LAHORE - KARACHI - ISLAMABAD

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US Vice president says talks with Iran possible

Detailed News On Page-08

Finance minister says country's economy growing



Detailed News On Page-08

Jam Kamal for exploiting mineral wealth



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At COP31 summit in Turkiye

PM Shehbaz calls for 'real action' on climate change

Premier also urges grant-based financing for vulnerable countries and increased resilience funding

NEWS DESK

ANTALYA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called for "real action" on climate change, stressing that expressions of solidarity must translate into tangible measures during climate disasters. "When climate disasters strike, vulnerable countries need timely help and finance that does not deepen their debt," the premier said while addressing the COP31 Leaders' Summit in Antalya, Turkiye on Thursday.

He called for grant-based finance for vulnerable countries, including public-private partnerships and a significant increase in resilience and adaptation funds for struggling economies. PM Shehbaz recalled his warning four years ago that the climate disaster in Pakistan would have repercussions beyond the country's borders. "That warning has become a stark reality. The future we feared has become the present we are living. Climate change knows no border. No nation can face it alone," he said. Reflecting the impact of climate change on Pakistan, the prime minister recalled the country's devastating 2022 floods, which submerged a third of the country and affected millions of people.

He said the floods affected approximately 33 million people across Pakistan, highlighting the country's vulnerability to climate-related disasters. He also acknowledged Turkiye's support during the devastating floods, saying it had stood shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan during the crisis. PM Shehbaz said that Pakistan is pursuing environmentally friendly measures, adding that the country is facing significant climate-related challenges despite being responsible for less than 1% of global carbon emissions.

The two-week COP31 talks kicked off in Turkiye this week with governments under pressure to tackle climate change after a year of searing heatwaves and wildfires in Europe, and deadly floods in Nepal. A day earlier, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres railed against the oil and gas lobby,

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PM honours fallen Kohat heroes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday expressed grief over the martyrdom of 10 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) police personnel, including Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Haidar Zaman, in a terrorist attack in Kohat, paying tribute to their sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.

In a late-night official statement, the prime minister strongly condemned the attack in the Darabukach area of Kohat and extended his heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyred personnel. According to police, militants belonging to Fitna al-Khawarij, acting at the instigation of criminal elements, attacked a police party returning from a joint operation with the local administration against illegal gold mining. The police personnel fought back against the attackers, engaging them in an exchange of fire that left 18 militants dead, while 10 officers and personnel embraced martyrdom in the line of duty.

Paying tribute to the officers and personnel who lost their lives while bravely confronting the attackers, Shehbaz said the KP police had set an outstanding example of dedication to duty, courage and bravery by making the ultimate sacrifice. He described the police personnel who laid down their lives for the country's peace and security as heroes of the nation, saying their sacrifices would always be remembered.

Continued on Page 06



ANTALYA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting with the Turkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. – DNA

Imran Khan sisters released from jail

NEWS DESK

LAHORE: Dr Uzma Khan and Noreen Niazi, sisters of incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan, were released from Kot Lakhpat jail following the withdrawal of their extended detention orders, PTI legal counsel Rana Mudassar Umer told Dawn on Thursday.

In a post on X, he said the two – who were detained in September under the Punjab Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance (MPO) along with their sister Aleema Khan – had returned home "safely". PTI lawyer Taimur Malik also said on X that the two women had been released upon the withdrawal of the "unlawful MPO detention order". "Everyone else detained under these MPO orders should be released as well," he said.

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Investment forum opens

Pak showcases mineral wealth

DPM Dar says restoring investor confidence priority for federal and provincial govts

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has said restoring investor confidence remained a priority for federal and provincial governments, as the two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 began in Islamabad on Thursday. Addressing the forum, Dar said that promoting investment, trade and information technology remained among the government's priorities, adding that efforts were also under way to strengthen international partnerships.

Dar said considerable work had been undertaken to achieve macroeconomic stability in Pakistan, while emphasising the country's potential in the minerals and mining sectors. He noted that Pakistan possessed a range of mineral resources and offered investment opportunities to international investors. The deputy prime minister also highlighted the potential of battery storage systems and electric vehicles, saying they could help reduce carbon emissions in Pakistan.

Referring to Balochistan's mineral resources, Dar described the province as the future of Pakistan's minerals sector.

The forum also brought together provincial leaders who outlined mineral opportunities and measures to attract domestic and international investment. Addressing the forum, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said the forum would play an important role in the development of Pakistan's minerals sector.

"Pakistan has immense potential," she said, highlighting the province's coal, granite, pink salt and rock salt reserves. She said the Punjab government was offering land at affordable rates and providing low-cost loans to facilitate businesses in the province. CM Maryam also highlighted improvements in Punjab's road network and said the process of granting mining leases had been digitised.

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Nvidia CEO steps down

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang is stepping down, leaving the AI industry without its biggest champion and clouding the future of the chipmaker he built into an AI powerhouse. Chief Financial Officer Colette Kress will take over as interim CEO as Nvidia looks for a permanent successor, the company said on Thursday. It named former Synopsys CEO and board member Harvey Jones as its first-ever board chairman.

Huang, who co-founded Nvidia and is its fourth-largest investor with a stake of about 3.61%, will exit the board as well. Nvidia shares fell more than 10% in premarket trading, and weighed on the broader market. Pressure had been mounting on Huang in recent days after reports said the 63-year-old, who is married, had an affair with a Chinese businesswoman who US authorities suspect of spying for Beijing.

Mississippi Democrat flips US Senate seat

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: In a historic upset, Democrat Scott Colom has won his US Senate race in traditionally conservative Mississippi, networks projected Wednesday, making him the first African American elected to the chamber from the southern state in more than 140 years. Colom, a 43-year-old district attorney, prevailed over Republican incumbent Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith in perhaps the most extraordinary seat flip of an already extraordinary US midterm election, in which Democrats crushed the Republicans to reclaim the majority in both chambers of Congress.

US envoys meet with Putin in the Kremlin

Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, who is also Trump's son-in-law, brokered the talks in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, the first direct discussions between representatives of Moscow and Kyiv in nine months as the push for peace stalled

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: US President Donald Trump's envoys met Thursday with President Vladimir Putin as Washington sought new momentum in peace efforts after two days of US-mediated negotiations between Russian and Ukrainian delegations. Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, who is also Trump's son-in-law, brokered the talks in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, the first direct discussions between representatives of Moscow and Kyiv in nine months as the push for peace stalled.

The two days of talks that ended Wednesday produced no major breakthrough, aside from an agreement to swap a large number of prisoners, with the exact figure still to be announced. Kushner and Witkoff went straight to the Kremlin to brief Putin, and are scheduled to fly later to Dublin, Ireland, for talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as the conflict stretches towad the five-year mark. US envoys want Europe at the negotiating table, too Kushner said that one of the goals of the meeting with

Continued on Page 06

London police arrest two on spying charges

NEWS DESK

LONDON: Two Iranian men who spied on journalists working for a Persian-language broadcaster in London were found guilty Thursday of spying for Tehran. Jurors at Woolwich Crown Court in south London found Mostafa Sepahvand, 41 and Farhad Javadi Manesh, 46, to be working on behalf of the Iranian state and convicted of assisting a foreign intelligence service. A third defendant, Shapoor Qalehali Khani Noori, 57, was acquitted of all offenses against him. "This was a calculated operation to spy on those critical of the Iranian regime," said Frank Ferguson, chief prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service's special crime and

Continued on Page 06

Referendum only solution to provinces debate: Naqvi

Acknowledging the importance of allies in the ruling coalition, he said: "Everyone is a part of this government, and nothing will happen against their will. And if something does happen, then it will be after taking everyone's consensus"

MONITORING DESK

LAHORE: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday suggested that political parties hold a referendum to gauge the public's opinion on the creation of new administrative units or provinces, terming it the "solution" to the ongoing debate.

The security czar has whipped up a political storm over the past few months since he called for the formation of new administrative units in the country, saying the current "system" of governance had "collapsed" and needed a "reset". Replying to a media query at the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) in Lahore on Thursday, Naqvi noted that each political party had a right to disagree with another party or individual.



At the same time, he observed that all parties stressed democracy and the supremacy of the people. Therefore, he said: "My only request to all political parties is that this is such an issue [...] so they should hold a referendum. "Whatever the public's opinion in the referendum is; if the public says [new units] should not be created, I am 100 per cent with them that they should not be created. [But], if the public says they should be made, then they should."

Naqvi noted that political parties had varying stances on the debate, with the PPP "having its own stance [and] some parties having their own stance while not saying anything officially". He again stressed that the solution was to take public opinion into account, suggesting that if there was a proposal for a "better solution", that should also be presented to the people.

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Islamabad POST
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NCCIA second phase of cyber awareness drive

ISLAMABAD: The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has launched the second phase of its nationwide cyber awareness campaign across all its circles, reaching out to students of schools, colleges and universities to educate them about digital safety, cyber blackmailing, online harassment, financial fraud and other emerging threats in cyberspace.

An NCCIA official told on Thursday that awareness sessions were being organised at educational institutions across the country, attracting large numbers of male and female students.

He said the initiative was aimed at equipping young internet users with practical knowledge to identify cyber threats, protect their personal information and use digital platforms safely and responsibly.

During the sessions, students are being briefed on digital safety, cyber blackmailing, online harassment and child sexual abuse material (CSAM), with particular emphasis on recognising online exploitation and seeking timely assistance.

The official said participants were also being educated about securing social media accounts, protecting personal data and avoiding online financial fraud and gaming-related scams.

He said the sessions also covered important legal provisions of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), 2016, as amended in 2025, to help students understand cyber offences and their legal implications.

Students were also guided on how to report cybercrime through the NCCIA online complaint portal and helpline, enabling them to approach the relevant authorities promptly in case of online harassment, fraud or other digital offences.

The official said participants appreciated NCCIA's efforts to promote cyber awareness among young people and strengthen their understanding of online safety.

Director General NCCIA Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi said creating awareness about cyber threats among the younger generation had become an urgent need in the rapidly expanding digital environment. He said NCCIA was taking all possible measures to promote a safe and secure digital environment and protect citizens, particularly students, from cybercriminal activities. The DG said cyber awareness sessions would continue across all NCCIA circles as part of the agency's ongoing public education campaign.–**APP**

Expressway Service Road East project 31pc complete

Sohail Ashraf directed the concerned formations to maintain quality standards, ensure transparency and accelerate construction work without compromising on the quality of the project



ISLAMABAD: More than 31 per cent of the Islamabad Expressway Service Road (East) project has been completed, with construction of a 9.3-kilometre, three-lane dual carriageway from Faizabad to Gulberg currently under way.

Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Sohail Ashraf reviewed the progress of the project during a visit on Thursday.

CDA officials briefed him that construction was progressing simultaneously at various sections, including an underpass forming a key component of the project. They said all 153 piles of the underpass had been completed, while work on retaining walls of ramps A and B was continuing.

The officials added that construction of various bridge culverts and drainage structures had also reached its final stages. An enforcement operation is also under way against illegal constructions and encroachments along the Expressway East to remove obstacles and facilitate timely completion of the project, the officials said.

Sohail Ashraf directed the concerned formations to maintain quality standards, ensure transparency and accelerate construction work without compromising on the quality of the project. He said completion of the service road would help ease traffic congestion on Islamabad Expressway and reduce commuters' travelling time and fuel consumption.

