongside provisions for the repatriation of capital, profits and dividends through authorised banking channels. He also drew attention to the incentives available in Special Economic Zones (SEZs), including a ten-year income tax exemption for eligible zone enterprises and a one-time exemption from customs duties and taxes on qualifying capital goods, in accordance with the applicable legal framework. Referring to the role of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), the Federal Minister noted that the Council provides an important institutional platform for coordinated investment facilitation among federal and provincial governments and relevant institutions. He emphasised that Pakistan is actively working to strengthen international partnerships, promote joint ventures and attract investment that brings financial resources, technical expertise, innovation, modern management practices and access to international markets. During the Ministerial Roundtable on "The Next Decade of Global Investment", the discussions focused on the changing global investment landscape in the context of geopolitical developments, evolving supply chains, technological transformation, climate challenges and changing patterns of international trade. The Minister highlighted the importance of developing resilient, sustainable and competitive investment ecosystems that provide businesses with confidence, predictability and long-term opportunities.
The Minister also emphasised Pakistan's commitment to sustainable and inclusive investment, particularly in renewable energy, climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable manufacturing, modern infrastructure, digital transformation and technology-driven industries. He noted that investment should generate benefits beyond financial returns by creating employment, empowering communities, strengthening human capital and supporting environmentally sustainable economic development.
Highlighting Pakistan's engagement with the international investment community, Mr. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh reaffirmed the country's commitment to strengthening cooperation with WAIPA and other international investment promotion agencies. He appreciated WAIPA's contribution to promoting international investment cooperation and providing a valuable platform for dialogue among governments, investors and business leaders. He also acknowledged the importance of the Board of Investment's engagement within WAIPA's Steering Committee in further strengthening international investment collaboration.—**DNA**

## Briefs

### Gold prices fall by Rs 3,400 per tola

ISLAMABAD: Gold prices witnessed a decline in the domestic market on Wednesday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola falling by Rs3,400 to Rs427,436, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.
Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold decreased by Rs2,915 to Rs366,457, while the price of 10 grams of 22-karat gold declined by Rs2,658 to Rs335,945.
In the international market, the price of gold decreased by $34 to $4,049 per ounce, the association reported.
Meanwhile, silver prices also recorded a downward trend, with the price of 24-karat silver per tola declining by Rs45 to Rs5,768, while the price of 10 grams of 24-karat silver fell by Rs39 to Rs4,945.
The price of silver in the international market also decreased by $0.45 to reach $52.90 per ounce, the association added.—**APP**

### Oman's public revenues rise 16% to $25.6b

JEDDAH: Oman's public revenues rose 16 percent year on year to 9.83 billion Omani rials ($25.56 billion) in the first nine months of 2026, while the state budget recorded a surplus of 90 million rials, official data revealed.
The increase in revenues, compared with 8.48 billion rials in the same period of 2025, was mainly attributable to higher oil and non-oil revenues, according to the Financial Performance Bulletin issued by the Ministry of Finance and carried by Oman News Agency.
Public expenditure reached 9.74 billion rials by the end of the third quarter, up 824 million rials, or 9 percent, compared with 8.91 billion rials during the same period in 2025, reflecting increases across all expenditure items.
The latest figures come as Oman continues to advance its fiscal sustainability agenda under Vision 2040. The vision's implementation report said the country's public-debt-to-gross domestic product ratio fell from 67.9 percent in 2020 to 34.6 percent in 2025.
"The bulletin stated that net oil revenues rose 7 percent by the end of the third quarter of 2026, reaching approximately 5.046 billion Omani rials, compared with approximately 4.710 billion rials by the end of the third quarter of 2025," ONA reported.
It added that the average realized oil price stood at $81 per barrel, while average oil production reached 1.102 million barrels per day.
Net gas revenues climbed 61 percent to 2.09 billion rials, compared with 1.30 billion rials a year earlier.
The release showed that current revenues increased 7 percent to 2.61 billion rials, from 2.45 billion rials in the corresponding period of 2025. On the expenditure side, current spending rose 394 million rials to 6.62 billion rials, up from 6.23 billion rials in the same period last year. "Development expenditure by ministries, civil government units and economic transformation projects amounted to approximately 1.224 billion rials by the end of the third quarter of 2026, representing 94 percent of the total development expenditure allocation of 1.3 billion rials for the year," the news agency reported. It added that contributions and other expenditure increased 9 percent to 1.72 billion rials, compared with 1.58 billion rials a year earlier. Support for social protection programs, the electricity sector and petroleum products amounted to 486 million, 441 million and 280 million Omani rials, respectively, by the end of the third quarter of 2026. Transfers to the allocation designated for debt repayment totaled 225 million rials. Expenditure pending settlement stood at approximately 170 million rials by the end of the third quarter of 2026. Payments made to the private sector through the financial system, for which the documentation process had been completed, exceeded 1.43 billion rials by the end of the third quarter of 2026.—**APP**