The project would also improve connectivity and provide better travelling facilities to residents of Islamabad and Rawalpindi living along the expressway, he added.

IRS webinar explores Uzbekistan's tourism potential and cultural heritage

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad, hosted a session as part of its Eminent Speaker Series titled "Uzbekistan in Photos: A Journey Through the 14 Regions," featuring Mr. Abdulaziz Abdurazakov, Leading Research Fellow at the International Institute for Central Asia (IICA) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The session explored Uzbekistan's historical and cultural heritage, diverse tourism potential and opportunities for strengthening Pakistan–Uzbekistan relations through cultural diplomacy, people-to-people exchanges and regional connectivity. The discussion centred on a photographic publication issued by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Islamabad, comprising 181 pages and covering all 14 regions of the country through a collection of photos highlighting historical cities, architectural landmarks, religious monuments, natural landscapes and cultural traditions. Dr. Usman Chohan, Research Fellow at the IRS commenced proceedings by highlighting historical, cultural and ancestral connections between the two countries. He noted the profound influence of Central Asian civilisation on Pakistan's architecture, religious traditions, mosques, madrasas and mausoleums. and emphasised that cultural exchanges as two-way processes based on mutual learning, greater understanding and people-to-people engagement are pivotal to expand ties in the cultural domain. He described the photographic publication as a valuable resource for promoting awareness of shared heritage to strengthen bilateral understandings. Mr. Abdulaziz Abdurazakov presented an overview of Uzbekistan's tourism potential which offers more than historical monuments. Instead, it provides visitors with an opportunity to experience a rich civilisation alongside ongoing modern development._**APP**

RCCI, SECP organize awareness session on fire & property insurance

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RCCI), in collaboration with the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), organized an awareness session on Fire & Property Insurance to educate the business community about insurance coverage, risk management, and protection of business assets against unforeseen incidents. The session was chaired by RCCI President Nosherwan Khalil Khan, accompanied by Senior Vice President Waseem Aslam and Vice President Ikram Abbasi, along with Executive Committee members and representatives from various business sectors.

Addressing the session, RCCI President Nosherwan Khalil Khan appreciated the SECP and insurance industry experts for their participation and valuable insights. He emphasized that effective risk management and adequate insurance coverage are essential for businesses in today's challenging environment. He stressed the importance of stronger collaboration among regulatory bodies, insurance companies, and chambers of commerce to help businesses mitigate potential risks and safeguard their assets.

The speakers highlighted the financial implications of fire incidents and the critical role of insurance in protecting commercial properties, machinery, stocks, and other business assets. They pointed out that fire-related incidents not only cause damage to physical assets but can also disrupt business operations, lead to business closures, and adversely affect employment and livelihoods.

Insurance experts provided detailed briefings on fire insurance coverage, key policy terms and conditions, available insurance options, risk management measures, and the procedures for filing and settling insurance claims. They also advised businesses to adopt appropriate fire safety measures and secure adequate insurance coverage to minimize potential financial losses.

The session featured prominent experts from the insurance industry, including Mr. Muhammad Aminuddin, CEO TPL Insurance; Mr. Muhammad Raza, Head of the Property Committee, Insurance Association of Pakistan (IAP); Mr. Mannan Mehboob, Senior Executive Vice President, EFU General Insurance; Mr. Muhammad Maroof, Senior Vice President, EFU General Insurance; and Mr. Syed Fazal Abbas, Regional Head, IGI General Insurance Limited.

Mr. Afzal Shakir, Joint Assistant Vice President, Askari General Insurance, also shared his insights. The SECP delegation was led by Ms. Bushra Aslam, Executive Director, along with directors, joint directors, assistant directors, and other management officials. The participants were also briefed on Takaful as a Shariah-compliant alternative to conventional insurance, as well as the importance of Business Interruption Insurance in ensuring business continuity and facilitating recovery following unforeseen incidents. SECP representatives highlighted the Commission's ongoing efforts to promote insurance awareness, strengthen financial protection, and encourage insurance coverage among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

RCCI reaffirmed its commitment to facilitating the business community through awareness initiatives, capacity building, and stronger institutional collaboration to promote a secure, resilient, and sustainable business environment.–**APP**

Railway Police asked to ensure security

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi on Thursday directed the Railway Police to take effective measures to ensure discipline, transparency and security across Pakistan Railways. He was talking to newly appointed Inspector General of Railway Police, Shahzada Sultan, who called on him at the Ministry of Railways. The federal minister congratulated Shahzada Sultan on assuming charge as IG Railway Police and expressed his best wishes for his successful tenure. During the meeting, the newly appointed IG assured the minister that comprehensive measures would be taken to prevent theft within the railway system, eliminate ticketless travel and remove encroachments from railway land. –**APP**

Govt urged to restore 6% DLTL for all exporters

FAISALABAD: Mian Farrukh Iqbal, Chairman of the Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PHMA), North Zone, has urged the Federal Government to restore the Drawback of Local Taxes and Levies (DLTL) scheme at a uniform rate of 6% of FOB export value for all eligible exporters, along with an additional 2% incentive on exports to non-traditional markets. He observed that Pakistani exporters are already bearing approximately 7.38% in various taxes and levies on their exports, placing them at a considerable disadvantage against regional competitors. The restoration of DLTL is therefore essential to reduce the cost of doing business, improve export competitiveness and provide much-needed relief to the value-added textile and apparel sector. Mian Farrukh Iqbal emphasized that the proposed 6% DLTL should be extended to all eligible exporters without imposing any export growth conditions. Furthermore, an additional 2% incentive should be provided to exporters exploring non-traditional markets to encourage geographical diversification, develop new international destinations, attract fresh investment and enhance Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings. Highlighting the growing regional competition, he pointed out that competing countries are providing substantial fiscal support to their textile and apparel industries. Bangladesh offers a 5% cash incentive on eligible locally.–**APP**

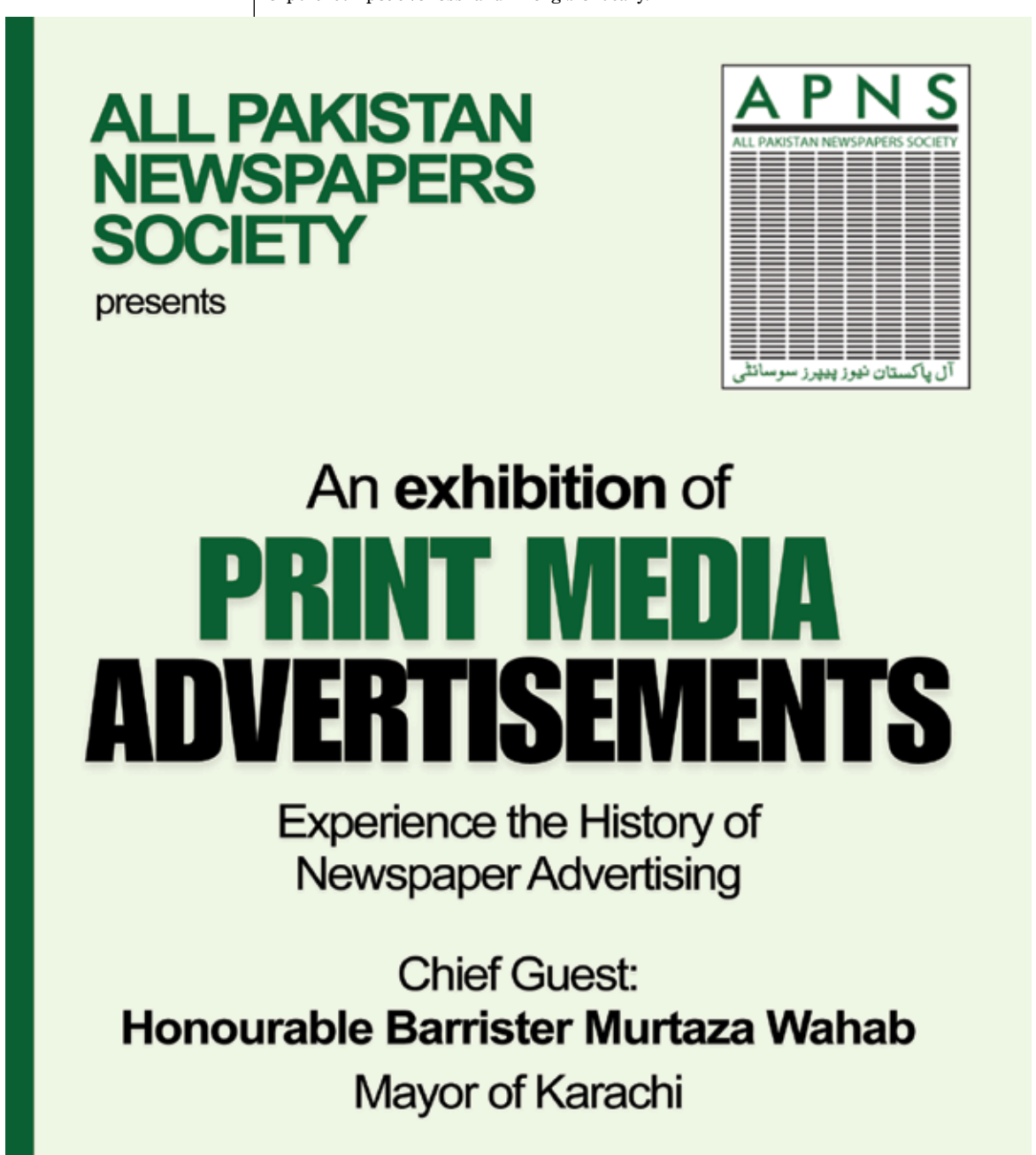


Committee reviews revamping of healthcare institutions in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: A high-level committee constituted on the directions of the Prime Minister reviewed measures to revamp healthcare institutions in Islamabad, with a focus on strengthening primary healthcare, improving referral systems and enhancing public service delivery.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Federal Minister Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry and attended by Members of the National Assembly from Islamabad, Secretary of the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, and District Health Officer Islamabad Dr Syeda Rashida Batool.

The committee discussed strategies to strengthen primary healthcare facilities and improve their linkages with secondary-care hospitals to ensure an effective referral mechanism and better access to healthcare services for residents of the federal capital. Participants also reviewed measures to improve the operational efficiency of healthcare institutions and enhance the quality and accessibility of medical services Following the meeting, the committee visited Pakistan-China Friendship Hospital in Chak Shahzad to assess its operational status, available facilities and healthcare services being provided to the public. The visit was aimed at reviewing the hospital's functioning and identifying areas requiring attention to ensure effective utilization of healthcare infrastructure and improved service delivery.–APP



Islamabad POST
METROLITE
Friday November 13 , 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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WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
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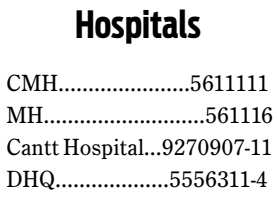
Hospitals

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MH.....561116
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
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RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
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TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Rubina for WB, BISP continued collaboration for social welfare

Under the new system, beneficiaries will no longer be restricted to a single financial institution and can access their financial assistance through any of the participating banks, offering greater convenience, flexibility and freedom of choice.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Thursday emphasised the importance of continued collaboration with the World Bank, leveraging technology, institutional expertise and skill development initiatives to further strengthen the country's social protection framework.

She expressed these views during a meeting with World Bank Country Director Bolormaa Amgaabazar at the BISP headquarters, where both sides discussed strengthening institutional collaboration and exploring new avenues of cooperation.

The World Bank Country Director was accompanied by Amjad Zafar, Technical Team Lead, World Bank. During the meeting, discussions focused on key areas of mutual interest, including the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER), Benazir Nashonuma Programme (BNP), Benazir Hunarmand Programme, digital and financial literacy training, and data sharing between federal and provincial entities. Both sides explored opportunities to enhance institutional engagement and strengthen cooperation, particularly in social protection, capacity building and improving service delivery for deserving families.

The meeting also discussed technological upgradation of BISP to enhance operational efficiency, improve programme implementation and strengthen service delivery to beneficiaries. Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted the need to harness technological advancements and institutional expertise to make BISP programmes more effective and responsive to the needs of deserving families.

The meeting concluded with a shared understanding to further strengthen engagement and explore additional avenues of cooperation between BISP and the World Bank. Director General National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) Dr. Asim Ijaz and Noman Ali also attended the meeting. Meanwhile, The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has formally launched the first disbursement of financial assistance to deserving women through six partner banks under its newly introduced interoperable payment system, allowing beneficiaries to receive their payments through multiple banking channels across the country. Under the new system, beneficiaries will no longer be restricted to a single financial institution and can access their financial assistance through any of the participating banks, offering greater convenience, flexibility and freedom of choice. In this regard, BISP Chairperson Senator Rubina Khalid held a special meeting with Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Jameel Ahmad to discuss the effective implementation of the new payment mechanism and the future course of action. She also thanked the SBP Governor for the central bank's support and guidance in developing and implementing the digital banking system. Additional Secretary BISP Dr. Ismat Nawaz also attended the meeting.

The six banking partners included in the interoperable payment network are Habib Bank Limited (HBL), HBL Microfinance Bank, easypaisa, JazzCash, Bank Alfalah and the Bank of Punjab. According to BISP officials, the launch of the first payment cycle marks an important step towards improving transparency in the disbursement process, eliminating long queues and unauthorized deductions, and ensuring dignified delivery of financial assistance to deserving women. During the meeting, Senator Rubina Khalid appreciated the State Bank of Pakistan's patronage and pivotal role in developing the new system and bringing six banking partners onto a unified payment network. She said the introduction of interoperability would enable deserving women to receive their payments according to their convenience and choice, while improving service delivery and promoting financial inclusion across the country.

The BISP Chairperson reaffirmed the programme's commitment to the welfare and financial empowerment of deserving women, adding that close coordination and cooperation with the State Bank and all partner financial institutions would continue to ensure the smooth and effective implementation of the new payment system.–**DNA**

Pakistan's mineral sector offers immense investment opportunities

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Petroleum Hamed Yaqoob Sheikh on Thursday said Pakistan's substantial deposits of copper, gold, chromite, coal, gemstones and other critical minerals offered immense potential and investment opportunities. Addressing the two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 (PMIF26), he welcomed international partners who had travelled from across the world to participate in the event. He said Pakistan stood at an important juncture in the development of its mineral sector. "We have started and are fully determined to optimally realise this potential in a responsible and sustainable manner, while ensuring minimal impact on the environment and equitable sharing of gains with our citizens," he said. The secretary said the mineral sector alone could transform the country's economic growth, industrial development, employment opportunities and long-term prosperity. He said the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum held special significance and was central to achieving this vision. The forum provided a platform for stakeholders from across the globe, including governments, investors, mining companies, financial institutions and technical experts, to exchange ideas, build partnerships and translate opportunities into tangible investments, he added. He said the third edition of the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum marked an important milestone in the country's journey. Last year, the forum brought together more than 5,000 delegates from across the globe, he said. Sixteen memorandums of understanding and agreements were signed between national and international institutions and mining companies, opening new avenues for cooperation in mineral exploration, development and technological exchange. The forum also provided an opportunity to showcase Pakistan's emerging mineral projects and strengthen engagement with international partners on geological surveys, mineral processing and investment facilitation.

"A year later, we are here not merely to revisit these commitments but to demonstrate the progress made and reaffirm our determination to translate investment interest into projects on the ground," he added. Since the previous forum, the federal government, in close coordination with provincial governments, federal institutions and ministries, had pursued important reforms to create a more transparent, predictable and investor-friendly mineral sector, he said. The launch of the National Mineral Data Centre, GSP Geoportal and Agreement Exchange at the forum would further strengthen institutional capacity and promote greater information exchange and cooperation, he added. He said the Reko Diq Copper-Gold Project remained one of Pakistan's most significant mining investments, while several other projects of comparable importance were also ready for investment. "We are pursuing new exploration opportunities and partnerships in copper, gold and other critical minerals," he said. After a break of many years, offshore exploration was also set to resume with the support of Turkish partners, he said. "You will hear more about these developments in the coming weeks," he added. Despite the regional conflict and the resulting energy crisis, the government had maintained the momentum of policy reforms to improve Pakistan's energy security, the secretary said.–**APP**

Govt committed to attract foreign investment :Ali

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik held a series of bilateral meetings with leading international mining and investment companies on the sidelines of the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum (PMIF), highlighting Pakistan's commitment to attracting foreign investment and expanding international partnerships in the minerals sector. During the engagements, the Federal Minister held separate meetings with Mr. John Thornton, Chairman of Barrick Mining Corporation, accompanied by the company's senior leadership; Mr. Andrew Neilson, Chief Executive of Scottish mining and engineering company Weir; Mr. Ibrahim El Gazzar, Head of Metals and Minerals (MENA) at Singapore-headquartered Trafigura, along with his delegation; and Mr. Mustafa Aksoy, Chief Executive Officer of Türkiye's Çal k Holding. He also met with a delegation led by Mr Robert Friedland of Ivanhoe Mines. During the meeting, Mr. Andrew Neilson expressed Weir's interest in expanding its engagement in Pakistan's mining sector, stating that the company was looking to participate in additional projects beyond its existing involvement in Reko Diq. Mr. Ibrahim El Gazzar conveyed Trafigura's keen interest in Pakistan's Zinc-Barite project. He also expressed the company's interest in exploring opportunities in Pakistan's LPG, bonded storage and refinery sectors. Mr. John Thornton remarked that it was always a pleasure to visit Pakistan, reflecting the company's continued engagement with the country.

The Federal Minister also witnessed the signing ceremony of an agreement between mining giant Ivanhoe Mines and Mari Minerals for the exploration of copper and gold deposits in Chagai, Balochistan. Under the agreement, the two companies intend to undertake exploration activities to assess the region's mineral potential and identify opportunities for the development of its copper-gold resources.–**DNA**

IRSA releases 93,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 93,600 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 45,000 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam stood at 1488.93 feet, which was 86.93 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 25,600 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1186.90 feet, which was 136.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 3,800 cusecs and 33,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu, and Sukkur was recorded as 101,700, 52,200, 37,700, and 12,800 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 2,000 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.–**APP**

Suspect linked in fake apostille sticker fraud network held

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone has arrested another key suspect allegedly linked to an organized network involved in defrauding citizens through fake apostille stickers, marking further progress in an ongoing investigation into document forgery and fraud.

According to FIA Islamabad Zone on Thursday, the accused, identified as Qazi Faheem Younis, was arrested during an operation in Islamabad in connection with FIR No. 48/2026.

Initial investigations revealed that the suspect was allegedly an important member of an organised network involved in deceiving citizens through counterfeit apostille stickers.

The FIA said several suspects had already been arrested in the same case, while the latest arrest was part of continuing efforts to identify and apprehend other individuals associated with the network.

Investigators are examining the arrested suspect's alleged role in the fraudulent activities and tracing other individuals who may have been involved in preparing, supplying or facilitating the use of fake apostille stickers. The agency said further interrogation of the suspect was underway, while the scope of the investigation was being expanded to identify other members and possible facilitators .–**APP**

Aleem expresses grief over cops' martyrdom

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications and President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Abdul Aleem Khan on Thursday expressed grief over the martyrdom of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police personnel in a terrorist attack in Kohat. In a message posted on social media platform X, he paid tribute to the courage and dedication of the martyred personnel, saying those who laid down their lives for the country's peace and security were the true heroes of the nation. He said that these brave sons of the soil had demonstrated through their supreme sacrifice that no compromise could ever be made on Pakistan's peace and security.

Aleem Khan said that the sacrifices made by security institutions and law enforcement personnel in the fight against terrorism were a source of pride for the entire nation. He added that the extraordinary sacrifices of the brave Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police personnel would always be remembered, and the entire nation held its martyrs in the highest regard.–**APP**



Briefs

Mohsin pledges federal support for GB's uplift, peace, tourism

ISLAMABAD :Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday assured the Gilgit-Baltistan government of full cooperation from the federal government in promoting development, maintaining law and order and ensuring peace and stability in the region.

He gave this assurance during a meeting with Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Amjad Hussain in Islamabad. The meeting discussed the overall situation in Gilgit-Baltistan, law and order and matters of mutual interest. During the meeting, Mohsin Naqvi appreciated the government's efforts for development, peace and stability in Gilgit-Baltistan. The interior minister said the number of tourists visiting Gilgit-Baltistan had increased significantly. He said the promotion of tourism in the region would strengthen the local economy and create more employment opportunities for its people. Naqvi said the federal government would extend all possible support for the overall development of Gilgit-Baltistan and the maintenance of law and order. He stressed the importance of continued efforts to promote tourism, which would contribute to economic activity and provide employment opportunities in the region. Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Amjad Hussain briefed the interior minister on the prevailing situation in the region. He said the overall situation in Gilgit-Baltistan was currently better and that the environment across the region was completely peaceful.

Both sides discussed issues relating to the region's development, security and other matters of mutual interest._**APP**

Estate Office digitises over 28,000 allotment files

ISLAMABAD: The Estate Office has digitised 28,116 government accommodation allotment files in Islamabad and four other major cities as part of a nationwide reform initiative launched by the Ministry of Housing and Works to ensure transparency.

It will ensure merit-based allotments and greater administrative efficiency, enabling federal government employees to apply for accommodation and track their applications through an automated online system. According to an official document available with Wealth Pakistan, all 17,496 allotment files maintained by the Estate Office in Islamabad have been scanned and digitised. In Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar, another 10,620 files out of a total of 11,014 have been digitised. The digitisation drive is part of broader administrative reforms aimed at eliminating manual intervention, strengthening accountability and ensuring that government accommodation is allotted to eligible federal government employees strictly on merit. As part of the reforms, the Estate Office has developed and operationalised a web-based automated allotment system that allows employees to register online for the General Waiting List (GWL), while seniority is calculated automatically. The system also provides SMS alerts and online application tracking facilities. The department has discontinued the acceptance of manual applications, requiring employees to submit their requests through the online system.

The move is intended to reduce physical visits to Estate Office facilities and make the allotment process more accessible and transparent. The document reveals that 894 government residences were allotted on merit through the General Waiting List system in Islamabad between July 2025 and June 2026. In another major step to address the unauthorised occupation of government accommodation, allotments of 2,200 houses previously occupied illegally were cancelled.–**APP**

Pak-China exhibition of Porcelain Artefacts

Chinese Embassy Counsellor, Mr. Cheng Peng reaffirmed the importance of Pakistan-China friendship, describing cultural cooperation as an important pillar of bilateral relations.