### Debate intensifies in Syria over stalled Kurdish integration process

SYRIA: A row over Syria's agreement to integrate Kurdish-led civilian and military institutions into the state has intensified after presidential adviser Mazloum Abdi accused unnamed parties of trying to derail the process.
Abdi's remarks drew a sharp response from local Arab media outlets, which portrayed them as part of an "escalation campaign" by former commanders of the disbanded Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to unravel existing agreements. The Hasakah Media Center and Hasakah Observatory were among outlets that branded his comments "provocative." Political researcher and Arab tribal elder Mudar Hammad al-Asaad accused some former SDF commanders of exploiting Kurdish sentiment to win over hardliners opposed to integration.
Al-Asaad told Asharq Al-Awsat that the commanders were making statements detached from reality and outside the terms of the agreement, particularly to appeal to the Kurdish Revolutionary Youth.
"Some leaders in Hasakah and Afrin remain affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and take orders from foreign parties," he said.—**APP**

### German military bans Chinese-made drones

BERLIN: The German military has banned the use of Chinese-made drones, including for training, and is replacing them with European models, the defense ministry said on Wednesday. Citing the need for data and IT security, the ministry said that "Chinese-made models will no longer be used ... and existing systems will be replaced by products from domestic or, where applicable, European sources." News magazine Der Spiegel first reported on the decision, based on worries the drones could transmit data on military exercises, training grounds or weapons systems to Chinese intelligence services. The ministry said the armed forces, the Bundeswehr, had used "inexpensive, off-the-shelf drones for training purposes," buying them "with minimal bureaucratic effort." "To strengthen the Bundeswehr's self-sufficiency and technological sovereignty, Chinese-made models will no longer be used for target or training purposes," its statement said.—**APP**

### World leaders to address COP31

ANTALYA, Turkiye: World leaders will set out their climate priorities in speeches at COP31 in Turkiye on Wednesday, as negotiators seek agreement on a plan to increase the share of electricity in global energy use and revive stalled efforts to move away from fossil fuels. Delegates from nearly 200 countries are meeting in the Mediterranean resort city of Antalya as global greenhouse gas emissions show little sign of falling and wars, inflation and other crises compete for political attention.
A UN report last month found the world on course to break through the 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warming limit that countries had agreed to pursue under the Paris Agreement to prevent the worst of climate change.
Former French Prime Minister Laurent Fabius, who presided over the 2015 Paris climate conference and leads an advisory council of former COP presidents, said the speeches could give political impetus to the negotiations "It is an opportunity for leaders to make some announcements, and more this time, to explain how they will implement, because the key word in Antalya is implementation," he told Reuters. Scores of world leaders – including presidents and heads of government – will begin their rapid-fire speeches on Wednesday afternoon and continue through the day on Thursday, according to the COP31 schedule.
Wednesday's speakers are expected to include Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who was re-elected at the end of October, and whose country hosted last year's climate talks.—**APP**




**ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan presents a degree to position-holding student during the COTHM Annual Convocation.**