ISLAMABAD: A Pak-China Joint Exhibition showcasing porcelain artefacts and contemporary art was inaugurated at the National Museum Islamabad to mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China. The exhibition has been organised by the National Museum Islamabad, under the National Heritage and Culture Division, Government of Pakistan, in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology and Museums (DoAM). Parliamentary Secretary for National Heritage and Culture, Farah Naz and Counsellor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan, Mr. Cheng Peng, addressed the inaugural ceremony.

In her remarks, Farah Naz highlighted the significance of cultural exchanges in strengthening Pakistan-China relations, saying that such initiatives provided valuable opportunities to showcase rich cultural heritage, artistic traditions and craftsmanship. She emphasized that cultural diplomacy played an important role in promoting mutual understanding, fostering people-to-people connections and further deepening the longstanding friendship between the two countries.

Chinese Embassy Counsellor, Mr. Cheng Peng reaffirmed the importance of Pakistan-China friendship, describing cultural cooperation as an important pillar of bilateral relations. They appreciated the initiative to showcase Chinese porcelain and contemporary art in Pakistan and highlighted the role of joint cultural activities in bringing the people of the two countries closer and enhancing mutual appreciation of their respective traditions. The inaugural ceremony was also attended by officials of the National Heritage and Culture Division, representatives of the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Chinese Embassy officials, cultural representatives, artists, students and other distinguished guests. The participants took keen interest in the displayed porcelain artefacts and contemporary artworks, appreciating the artistic craftsmanship and cultural heritage showcased through the exhibition. The exhibition brought together an impressive collection of Chinese porcelain artefacts and contemporary artistic creations, reflecting centuries of artistic excellence, craftsmanship and cultural exchange. The collection featured exquisite Tang Sancai horse and camel figurines, delicate Ru porcelain celadon wares, vibrant blue-and-white floral vessels, intricately sculpted peony plates and contemporary luxury dinnerware.

Chinese porcelain, renowned worldwide for its artistic refinement and technical innovation, has historically played an important role in cultural exchange along the ancient Silk Road. The exhibition provided visitors an opportunity to explore this rich artistic heritage and appreciate the evolution of ceramic craftsmanship over the centuries. As part of the exhibition's educational activities, students from IMCG F-7/2 participated in a ceramic painting workshop, where they explored Chinese motifs and iconography. The students showed keen interest in Chinese ceramics and the art of porcelain painting. Beyond its artistic significance, the exhibition celebrated the longstanding cultural and historical connections between Pakistan and China. It highlighted the role of cultural diplomacy in bringing nations closer, strengthening people-to-people contacts and fostering greater appreciation of shared artistic traditions.

The initiative reflected the commitment of the National Heritage and Culture Division and the Department of Archaeology and Museums to promoting international cultural cooperation, safeguarding heritage and providing platforms for meaningful artistic exchange.–**DNA**

Ahsan for shift from rote learning to critical thinking, creativity

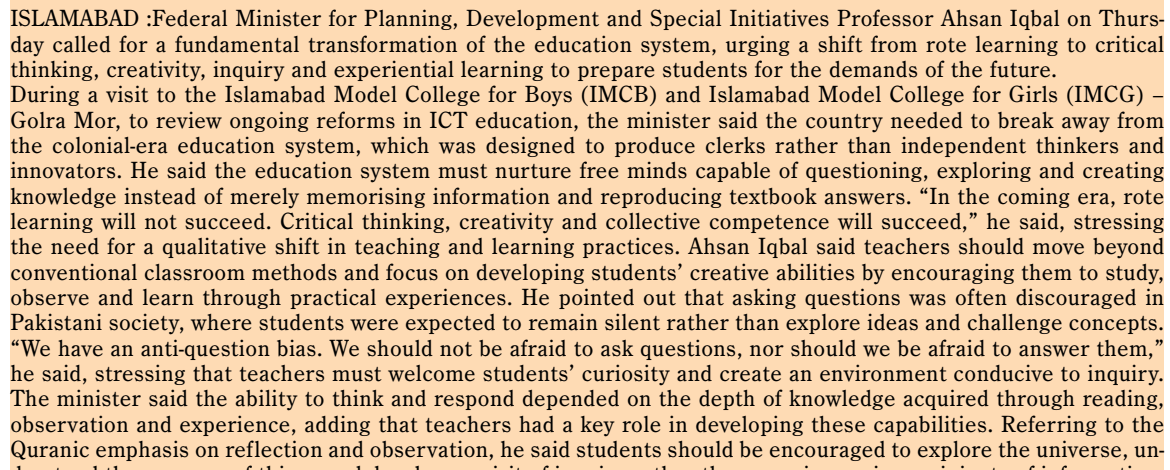
ISLAMABAD :Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday called for a fundamental transformation of the education system, urging a shift from rote learning to critical thinking, creativity, inquiry and experiential learning to prepare students for the demands of the future.

During a visit to the Islamabad Model College for Boys (IMCB) and Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG) – Golra Mor, to review ongoing reforms in ICT education, the minister said the country needed to break away from the colonial-era education system, which was designed to produce clerks rather than independent thinkers and innovators. He said the education system must nurture free minds capable of questioning, exploring and creating knowledge instead of merely memorising information and reproducing textbook answers. "In the coming era, rote learning will not succeed. Critical thinking, creativity and collective competence will succeed," he said, stressing the need for a qualitative shift in teaching and learning practices. Ahsan Iqbal said teachers should move beyond conventional classroom methods and focus on developing students' creative abilities by encouraging them to study, observe and learn through practical experiences. He pointed out that asking questions was often discouraged in Pakistani society, where students were expected to remain silent rather than explore ideas and challenge concepts. "We have an anti-question bias. We should not be afraid to ask questions, nor should we be afraid to answer them," he said, stressing that teachers must welcome students' curiosity and create an environment conducive to inquiry. The minister said the ability to think and respond depended on the depth of knowledge acquired through reading, observation and experience, adding that teachers had a key role in developing these capabilities. Referring to the Quranic emphasis on reflection and observation, he said students should be encouraged to explore the universe, understand the purpose of things and develop a spirit of inquiry rather than remain passive recipients of information. He said Pakistan had gradually become a consumer rather than a creator of knowledge, relying heavily on books and knowledge produced elsewhere. "The factory of knowledge creation has been shut down. We have to revive that factory," he said, calling for an education system that promoted research, independent thinking, lifelong learning and intellectual development. The minister said the ongoing reforms aimed to free the country's education system from the legacy of colonial thinking and equip the younger generation with the intellectual capabilities required in the emerging era. He also invited teachers and education officials to share practical suggestions for improving the education system and identifying weaknesses requiring attention.–**DNA**

ITP cautions motorists over traffic diversions

ISLAMABAD: Motorists travelling on Islamabad Expressway and Srinagar Highway may face temporary traffic disruptions and slow-moving traffic at different times on Thursday due to the movement of cricket teams, prompting Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) to advise citizens to use alternative routes and allow an additional 20 to 25 minutes for their journeys An ITP official told that traffic diversions would be implemented at different locations and times along Islamabad Expressway and Srinagar Highway to facilitate the movement of cricket teams. He said motorists using Srinagar Highway should take Suhrawardy Road, G-8 Service Road, G-9 Service Road and Zero Point as alternative routes. Traffic heading towards Faizabad should use Faisal Avenue, while motorists travelling towards Ninth Avenue have been advised to use Service Road East.The official said citizens travelling from Koral towards Islamabad could use the old airport route, Rawal Road, Rawalpindi's Murree Road, IJP Road and Faqir Aipee Road. In case of closures on Koral Expressway, Murree Road and Club Road, motorists should use Lehtrar Road and Park Road to reach their destinations. Similarly, citizens travelling towards New Islamabad International Airport and Peshawar Road have been advised to use Jinnah Avenue and Margalla Road, while those coming from Bhara Kahu towards Islamabad could travel through Bani Gala and Park Road. The official said traffic movement was likely to remain slow on major roads during the diversions, and motorists should plan their journeys accordingly.–**APP**

Celebration of leadership held at IMCG G10/4



ISLAMABAD : Model College for Girls (Postgraduate), G-10/4 held its Investiture Ceremony.An atmosphere of enthusiasm, pride and anticipation filled the premises of College marking the formal induction of the newly elected College Student Council.

The college was honoured by the gracious presence of Javed Iqbal Mirza, Director General, Federal Directorate of Education as the Chief Guest. While Principal Prof Sadia Ibrar presided the ceremony. Principal in her welcome address gratitude to the distinguished Chief Guest and other esteemed guests for gracing the occasion with their presence. Her words reflected the institution's commitment to nurturing responsible, confident and capable young individuals who can emerge as thoughtful leaders and active contributors to society.

Fazeelat Hussain, Incharge Student Council, expressed her affection for the students and her unwavering commitment to her role through a beautiful composition of poetry penned by her own hand. A defining moment of the ceremony was the oath-taking and the chief guest took oath from Fatima Habib President,Hooria Fatima General Secretary,Malaika Hafeez Podcast Secretary ,Malaika Arif Urdu Debating Secretary,Laiba Abbasi Vocal Art Secretary,Mawra Islamic Secretary,Maryam Noor English Debating Secretary,Khadija Naeem Debating Secretary,Hadia Nisarat Fine Arts Secretary.Eman Nisar Science/Environment Secretary and Momina Shabir Sports Secretary . Apart from main council secretaries of different societies , Class representatives and Bus proctors also took their oath.

In his address Chief Guest Javed Mirza, congratulated the newly elected council members and extended his best wishes for their new responsibilities. He expressed his hope that their tenure would prove fruitful and productive, encouraging them to make the most of this opportunity and contribute positively to their institution. His words served as an inspiring reminder that true leadership is not merely a position of honour but a commitment to responsibility, dedication and meaningful action.

The ceremony concluded on a cheerful note with a cake-cutting ceremony, symbolising the celebration of new beginnings and shared aspirations. The occasion was a fitting tribute to the values of leadership, teamwork and institutional pride, leaving the newly inducted council members with a renewed sense of purpose and responsibility.—APP

Police review Phase-II recruitment tests

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police senior officers on Thursday reviewed the ongoing Phase-II recruitment process at testing centres in Karachi and Quetta, directing officials to ensure merit, transparency and strict compliance with prescribed procedures, while a separate inspection was conducted to assess development works at Police Lines Headquarters.

An ICT official told that the Superintendent of Police (SP) Headquarters Parri Gul Tareen visited the Karachi testing centre to inspect the physical and running tests being conducted as part of the Islamabad Police Recruitment Phase-II.

During the visit, she reviewed security arrangements, testing procedures and other facilities established for candidates participating in the recruitment process.

She directed the officials concerned to ensure that all stages of recruitment were conducted in a transparent, organised and fair manner, strictly in accordance with the prescribed rules and procedures.

Meanwhile, Assistant Inspector General (AIG) Operations Shoaib Masood visited the Quetta testing centre, where he conducted a detailed inspection of the ongoing physical and running tests, security measures and other administrative arrangements.

He instructed the officers concerned to maintain effective supervision throughout the recruitment process and ensure that all testing activities were completed in accordance with the prescribed procedures.

The AIG also emphasised the importance of maintaining necessary arrangements to facilitate the smooth conduct of recruitment tests.

Separately, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Law and Order and Training Muhammad Ateeq Tahir visited Police Lines Headquarters Islamabad to review ongoing development projects.

During the inspection, he assessed the progress of development works and directed the officials concerned to complete all projects at the earliest while maintaining the prescribed quality standards. He said the timely completion of development works would help improve the facilities available at Police Lines Headquarters._**APP**



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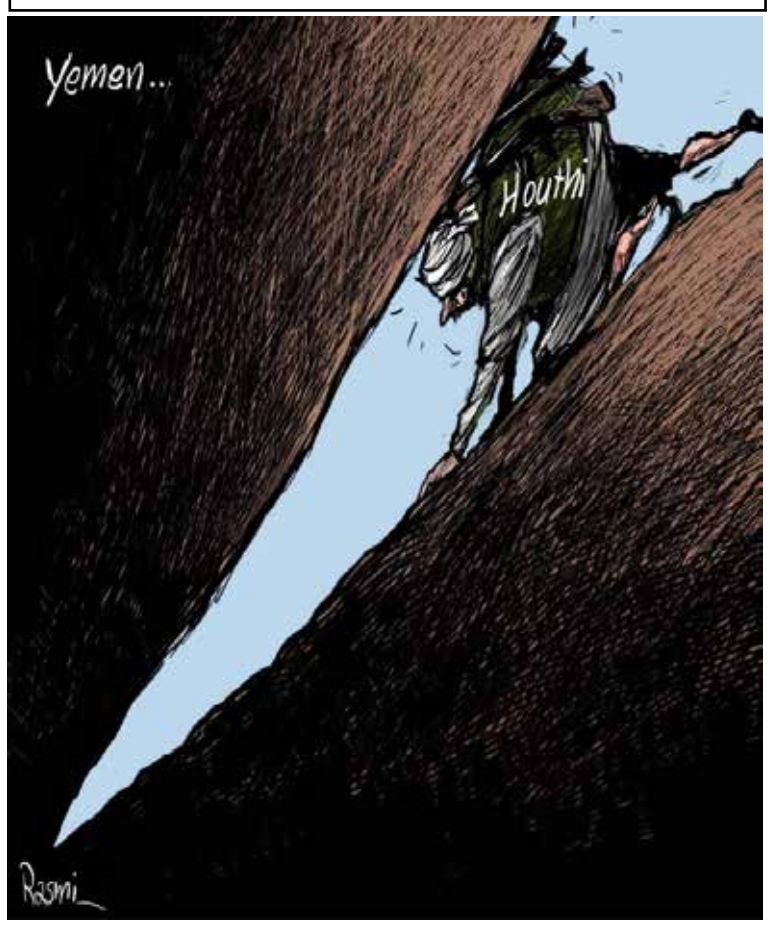
AI is changing cybercrime: How to protect yourself

ARTIFICIAL intelligence has changed the nature of cybercrime. Criminals now use it to create more convincing scams, impersonate real people and target ordinary individuals on a larger scale. Warnings from international law enforcement agencies show that these attacks are becoming more common and harder to spot. What once required technical skill is now available to many more people, making everyday users increasingly vulnerable to hacking attempts, identity theft and financial fraud. AI tools allow scammers to produce polished messages, realistic voices and fabricated videos that look and sound authentic. A short clip of someone's voice pulled from social media or an old phone call can be turned into a convincing clone. A few public videos of a person's face can be used to generate a deepfake that appears on a live call. In addition, emails and chat messages can be written in a natural style that matches the way a real colleague or relative would write, without the spelling mistakes or awkward phrasing that once served as warning signs. These methods appear in several common schemes. One frequent approach is the voice cloning of family members or workplace superiors. A scammer makes a voice call and claims there is an urgent problem — someone is in trouble and needs money right away or a confidential company transaction must be completed immediately. Because the voice sounds familiar, people often act before they have time to check.

Urgency is almost always part of the script because pressure reduces the chance that someone will pause and verify Similar techniques are used in video calls. A person may join what looks like a normal meeting with a boss or colleagues, only to discover later that every face and voice on the screen was artificially generated. Instructions given during the call lead the victim to transfer funds or share sensitive information. Another common tactic involves carefully written messages that appear to come from a trusted source. These can instruct an employee to move money or reveal login details. The same technology also powers longer-running scams that build trust over time, such as fake investment opportunities promoted with fabricated celebrity videos or romance schemes that use realistic online profiles and ongoing conversations. In some cases, scammers even impersonate officials or create fake websites that look official in order to collect personal details from people who think they are reporting a problem or recovering lost funds. Be especially careful with unexpected video calls that ask for confidential actions. End the call and confirm the request another way. The common thread is the removal of traditional clues. Perfect language, familiar voices and realistic faces no longer guarantee that a request is genuine. Urgency is almost always part of the script because pressure reduces the chance that someone will pause and verify. Protecting yourself does not require advanced technical knowledge. It rests on a few consistent habits. For example, agree with close family members on a private code word or phrase that only you know. If a call arrives claiming to be from a relative in crisis, ask for the code. A real family member will know it; a clone will not. Treat any unexpected request for money or sensitive information with caution, no matter how convincing it sounds. Always verify through a second, independent channel — call the person back on a number you already have, check through a known work system or speak face to face where possible.

Be especially careful with unexpected video calls that ask for confidential actions. End the call and confirm the request another way. Limit the amount of clear voice and video material you post publicly because those samples make cloning easier. Also use strong, unique passwords for important accounts and enable multifactor authentication wherever it is offered. Prefer authenticator apps or security keys over codes sent by text message when you have the choice. Keep your devices and software updated so that basic security protections remain current. Furthermore, monitor bank and credit card accounts regularly and set up alerts for unusual activity. If something looks wrong, contact the institution quickly. Share these practices with relatives and friends who may be less familiar with the risks. Many successful attacks rely on isolation and the victim's reluctance to discuss what happened. Finally, when a scam does occur, report it to the appropriate authorities. Even if no money was lost, the information helps investigators track patterns and warn others. The technology will continue to improve but the strongest defense remains human judgment: slow down when money or personal data is involved, verify independently and refuse to act solely on the basis of a voice, face or message that arrives under pressure. These simple steps still stop the majority of attempts. In the end, the rise of AI in cybercrime does not mean ordinary people are powerless. While the tools available to scammers continue to grow more sophisticated, the most effective protections remain practical and within reach of anyone.

Building the habit of verification, protecting personal information and talking openly about these risks with those around us creates a stronger defense than any single technical fix. Awareness is critical. By staying cautious, questioning urgency and confirming requests through trusted channels, individuals everywhere can sharply reduce their exposure. The digital environment will keep changing but careful everyday decisions can offer the most reliable shield against deception.



Pakistan's Mineral Wealth: A Divine Blessing and an Economic Opportunity

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The international demand for critical minerals is growing as nations seek to secure their supply chains and reduce dependence on limited sources. Pakistan's geographical position, linking South Asia, Central Asia, China and the Middle East, could provide an additional strategic advantage. Yet this advantage will remain theoretical unless the country develops reliable infrastructure, efficient transportation networks, modern processing facilities and a predictable regulatory environment

ALLAH has bestowed upon Pakistan blessings that few nations can claim in such abundance. Its Muslim-majority population is awakened five times a day by the magnificent call of "Allahu Akbar", while the invitation to prayer echoes across its cities, villages and valleys. Its geographical landscape is equally remarkable, embracing all four seasons, mighty rivers, fertile plains, towering mountains, expansive deserts and a coastline stretching along the Arabian Sea. Beneath this diverse landscape lie mineral treasures of immense economic value. Gold, copper, coal, iron ore, chromite, limestone, gypsum, rock salt, precious stones and numerous industrial minerals constitute a natural inheritance whose true worth has yet to be realised. No matter how deeply we express gratitude for these blessings, our gratitude would remain incomplete if we failed to utilise them for the welfare and prosperity of our people.

It is, therefore, a matter of serious reflection that a country so richly endowed with natural resources continues to face economic instability, mounting financial obligations and recurring dependence on external assistance. Pakistan has often looked beyond its borders for financial support, while considerable wealth remains buried beneath its own soil. Natural resources alone, however, do not guarantee prosperity. Their true value emerges only when vision, knowledge, investment, technology and honest administration combine to transform underground potential into national wealth. The Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026, being held in Islamabad on November 12 and 13, represents an important opportunity to change this long-standing situation. Organised with the support of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), the forum brings together international investors, mining experts, policymakers and multinational companies to explore Pakistan's mineral potential and establish meaningful partnerships. Its significance extends beyond a two-day gathering; it offers an opportunity to place Pakistan more firmly on the international mining and critical-minerals map. The participation of international mining leaders and companies provides an opportunity to attract not merely financial capital but also advanced technology, professional expertise and access to international markets.

Pakistan's mineral landscape is remarkably diverse. Balochistan occupies a particularly important position, with its substantial deposits of copper and gold. The Reko Diq project in Chagai district is among the world's largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits and has the potential to become a landmark undertaking in Pakistan's mining history. Its development could generate substantial export earnings, employment and opportunities for associated industries. The Saindak copper-gold project, also situated in Balochistan, further demonstrates the province's importance in the country's mineral economy.

Coal is another considerable resource, particularly the enormous deposits of Thar in Sindh, which offer opportunities for energy generation and associated industrial activity. Pakistan also possesses substantial iron ore deposits, chromite, lead and zinc, along with limestone, gypsum, dolomite, marble, granite, rock salt and other industrial minerals. The Salt Range and Khewra are internationally recognised for their rock salt, while the mountainous regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are known for their remarkable deposits of emeralds, rubies, topaz, tourmaline and other precious and semi-precious stones.

The emerging importance of lithium and rare earth elements deserves particular attention. These minerals are increasingly essential to electric vehicle batteries, renewable energy systems, electronics, telecommunications and advanced industrial technologies. Their strategic significance in the changing global economy presents Pakistan with an opportunity to explore new avenues of investment. However, geological indications and exploration prospects must be translated into independently verified commercial reserves before their economic value can be established.

The international demand for critical minerals is growing as nations seek to secure their supply chains and reduce dependence on limited sources. Pakistan's geographical position, linking South Asia, Central Asia, China and the Middle East, could provide an additional strategic advantage. Yet this advantage will remain theoretical unless the country develops reliable infrastructure, efficient transportation networks, modern processing facilities and a predictable regulatory environment. The SIFC has an important role in facilitating investment, coordinating government institutions and connecting domestic opportunities with international investors. Nevertheless, the mining sector requires sustained cooperation between federal and provincial governments, since constitutional responsibilities concerning mineral development largely rest with the provinces. Clear licensing procedures, transparent agreements, dependable dispute-resolution mechanisms and consistent policies are essential to establishing investor confidence.

Equally important is the principle that the people living in mineral-rich regions must become genuine beneficiaries of the wealth extracted from their land. Balochistan, despite its extraordinary natural endowment, continues to face serious challenges of poverty, unemployment, inadequate education and insufficient healthcare. Mining projects must therefore bring tangible improvements to local communities through employment, technical training, schools, hospitals, clean drinking water and infrastructure. Environmental protection, responsible water management and the rehabilitation of mining sites must also remain integral to every major undertaking. Pakistan must also move beyond the traditional practice of extracting and exporting raw materials. The real economic opportunity lies in value addition. Copper should support domestic industrial production; gemstones should be processed and polished within the country; marble and granite should be converted into finished products; and mineral resources should provide the foundation for manufacturing industries. Such an approach would create employment, strengthen exports, reduce unnecessary imports and develop a skilled industrial workforce.