# Illicit cigarette market share falls to 48pc

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's legitimate cigarette market expanded by around five billion sticks during FY2025-26, accompanied by a Rs45 billion increase in tax revenue and a decline in the estimated share of illicit trade from 54 to 48 per cent, after the government's strengthened enforcement measures against illegal tobacco products started yielding the required results. The legitimate cigarette market grew from approximately 36.5 billion sticks to 41.5 billion sticks during the fiscal year, indicating a significant shift towards the tax-paying sector and strengthening the contribution of compliant manufacturers to the national exchequer. During a media briefing on a recently launched report titled "Illicit Tobacco Trade in Asia-Pacific: Taxation, Market Incentives, and Macroeconomic Costs," here on Wednesday Senior Fiscal Engagement Manager at Pakistan Tobacco Company (PTC) Mohammad Ranjha said tax revenues from the cigarette sector increased from approximately Rs284 billion to Rs329 billion during the period. Around 95 per cent of the additional tax contribution from legitimate manufacturers, he said, came from the two established legal manufacturers, while the remaining five per cent was contributed by other market participants. Ranjha said the improvement coincided with the government's continued focus on curbing illicit tobacco trade through legislative, regulatory and enforcement measures aimed at ensuring a level playing field for tax-compliant businesses and protecting public revenue. These measures, he said, included electronic monitoring of green leaf threshing (GLT), enhanced monitoring of tobacco movement from GLT facilities, deployment of law enforcement agencies and expanded powers for provincial authorities to take action against illicit cigarette manufacturing and distribution. Enforcement operations also resulted in the confiscation of substantial quantities of tobacco, cigarette paper, acetate tow, smuggled and duty-not-paid cigarettes, besides the sealing of 14 factories.
Industry data recorded 675 tobacco-related raids during 2026, indicating an intensified enforcement drive against illegal activities in the sector. However, effective prosecution and timely judicial outcomes remain important to ensure that enforcement actions translate into sustainable deterrence against illicit trade. "The progress achieved demonstrates what coordinated action against illicit tobacco can deliver. The next critical step is to ensure that successful raids translate into effective prosecutions and timely legal outcomes," said Ranjha. PTC acknowledged the government's sustained efforts to address illicit tobacco trade and stressed the importance of strengthening coordination among enforcement agencies, prosecution authorities and the judicial system to ensure effective legal proceedings against offenders. Ranjha said illicit tobacco trade resulted in estimated annual revenue losses of $14.85 billion across the economies covered by the study. Pakistan's estimated annual fiscal leakage stands at approximately $1 billion, highlighting the importance of sustained action to protect legitimate market share and strengthen revenue collection.—**DNA**

# *RCCI celebrates global entrepreneurship week*

ISLAMABAD: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), in collaboration with Bahria University, celebrated Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) 2026 on Wednesday under the theme "Empowering the Next Generation: Entrepreneurship Without Barriers" at Bahria University, Islamabad. The event was graced by Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Tourism, as Chief Guest. Vice Admiral Engr. Abid Hameed HI(M), Rector Bahria University; Sohail Altaf, Patron-in-Chief RCCI; Nosherwan Khalil Khan, President RCCI; and Dr. Shimail Daud, Former President RCCI, were also present on the occasion. In his keynote address, RCCI President Nosherwan Khalil Khan emphasized the importance of promoting entrepreneurship among young people, saying that initiatives like Global Entrepreneurship Week would encourage students to become job creators rather than job seekers. He said GEW provides an excellent platform for young people to participate in interactive sessions, training workshops, learn from successful entrepreneurs, explore innovative ideas, and enhance their knowledge and skills in the field of entrepreneurship. The RCCI President urged faculty members and academic institutions to actively connect students and aspiring entrepreneurs with Chambers of Commerce and Industry, enabling them to benefit from industry linkages, business networking, mentorship, and practical guidance from the business community. He emphasized that stronger collaboration between academia and industry is essential to nurturing entrepreneurial talent and transforming innovative ideas into successful business ventures. He further announced that, as part of Global Entrepreneurship Week activities, RCCI had also arranged industrial and factory visits for students to provide them with practical exposure to business operations, manufacturing processes, industrial management, and the challenges and opportunities of running a business. He said RCCI's participation in Global Entrepreneurship Week reflects the Chamber's commitment to facilitating youth, strengthening the private sector, encouraging innovation, and promoting entrepreneurship as a viable career opportunity. Empowering young entrepreneurs, he added, is essential for sustainable economic growth and a stronger business ecosystem. A thought-provoking panel discussion brought together leading entrepreneurs and business professionals to highlight emerging business opportunities, discuss challenges faced by startups, and explore ways to empower the next generation through innovation, entrepreneurship, and inclusive business growth.—**DNA**

# Major chambers urged to form joint platform to address business issues

## He appreciated ICCI President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia for bringing leading chambers onto one platform and invited the Islamabad Chamber leadership to visit Karachi

ISLAMABAD: President Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Talat Mehmood has called for forming a joint platform of five to six major chambers of commerce across Pakistan, with monthly meetings on a rotational basis, to raise a strong collective voice for resolving common business and industrial issues. Addressing a meeting hosted by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) here on Wednesday he said that individual representations often failed to achieve desired results, whereas a united stance by major chambers would carry greater weight before the government. He appreciated ICCI President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia for bringing leading chambers onto one platform and invited the Islamabad Chamber leadership to visit Karachi. The meeting was attended by ICCI former Presidents, executive members, along with representatives of the trade and export sectors in large number. Referring to Pakistan's economic challenges, he observed that the country's exports stood at approximately $ 30 billion while remittances were around $ 41 billion and cautioned against excessive reliance on overseas remittances and urged the government to introduce policies and incentives that encourage overseas Pakistanis to invest in their home country and strengthen domestic economic activity. He further proposed special facilitation for the business community including separate arrangements at airports for traders and investors and called for making digitization and institutional reforms instruments of facilitation rather than harassment. In his remarks, ICCI President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia supported stronger coordination among major chambers and emphasized that collective efforts were essential to address common business challenges and strengthen Pakistan's trade and industrial sectors. He called for improved access to bank financing, better industrial infrastructure, reduced regulatory hurdles and an end to unnecessary harassment of traders and industrialists. He stressed that the business community should be treated as a key partner in economic development.
President Khyber Chamber of Commerce and Industry Syed Jawad Kazmi highlighted the severe impact of the prolonged closure of the Torkham border on regional trade and industry by highlighting the rich export potential of the province.
Former President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Faiz Mohammad Faizi also underlined the need for strengthening cooperation among leading chambers for a coordinated approach towards resolving business community issues. Chairman ICCI Founder Group Sheikh Tariq Sadiq by highlighting the business community's severe challenges said that united voice of the business community is need of the hour to make the power corridors to pay heed to the issues and resolve them. ICCI Senior Vice President Mohammad Ashfaq Hussain Chatha who moderated the session in the most effective manners showcased the ICCI targets for the betterment of the business community. Executive member KCCI Syed Umairuddin Hussain also addressed the event.—**DNA**

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## Briefs

### Raza among 8 indicted in foreign women rape case

NEWS DESK

LAHORE: A sessions court in Lahore indicted eight suspects, including prime suspect Raza Dar, in a case involving the alleged rape and kidnapping of two foreign women. Additional Sessions Judge Rafaqat Ali Gondal conducted the hearing, during which jail authorities produced prime suspect, Raza Dar, and others accused before the court.

The court also summoned prosecution witnesses to record their statements on December 10. The case was registered at the Defence C Police Station under sections relating to alleged rape and kidnapping.

According to the first information report (FIR), the two foreign nationals — one from the Netherlands and the other from Venezuela — were invited to Pakistan by Dar, who was identified as the grandson of a high-profile political figure and had previously entered into a business partnership with them in Singapore in October 2025.

The women arrived in Lahore on June 29, 2026, after Dar arranged their travel visas. Upon their arrival, they were allegedly forcibly taken to a residential location in Y-Block, Defence, where they were held at gunpoint. The FIR alleged that the women were subjected to sexual assault and severe physical abuse involving weapons, while the suspects demanded a ransom of $1.5 million.

### Hegseth survives impeachment threat

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Republicans in the US House of Representatives blocked an effort on Tuesday to impeach Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth, winning a reprieve for the polarising Pentagon chief before Democrats take control of Congress next year and possibly try again.

The vote on a procedural motion came just hours after Hegseth blasted efforts to impeach him as a farce and delivered a defiant defence of his record at the helm of the US military, winning praise from President Donald Trump. The chamber voted 211 to 204 in favour of a motion to refer eight articles of impeachment to the Republican-led House Judiciary Committee, a move that the sponsor of the impeachment push, US Representative Thomas Massie, warned would kill it. Massie, an outgoing Kentucky Republican, had hoped to draw votes from Republicans upset with Hegseth's policies.

## NATIONAL DAY OF ALGERIA



ISLAMABAD: Chief guest Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Federal Minister, Presidential spokesman Murtaz Solangi, Ambassador of Algeria Dr. Brahim Romani, Ambassadors Malaysian, Oman, Kenya, Turkey, Palestine, Brazil, Philippines and others cutting cake to celebrate the 72nd Anniversary of the National Day of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. – DNA

# Centre deducts Rs34.84bn from provinces' grant

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has, for the first time in the country's history, deducted Rs35 billion from the grant receipts of all four provinces under Article 164 of the Constitution, out of the total projected earmarked amount of Rs1.035 trillion for the financial year 2026-27.