There are, admittedly, challenges that cannot be ignored. Security concerns, inadequate infrastructure, technological limitations, bureaucratic delays and uncertainty surrounding long-term policies have discouraged investment. The recent review and slowdown of development activity at Reko Diq, announced by Barrick in April 2026 in response to escalating security concerns, illustrates how essential stability and investor confidence are to projects of this scale. These difficulties must be addressed through institutional coordination, effective security arrangements and a consistent national commitment to economic development. Pakistan's mineral wealth is not merely a geological advantage; it is a responsibility entrusted to the present generation. The Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum should therefore be judged not by the number of international delegates attending or the declarations made during its sessions, but by the investments realised, projects developed, industries established and livelihoods improved in the years ahead.

A nation blessed with fertile fields, flowing rivers, abundant minerals and a hardworking population should not remain perpetually dependent upon borrowing. Our natural resources can become instruments of national dignity, economic independence and collective prosperity, provided they are managed with wisdom, transparency and a sincere commitment to the public good. The Almighty has placed immense treasures beneath our feet; it is now our responsibility to bring their benefits to the lives of our people.

Makkah alliance signals a Gulf shift from dependence to diversification

Zaid M. Belbagi

Turkiye offers an established military-industrial base, considerable operational experience and a growing capacity to manufacture defense technologies. Meanwhile, Pakistan contributes long-standing military ties with the Kingdom, alongside deep expertise in training and operational planning. Ultimately, the alliance's true strategic value lies in how these capabilities complement one another

JUST three months after its signing, the Saudi-Turkish-Pakistani Makkah Defense Alliance has taken a major step toward becoming a fully operational security partnership. Following renewed Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia, the three nations last month agreed to activate their collective defense commitments and facilitate the rapid deployment of military forces and capabilities to the Kingdom. Two further moves have added institutional weight to the pact, which was only signed in August: the appointment of retired Pakistani Lt. Gen. Nauman Mahmood as the alliance's first secretary-general and Turkiye's parliamentary ratification of the agreement last week. These developments came as Gulf states reassessed how much they can continue to rely on Western military guarantees. Because the ongoing regional conflict has exposed the limits of existing security arrangements, Riyadh and its partners appear to be laying the groundwork for a more autonomous regional defense architecture.

The agreement marks a clear departure from the mostly bilateral arrangements that have long underpinned Saudi Arabia's defense ties with Turkiye and Pakistan. Its central provision — that an armed attack against one member is considered an attack against all three — establishes a formal collective defense commitment backed by real structure. A Strategic Political and Defense Committee and a permanent secretariat in Riyadh now provide dedicated channels for political consultation and military planning.

Riyadh and its partners appear to be laying the groundwork for a more autonomous regional defense architecture

Furthermore, appointing a Pakistani secretary-general for an initial three-year term signals that the organization is built to outlast the immediate crisis. This is an alliance designed to endure, not a mere communique drafted for the moment. Consequently, the October decision to implement collective defense measures serves as a vital stress test.

While earlier declarations of military cooperation rarely had to prove themselves in practice, this pact now faces real-world demands. It must demonstrate that it can coordinate capabilities across three distinct armed forces and translate political pledges into practical assistance. Thus, its credibility will depend on how well these mechanisms perform under pressure, rather than the ambition of its founding charter. For Riyadh, this partnership offers a way to broaden its defense relationships in an increasingly unpredictable security environment. Although Saudi Arabia has invested heavily in military modernization, the sustained missile and drone campaign against the Kingdom has proved that advanced weapons systems alone cannot guarantee protection against prolonged assaults. To address this vulnerability, each partner brings distinct strengths to the table.

Turkiye offers an established military-industrial base, considerable operational experience and a growing capacity to manufacture defense technologies. Meanwhile, Pakistan contributes long-standing military ties with the Kingdom, alongside deep expertise in training and operational planning. Ultimately, the alliance's true strategic value lies in how these capabilities complement one another.

Turning these assets into a credible deterrent will require sustained investment in interoperability and unified command structures Over time, joint exercises, intelligence-sharing, military logistics and defense-industrial cooperation will steadily bolster the three nations' ability to counter shared threats, while also supporting Riyadh's drive to localize military production and diversify procurement. Nevertheless, turning these assets into a credible deterrent will require sustained investment in interoperability and unified command structures.

None of this suggests that Saudi Arabia is preparing to abandon American security guarantees. Despite recent strains, the Kingdom still relies heavily on US intelligence, advanced weaponry and military technology. Indeed, the strategic defense agreement signed with Washington in November 2025, along with subsequent US arms approvals, confirms that bilateral cooperation remains central to Riyadh's security calculations. Moreover, Turkiye's continued membership in NATO makes it difficult to view this new pact as an anti-Western bloc.

What is shifting, however, is the willingness of Gulf governments to depend on a single external protector. Specifically, the Makkah Agreement gives Saudi Arabia an additional framework to mobilize military support alongside partners that have a direct stake in regional stability. Rather than signaling disengagement from Washington, this move reflects strategic diversification. Over time, it could foster a more distributed security architecture in which regional states hold greater sway over defense planning and crisis response, while preserving vital Western alliances.

For the wider Gulf, meanwhile, how this pact integrates with existing Gulf Cooperation Council defense mechanisms will be critical. The GCC already maintains collective security frameworks, such as the Peninsula Shield Force, though their effectiveness and integration have long faced challenges. Consequently, bringing two major non-GCC military powers into a trilateral framework could reinforce these structures by adding fresh capabilities and avenues for coordination, provided their overlapping responsibilities are clearly defined to avoid complicating crisis decision-making. Far from replacing the Gulf's Western partnerships, the Makkah alliance instead hedges against overreliance on them. Riyadh's task now is to ensure the pact strengthens regional defense cooperation without fragmenting it. If it succeeds, the Makkah Defense Alliance will be remembered less as a departure from the past and more as the moment Gulf states began truly taking ownership of their own security

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PM Shehbaz calls for 'real action' on climate...

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telling world leaders fossil fuels "must go the way of the dinosaurs" at a climate summit missing several prominent figures. "The brutal truth is that the climate crisis is outrunning us," Guterres had told dozens of world leaders assembled in Antalya for two days of speeches by heads of state and government. But few major breakthroughs are anticipated at the COP31 negotiations, which run until November 20, as countries grapple with an oil price shock and geopolitical tensions fuelled by the US war with Iran and the Russia-Ukraine war. Since agreeing in 2023 for the first time to transition away from fossil fuels — the main driver of climate change — nations have struggled to advance that goal at the annual UN conferences. At his final COP before stepping down in December, Guterres had said governments could not keep expanding fossil fuel production while claiming to support the fight against climate change. "Fossil fuels must go the way of the dinosaurs, but that won't happen on its own. The dinosaurs did not have a lobby, but fossil fuels do," he had said in another salvo against an industry he has long accused of fuelling climate chaos. "Their strategy is simple: Distort the science. Delay the policy. Delay the action. Delay the accountability. It's time to kick the habit – and end the fossil fuel addiction," he had said to sustained applause.

Referendum only solution to provinces debate...

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Acknowledging the importance of allies in the ruling coalition, he said: "Everyone is a part of this government, and nothing will happen against their will. And if something does happen, then it will be after taking everyone's consensus." "My only recommendation is that if we were to conclude this debate, then we should just take the people's opinion," he said. The minister had also affirmed in September that any new administrative units would only be formed with the public's consent, while also doubling down on his call for new provinces.

US envoys meet with Putin in the Kremlin

FROM PAGE 01

Putin was to get the Russian leader's blessing for European representatives to be part of the talks, which are looking at the continent's broader security arrangements. The US and Zelensky want Europe to appoint a single person to negotiate with Moscow. But Moscow doesn't want European countries involved in the direct negotiations, complaining they are financing and supplying Ukraine's military effort. The Europeans are concerned about Russia's conduct and broader intentions on the continent. Many in Europe see the inclusion of Moscow in discussions about postwar European security as an unwelcome concession to Putin, who has described NATO's eastward expansion as a main security threat to Russia. Putin has demanded the trans-Atlantic alliance's troops be pulled back from Russia's borders. Some analysts say negotiators may be looking to grant Russia concessions on NATO's strategy in return for peace in Ukraine — a possibility that alarms European leaders. The Russian and Ukrainian delegations in Abu Dhabi "agreed on many of the principles, but are still apart on some of the way to accomplish" peace, Kushner said in Moscow. Putin reaffirmed to the US envoys Moscow's rejection of any European troop presence in Ukraine, saying that Russia sees them as a security threat to its security and warns that they would be legitimate targets.

Sahiwal Power Plant adopts anti-smog measures, using advanced technology

This initiative is a vital part of the plant's anti-smog strategy, as trees and plants play a crucial role in improving air quality

ISLAMABAD: At a critical juncture of time when Punjab, is grappling to wriggle out of smog dilemma, Sahiwal coal-fired power plant built and operated under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is keeping emission level at bare minimum level through advanced technologies such as Electrostatic Precipitators (ESP) and Flue Gas Desulfurization (FGD) systems.

These cutting-edge technologies effectively capture and remove particulate matter and sulfur dioxide from the exhaust gases, ensuring that emissions are significantly lower than the minimum standards set by Pakistan's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the World Bank, and Chinese regulations, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday

"Additionally, the plant has taken significant steps to reduce emissions within its own operations. One of the most effective and environmentally conscious strategies employed is the shift to electric vehicles for internal transport. The use of electric cart vehicles has been strictly mandated for moving personnel and goods within the plant premises, eliminating the need for fuel-powered vehicles that contribute to air pollution," Sahiwal power plant official said this during a research survey conducted on 10th November by Institute of International Relations and Media Research (IIRMR) in collaboration the environmentalists and university researchers.

"This transition to electric carts significantly reduces the emission of greenhouse gases, particulate matter, and other air pollutants, helping to improve the overall air quality within the plant and in its immediate surroundings. The move not only addresses local pollution but also aligns with the plant's broader commitment to sustainability and reducing its carbon footprint," he replied to a question during survey.

Moreover, survey revealed that the plant has embarked on an ambitious and ongoing plantation drive to increase the green cover within and around its premises. "This initiative is a vital part of the plant's anti-smog strategy, as trees and plants play a crucial role in improving air quality. The plantation drive is carried out regularly, with employees actively participating in tree-planting activities creating a more environmentally friendly workplace.

By increasing its green footprint, the Sahiwal Power Plant is contributing positively to its local ecosystem and setting a valuable example for other industrial entities to follow," IIRMR survey laid bare the facts.

IIRMR research survey revealed that ensuring higher standards in maintaining best ecosystem, values of the hazardous gases of SO2 NOX, CO and mercury, Sahiwal coal-fired power plant which was built by Huaneng Shandong Ruyi (Pakistan) Energy (Limited) Sahiwal project a joint venture of Huaneng Shandong Power Generation Company and Shandong Ruyi Group, with an investment of about $1.8 billion, has been keeping lower than the emission values set by World Bank, Japan, EU since operationalization of plant in 2017 till date.

"It has also set up a Continuous Emission Monitoring System (CEMS) for monitoring the Particulate Matter (PM). In order to strength the Environmental Monitoring Protocols, Project Company has hired EPA Certified Third party Environmental Monitoring Company to follow Environmental Monitoring Plan (EMP) and submit monthly the Environmental Reports. The Company has also installed Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Station to keenly monitor the air quality and to make sure quality air in accordance to NEQS," survey said. Survey in its in-depth report observed that in designing the coal yard, the company has paid special attention to environmental protection.

The coal yard is equipped with water spraying guns to avoid coal dust. The catch fence is provided around the coal yard, which is 2m higher than height of coal pile. Ash yard is designed according to Chinese standards polyethylene geo-membrane (two cloth one membrane) of the design to (artificial barrier layer) has the equivalent permeability coefficient of 1.0x10-7cm/s and 1.5M thick clay layer to control seepage, survey said.

IIRMR survey made more revelation that 1320 MW Sahiwal Coal-Fired Power Plant, located in the heart of Punjab, Pakistan, has also recognized the critical need to save its employees from this ongoing smog threat.

"One of the most significant measures introduced at the Sahiwal Power Plant is the mandatory wearing of protective masks by all employees working within the plant premises. During the smog season, all employees wear high-quality masks that are capable of filtering out harmful particulate matter (PM2.5) and other pollutants that are prevalent in smog. This measure is critical because exposure to these pollutants can lead to serious respiratory issues and exacerbate pre-existing health conditions. By ensuring that all workers are equipped with the necessary protective gear, the plant is prioritizing the health and safety of its workforce, while also setting an example for other industrial facilities in the region," survey said. Alongside these physical measures, survey added that the plant has implemented a comprehensive educational program to raise awareness about the dangers of smog among its employees.

"Regular lectures, workshops, and informational sessions are organized, where experts discuss the causes of smog, its health impacts, and practical ways to reduce exposure. The plant leadership, including senior executives like the CEO, CFO, Vice Presidents, and Chief Engineers, actively participates in these sessions, demonstrating their commitment to the cause, survey divulged. For instance, survey revealed that employees are encouraged to limit outdoor activities during peak smog hours, wear protective masks when necessary, and monitor air quality levels through available tools and apps. This proactive approach helps employees better understand the severity of the issue and empowers them to make informed decisions about their health and safety. – **APP**

One pair of gloves at a time: Family business brings top sports brand to goalkeepers in Lebanon

DNA

ALKHOBAR: In 2012, Lebanon looked like a good bet to mount an unlikely run to the 2014 FIFA World Cup, having beaten Asian heavyweights South Korea and Iran in the qualification stages. The campaign ultimately collapsed, however, and was followed by an agonizing near miss in their attempt to earn a place at the 2015 AFC Asian Cup.

Their first-ever Asian Cup qualification on merit (after participating as host nation in 2000) came in 2019. They qualified again in 2023, but a defeat by Yemen on the final day of qualification in June dashed their hopes of a third consecutive Asian Cup appearance in 2027.

To call this a disappointment for Lebanese football fans would be an understatement. After all, with the World Cup having expanded to 48 teams this year — and potentially 64 in 2030 — supporters feel the national team should be getting closer to qualifying for the world's biggest competition, not backsliding on years of steady growth during which they had built a reputation as Asian Cup regulars.

While the efforts to develop and improve on the pitch continue, off the pitch a Lebanese company aims to help the country close the gap on the world's top footballing nations, one pair of gloves at a time.

Kamal Hibri has seen the struggles Lebanese football faces up close. As managing director of KHT Sports, official distributor of the Uhlsport brand in Lebanon, and a contributor to the development of the Lebanese game, he believes the problem starts with the available resources.

"We have great players and we have great potential," he told Arab News. "However, the resources are the main challenge that is stopping us from reaching the potential that we want."

Resources, in this context, is an umbrella term he uses to cover a long list of problems, including organization, governance, funding and equipment. These are issues that Hibri and his father, Issam, a former youth football coach in Lebanon, decided to chip away at by setting up KHT Sports.

"It all started with me ordering gloves for my brother Omar, who is an 11-year-old goalkeeper — a very young prospect," he said. "But there was a lack of... I do not want to say good-quality gloves, but compared to other brands, there were goalkeepers that were struggling to find the gloves that they felt comfortable with."

PTCL partners with myco to offer 50% discount on English Premier League subscription to customers

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest integrated telecom and ICT services provider, Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) has signed a partnership agreement with myco, a Web3-enabled international video streaming and entertainment platform, to offer PTCL customers an exclusive 50% discount on monthly English Premier League (EPL) subscription for the entire duration of the League. myco holds the official and exclusive streaming rights to EPL in Pakistan for the 2026-27 season.

The partnership brings together PTCL's extensive customer base and billing ecosystem with myco's premium digital sports entertainment proposition to provide Pakistani football fans a convenient and affordable way to follow the English Premier League throughout the season.

The partnership furthers PTCL's efforts to expand its consumer services and value-added services (VAS) ecosystem by bringing relevant digital experiences within its customers' reach. The offer is available to all PTCL customers, regardless of their connection type. The subscription journey has also been digitalized to make the process seamless, while the payable amount is conveniently added to the customer's monthly PTCL bill. Commenting on the partnership, Amad Khan, Chief Marketing Officer, PTCL, said. – **APP**

Andreeva reaches WTA Finals semis, Svitolina fights back to beat Muchova

DNA

INDIAN WELLS, California: World number three Mirra Andreeva booked her place in the semifinals of the WTA Finals with a 6-4 6-0 win over Aryna Sabalenka on Wednesday, while Elina Svitolina battled back to beat Karolina Muchova and keep her hopes alive. Andreeva, the 19-year-old French Open champion, won her second straight Group 2 match and advanced as group winner after Svitolina earlier defeated Muchova 3-6 6-2 6-2. The result eliminated Muchova from semifinal contention, while Svitolina will face Sabalenka in Friday's final group match with the remaining place in the last four at stake. Sabalenka, the world number two and US Open runner-up, made the stronger start and broke Andreeva in the fourth game of a closely fought opening set to move 3-1 ahead. Andreeva responded immediately, however, winning three consecutive games to draw level at 4-4 before breaking Sabalenka again and serving out the set.

Kudus boost as desperate Ghana seek AFCON redemption

JOHANNESBURG: Troubled Ghana have received a boost with Tottenham Hotspur midfielder Mohammed Kudus available for a must-win Africa Cup of Nations qualifier against Somalia. Injuries ruled the 26-year-old out of the 2026 World Cup, and he also missed AFCON losses to the Ivory Coast and the Gambia two months ago. Veteran captain and striker Jordan Ayew, who plays for English second-tier club Sheffield United, is another returnee as Ghana seek redemption after a dismal start in Group C. – **DNA**

Saqib bags seven wickets on debut as Sri Lanka take slender lead

Saqib Khan claimed seven wickets for Pakistan, while Mohammad Abbas took two and Razaullah picked up one

RAWALPINDI: Sri Lanka were bowled out for 446 in their first innings against Pakistan on the fourth day of the Rawalpindi Test on Thursday, taking a 12-run lead as debutant Saqib Khan claimed seven wickets. Sri Lanka resumed innings on Day 4 at 404-4 but lost their remaining six wickets for 42 runs. Dhananjaya de Silva top-scored for Sri Lanka with 167 runs, while Kusal Mendis contributed 119. Saqib Khan claimed seven wickets for Pakistan, while Mohammad Abbas took two and Razaullah picked up one.

Sri Lanka dominated Day 3 as Dhananjaya and Mendis showed great staying power as both posted centuries to lift Sri Lanka to 404-4 at the end of play. Mendis became the first Sri Lankan to score a century in his maiden Test as captain, after taking the reins from De Silva before this series.

Their stand is a record for Sri Lanka against Pakistan, improving upon the 207 by Thilan Samaraweera and Tillakaratne Dilshan in Lahore in 2009. De Silva, lucky to be dropped on 38 by Saud Shakeel off pacer Razaullah, took full advantage of the reprieve and has so far struck 20 boundaries in his 246-ball knock. De Silva cracked a boundary off spinner Arafat Minhas to complete his 14th Test hundred, fourth against Pakistan and second at the venue. Mendis brought up his 11th century with a ramp boundary off Razaullah. Kamindu completed his eighth Test fifty before edging Abbas to wicket-keeper Ghazi Ghori to leave Sri Lanka 155-4. The second Test is also in Rawalpindi starting November 17, having been shifted from Lahore due to poor weather. – **DNA**

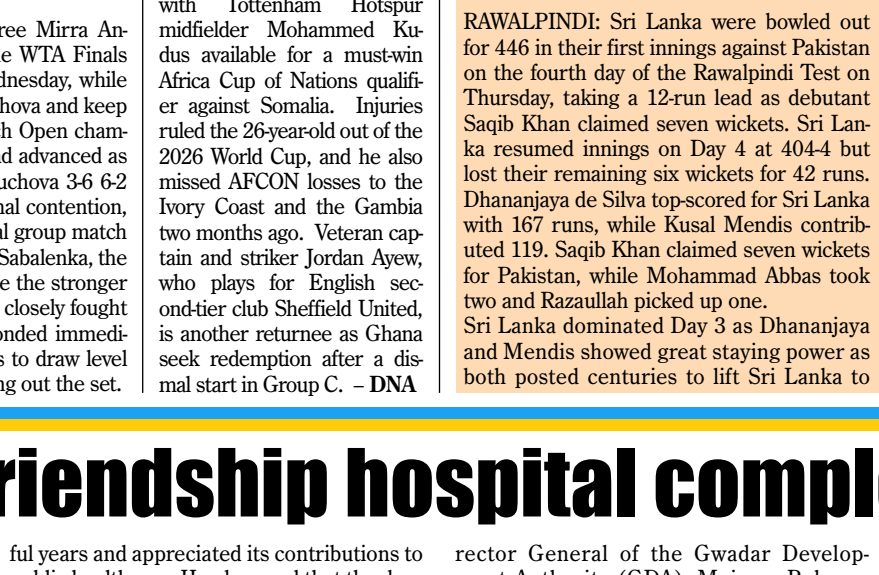
Pak-China Friendship hospital completes 4 years

ISLAMABAD: Pak-China Friendship Hospital has completed four years of successful healthcare services in Gwadar, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. The occasion also marked the formal inauguration of a state-of-the-art Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Operation Theatre and Emergency Department established in the hospital's newly constructed block. In order to celebrate four years of operation, a prestigious ceremony was held at the GDA Pak-China Friendship Hospital in Gwadar, managed by Indus Hospital & Health Network (IHHN) on November 11.

Speakers at the ceremony paid tribute to the hospital's remarkable healthcare contributions, describing it as a major medical facility and a beacon of hope for the people of Gwadar, Makran and other parts of Balochistan. On the occasion, Dr. Nasir Sheikh, Head of Campus, briefed participants on the hospital's four-year performance, medical facilities and services provided to patients. He revealed that more than 900,000 patients had received medical treatment and healthcare services at the hospital over the past four years.

He further stated that the hospital currently provides healthcare services through 15 departments, including emergency services, outpatient departments (OPD), labour rooms, a modern diagnostic laboratory and a blood bank, benefiting a large number of patients every day. Member of the Balochistan Provincial Assembly, Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman Baloch, congratulated the hospital administration on completing four successful years and appreciated its contributions to public healthcare. He observed that the days when residents of Gwadar had to travel to other cities for medical treatment were gradually becoming a thing of the past.