"The Centre has deducted Rs34.839 billion as grant receipts from the provinces under Article 164 as Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) during the first two months of the current financial year 2026-27,". The Centre and the four provinces had agreed ahead of the budget 2026-27 announcement that the provinces would provide Rs1,035 billion as grants to the federal government from their National Finance Commission (NFC) share to help meet its obligations under the $7 billion IMF programme for FY27.

However, Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb had stated that this arrangement of sharing grants with the Centre would continue for the medium term, but he did not specify the exact timeframe in the absence of a new NFC Award. The federal government has decided in principle to utilise these resources collected in the shape of non-tax revenue on water resources after the first instalment had been approved by the Economic Coordination Committee as a Technical Supplementary Grant for utilisation on funds for the Bhasha and Dasu hydropower projects and K-IV in Karachi.

These resources will be diverted towards water resources in phases, as the federal government will continue deduction on the basis of revenue collection of the FBR and deduction of the Centre in line with the agreed formula with the provinces under Article 164 of the 1973 Constitution.

On the other hand, all the federal ministries, divisions and attached departments have so far utilised Rs74.655 billion on development projects out of the total allocated amount of Rs682.485 billion for the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for FY27.

Out of the total allocated amount of Rs103.086 billion for water resource development, the federal government authorised Rs90 billion, but utilisation of funds stood at Rs18.726 billion in the first four months (July-October) of the current fiscal year. The utilisation of funds for water resource development remained the second largest head for utilisation of development funds. The first head of expenditure was the provinces and special areas, where the fund utilisation stood at Rs23.8 billion.

The Cabinet Division authorised Rs64 billion for the Parliamentarians' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Achievement Programme, but the utilisation of funds stood at only Rs59.99 million in the first four months of FY27. The Federal Education and Professional Training Division has so far utilised Rs6 billion in the first four months of the ongoing fiscal year. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) utilised Rs4 billion. The National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Division has so far utilised Rs6.6 billion of the PSDP funding in the current fiscal year. The Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Division utilised Rs2.15 billion. – **APP**

## Oil tanker catches fire, says Iran

### Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said three oil tankers had caught fire in the strait recently

TEHRAN: An oil tanker struck a mine and caught fire in the Strait of Hormuz after entering a prohibited area, Iran's army said on Wednesday. Separately, the UK Maritime Trade Operations agency said it had received a report of an incident involving a tanker in the Strait of Hormuz. It said the condition of the crew, the extent of any damage and the environmental impact were not yet known. It was not immediately clear whether the report referred to the same vessel. Iran has restricted traffic through the strategic waterway since the war in the Middle East began in late February, and has been targeting vessels that pass through without its authorization.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said three oil tankers had caught fire in the strait recently. In one incident, a Liberia-flagged tanker was hit by a projectile, injuring several people, including an Indian national who was taken ashore safely. Tehran has reported a number of ships catching fire in the strait, often blaming mines, despite recent US claims that all mines in the area had been cleared. The US has imposed a naval blockade on Iranian ports and has been helping tankers through the strait, which carries around a fifth of the world's oil. US Central Command, which oversees American military operations in the region, has been escorting ships and helping Gulf countries export oil through Hormuz. It says around 1.5 billion barrels have passed through since the summer. – **DNA**

## German military bans Chinese-made drones

NEWS DESK

BERLIN: The German military has banned the use of Chinese-made drones, including for training, and is replacing them with European models, the defense ministry said on Wednesday. Citing the need for data and IT security, the ministry said that "Chinese-made models will no longer be used ... and existing systems will be replaced by products from domestic or, where applicable, European sources."

News magazine Der Spiegel first reported on the decision, based on worries the drones could transmit data on military exercises, training grounds or weapons systems to Chinese intelligence services. The ministry said the armed forces, the Bundeswehr, had used "inexpensive, off-the-shelf drones for training purposes," buying them "with minimal bureaucratic effort." "To strengthen the Bundeswehr's self-sufficiency and technological sovereignty, Chinese-made models will no longer be used for target or training purposes," its statement said.

## Minister Salik says he did not name Punjab CM



DNA

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Chaudhry Salik Hussain has said he did not mention Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz by name in his recent remarks about alleged corruption in the province, as he revealed that the Punjab government had withdrawn his Elite Force security. Speaking to reporters in Lahore, Salik sought to clarify his remarks amid a growing dispute with Maryam, who subsequently served him a Rs5 billion defamation notice. I did not mention Maryam Nawaz by name," he said. The federal minister also confirmed that the Punjab government had withdrawn his security, adding that Elite Force personnel had been accompanying him for around one-and-a-half years. Asked whether his elder brother, Punjab Minister for Industries, Commerce and Investment Chaudhry Shafay Hussain, would resign from provincial cabinet following the controversy.

## US Senator-elect El-Sayed urges Hegseth to resign

DUBAI: US Senator-elect Abdul El-Sayed called on Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Tuesday to resign after the House of Representatives voted to send a resolution to impeach him to committee. In an interview with CNN, El-Sayed said Hegseth had mishandled the war with Iran and had failed at his responsibilities.

"Why are you still doing this job? You are really bad at this ... So just resign. Make it easy for everybody instead of, in the end, getting taken out, because that is clearly what's happening," he said. El-Sayed said the war in Iran was the reason the cost of living had increased in America.

"Everywhere I went in Michigan, the big questions were: Why does it cost me $80 to fill my truck? And why can't I afford a second pound of ground beef at the grocery store? And that goes back to one issue, which is this insane war that we have no business fighting," he said.

He called for ending the war, describing it as "illegal, immoral and unethical." Hegseth dismissed efforts to impeach him at a Pentagon news conference earlier on Tuesday. "It's a farce, and it's a stunt and everybody knows it," he said. "These are not high crimes. This is the job, and it's the job well done." – **APP**

## Nvidia CEO affair revives push for tougher US line on China

WASHINGTON: The scandal engulfing Nvidia chief executive Jensen Huang could have its biggest consequences in Washington, where China hawks are seizing on the affair to push a hard line that had been put on the back burner under President Donald Trump.

Huang, who co-founded Nvidia and turned it into the world's leading supplier of the processors that power artificial intelligence, admitted on Sunday to an affair with Alice Huang, a former executive at Singapore-based Megaspeed whom US intelligence officials believe was working for Chinese intelligence.

Trump, who has relied on Huang as an adviser on AI, called him "an honorable guy" and said Huang told him he had no idea the woman was a spy. Huang has spent years lobbying against curbs on sales of advanced AI chips to China, and Trump last year cleared Nvidia's H200 chips for export there over objections from hawks in both parties. "China hawks in policy circles in Washington DC were quite frustrated with the decisions and really wanted to see a more aggressive approach around export controls to China," said. – **APP**

## Supreme Court disposes of Imaan, Chattha's petitions in security breach case

*Development comes days after lawyer couple filed appeals in IHC against convictions in case*

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Wednesday disposed of lawyer Imaan Mazari and her husband, Hadi Ali Chattha's appeals in the security breach case. The development comes days after the lawyer couple filed appeals in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) against their convictions by the anti-terrorism court in the security breach case. Rawalpindi ATC on October 29 sentenced Mazari and Chattha to 10 years' imprisonment and imposed fines of Rs100,000 each under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), 1997, in the case.

The case, registered at Aabpara Police Station, stems from allegations that the lawyer couple posed a security risk by interfering in state affairs during the visit of an international cricket team in October 2024. A three-member SC bench, headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, heard the lawyer couple's appeals against an order by the IHC concerning their trial court proceedings. The top court disposed of the petitions, stating the case has become infructuous in the Supreme Court and that the IHC will rule on the maintainability of the petitions. The lawyer couple has been in custody since their arrest on January 23 this year in a case registered against them over a protest outside the IHC.

A day later, a sessions court sentenced them to 17 years on multiple charges under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca) in a case related to controversial social media posts. On September 17, following months of proceedings, the Supreme Court suspended the couple's sentences in a case related to controversial tweets and granted them bail against surety bonds worth Rs200,000 each, until the final decision on the case pending before the IHC. However, the relief was short-lived. Hours later, Islamabad police arrested the couple again in connection with another case and produced them before an anti-terrorism court (ATC).




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