He expressed hope that other healthcare facilities across Gwadar district would also be entrusted to Indus Hospital & Health Network, following the successful model of the GDA Pak-China Friendship Hospital. This, he said, would significantly improve the overall healthcare system in the district, with the GDA Pak-China Friendship Hospital potentially serving as the central hub for these facilities. He assured the hospital administration of his full support and continued cooperation. Director General of the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), Moin ur Rehman Khan, said that GDA had extended full cooperation to the hospital since its establishment and would continue to support it in the future. He highlighted that the hospital was not only serving the people of Gwadar but also providing essential medical facilities to patients from across Balochistan, describing it as a significant achievement for the region. Speaking via video link, Dr. Abdul Bari Khan, President and CEO of Indus Hospital & Health Network, extended heartfelt congratulations to the hospital's staff, partners and the local community on the successful completion of four years of healthcare services.



He said that the fundamental objective of Indus Hospital was to provide the public with the highest standards of quality healthcare, ensuring that every individual could access the best possible medical treatment without barriers.

He added that the four-year journey reflected hard work, dedication and sincerity, and that the collective efforts of the entire team had brought the institution to its current position. He expressed confidence that the hospital would continue serving the public with the same commitment in the years ahead and achieve further milestones in the healthcare sector.

Patients who had received treatment at the hospital also shared their experiences during the ceremony. Master Habib ur Rehman, a resident of Kech district, and Zohur Ahmed, who had sustained injuries in an accident, said that after unsuccessful treatment in Karachi, they had received excellent and successful medical care from the doctors and healthcare staff at the GDA Pak-China Friendship Hospital.

They appreciated the professionalism and dedication of the medical team and expressed their gratitude for the treatment they received. Marking the completion of four years, the newly established ICU, Operation Theatre and Emergency Department in the hospital's new block were formally inaugurated by Gwadar MPA Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman Baloch and Major General Habib Nawaz, General Officer Commanding (GOC) Gwadar. – **APP**

London police arrest two on spying charges

FROM PAGE 01

counter-terrorism division. He said the pair were promised rewards to send intelligence back to Iran, while Sepahvand was willing to go beyond surveillance to commit serious violence against their targets. These included journalists for Iran International, Mojtaba Pourmohsen and Kambiz Hosseini, and a founder member of UK Lawyers for Israel, Jonathan Turner. Iran International is banned by the government in Tehran. The defendants were accused of visiting addresses linked to their targets, taking photos and videos, and using platforms such as ChatGPT to research them online. "Thankfully, the defendants were stopped before any attack could take place," Ferguson said.

PM honours fallen Kohat heroes

FROM PAGE 01

The prime minister also prayed for the elevation of the ranks of the deceased officers and strength and patience for their bereaved families. Commending the police for their response to the attack, Shehbaz said the killing of 18 militants during the operation demonstrated the professional capabilities, courage and unwavering commitment of the KP police in the fight against terrorism.

Imran Khan sisters released from jail

FROM PAGE 01

Noreen's son, Wali, also said on X that his mother and his aunt had been released from jail. "For 53 days they were held under Section 3 of the MPO. No charge. No trial. Two weeks ago, Noreen, in her seventies, was taken to a cardiac hospital. No one told us. Today they were let out. No reason given," he said. He called for a judge to "explain both decisions", but added: "No one can, because neither decision rested on law. Their jailing was arbitrary and so is their release."

Pak showcases mineral wealth

FROM PAGE 01

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah highlighted the province's mineral resources and the potential for investment in the energy and industrial sectors. He said Thar coal represented the world's sixth-largest coal reserve and offered significant opportunities for investors. "Thar coal has considerable potential for investors," Shah said, adding that Sindh was home to several types of minerals. He said the provincial government was developing an effective framework for mining and encouraging private-sector participation in the sector. CM Murad also said the province was using international investment to facilitate technology transfer and welcomed global investors interested in Sindh's mining sector. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said the security of investors was the government's foremost priority. "Our biggest priority is to provide security to investors," he said, adding that investors would be offered a one-window operation facility. He also invited investors to explore mineral resources in KP and said the province was keen to promote its mining sector. Governor Kundi further said the province was the country's second-largest gas-producing province. Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti also invited domestic and international investors to explore mining opportunities in the province. He said the province offered opportunities in minerals, as well as oil and gas exploration, and assured investors that their security was being ensured. He further urged national and international investors to come forward and invest in the province, saying security arrangements were being made for every investor.

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113% growth in sovereign Sukuk issuance: Aurangzeb

He stressed the need to actively promote Sukuk among international investors and diversify foreign portfolio investment into Shariah-compliant financial instruments, urging banks, primary dealers, brokers and other stakeholders to work collectively towards this objective

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday said Pakistan's sovereign Sukuk issuance had registered a significant 113 percent year-on-year increase, reflecting the country's expanding Islamic capital market and efforts to diversify government financing instruments. Addressing the ceremony marking the achievement of PKR 10 trillion in Sovereign Sukuk, alongside the issuance of Hybrid and short-term Sukuk, the minister said the issuance had grown from approximately Rs2 trillion in the previous year to the current milestone, while the five-year compound annual growth rate stood at around 22 percent compared to nearly Rs761 billion in 2020. He said the achievement was not merely about the volume of issuance but also reflected sustained efforts to diversify the Sukuk market and introduce greater flexibility in sovereign financing instruments. Highlighting key developments, Aurangzeb said the introduction of hybrid government Sukuk, combining different Shariah-compliant structures, would provide greater flexibility in utilizing government-owned assets. He described the introduction of short-term Sukuk, including instruments with three- to six-month maturities, as another important development, addressing a long-standing gap in the market and helping establish a comprehensive Shariah-compliant yield curve across different maturities. The minister, however, pointed out that foreign investment in Sukuk remained below expectations despite positive inflows through Special Convertible Rupee Accounts (SCRAs) into Treasury Bills and Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIBs). He stressed the need to actively promote Sukuk among international investors and diversify foreign portfolio investment into Shariah-compliant financial instruments, urging banks, primary dealers, brokers and other stakeholders to work collectively towards this objective. Aurangzeb also emphasized expanding retail participation through digital platforms, saying investment opportunities should not remain limited to institutional and large-scale investors. He said digital channels could enable individuals to participate in Sukuk investments with amounts as small as Rs5,000, making Islamic financial instruments more accessible to ordinary citizens and helping broaden the investor base. Referring to the development of the corporate debt market, he said efforts were also underway to promote listed Sukuk. In this regard, the Ministry of Power had issued the first mandate to National Debt Company, which was in the process of launching its first-ever listed Sukuk. He expressed hope that the successful issuance would establish a benchmark for other corporate entities to enter the market, adding that the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, State Bank of Pakistan, Pakistan Stock Exchange and Central Depository Company would need to collaborate in developing a comprehensive Sukuk market ecosystem. The finance minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to developing a deep, diversified and liquid Islamic capital market through active cooperation among the government, private sector, regulators and financial institutions. Broadening his remarks, Aurangzeb said the principles of learning, reflection, mutual understanding and cooperation were equally important for the development of Islamic finance and society. Referring to Quranic teachings, he emphasized the importance of understanding and reflecting upon religious guidance, while encouraging informed reasoning and respectful discussion among scholars and financial experts. He said Ijtihad had an important place in Islamic jurisprudence and that emerging economic and financial challenges required sound scholarship, informed discussions and thoughtful application of established principles of the Quran and Sunnah. The minister stressed that stakeholders should focus on common ground rather than differences, expressing confidence that continued collaboration and collective efforts would further strengthen Pakistan's Islamic capital market.—**DNA**

Briefs

Gold prices fall sharply by Rs10,900 per tola

ISLAMABAD: Gold prices witnessed a sharp decline in the domestic market on Thursday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola falling by Rs10,900 to Rs416,536, 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 Rs9,345 to Rs357,112, while the price of 10 grams of 22-karat gold declined by Rs8,581 to Rs327,364.
In the international market, the price of gold decreased by $109 to $3,940 per ounce, the association reported.
Meanwhile, silver prices also recorded a downward trend, with the price of 24-karat silver per tola declining by Rs190 to Rs5,578, while the price of 10 grams of 24-karat silver fell by Rs163 to Rs4,782.
The price of silver in the international market also decreased by $1.90 to reach $51 per ounce, the association added.—**APP**

SECP urges businesses to insure assets against fire-related risks

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), in collaboration with the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) on Thursday organized an awareness session on fire and property insurance, highlighting the importance of protecting business assets against fire-related risks and financial losses.
Held at RCCI premises, the session brought together members of the business community, traders and industrialists to discuss the financial impact of fire incidents and the role of insurance in protecting commercial properties, machinery, equipment and inventory, said a news release.
Discussions highlighted that fire incidents can result not only in property damage but also business interruption, loss of income and disruption of livelihoods.
The participants were encouraged to adopt effective fire prevention and safety measures and obtain adequate insurance coverage to protect their businesses against unforeseen losses.
Insurance industry representatives explained fire and property insurance coverage, key policy considerations, available protection options and the claims settlement process.
The session also covered Takaful as a Shariah-compliant alternative to conventional insurance and highlighted the importance of business interruption coverage in supporting financial recovery following insured losses.
An interactive question-and-answer session allowed participants to seek clarification on insurance and Takaful products, coverage options and claims-related matters.—APP

Rupee gains 01 paisa against Dollar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 01 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 276.61, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 276.62.
According the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the dollar's open-market buying and selling rates were Rs 277.30 and Rs 279.55, respectively. The Euro declined by Rs 1.51 to close at Rs 306.77, down from Rs 308.28 the previous day, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen decreased by 01 paisa and closed at Rs 1.73, while the British Pound came down by Rs 1.42 to Rs 367.09 from Rs 368.51 the previous day. The exchange rate of the Emirate Dirham and the Saudi Riyal remained unchanged to close at Rs 75.31 and Rs73.70, respectively.

Jam for global mining partnerships to unlock mineral wealth



ISLAMABAD: A delegation from Wood Mackenzie called on Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan at his office to discuss investment opportunities, international partnerships and preparations for the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum. During the meeting, the minister highlighted Pakistan's vast and largely untapped mineral potential, particularly in copper, antimony, iron ore, gemstones and other critical minerals. He emphasized that developing the mining sector could significantly boost exports, attract foreign investment and create new opportunities for industrial growth, said a release issued here on Thursday. Jam Kamal Khan stressed the importance of investor-friendly policies, competitive taxation, reduced import duties on specialized mining equipment and greater coordination between federal and provincial governments to facilitate international investors. The Minister particularly emphasized connecting small-scale Pakistani miners and existing leaseholders with major international mining companies through joint ventures, technology transfer and financial partnerships. Highlighting the Ministry of Commerce's role, he said tariff rationalization, trade agreements, improved market access and development of professional services could help Pakistan become a competitive destination for mineral investment. The Minister also advocated a phased approach to value addition, emphasizing that commercially viable mining operations would pave the way for future investment in copper smelting, refining and downstream manufacturing.—**DNA**

Migration to 'developed' countries declines for second year

PARIS: Migration to developed countries dwindled for a second year in a row in 2025, down 1.6 percent compared to the previous year, according to an OECD report published Thursday. While still experiencing high numbers, the 38 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries recorded 6.1 million new permanent immigrants in 2025, compared to 6.2 million the previous year. There has been a backlash in many Western countries against the arrival of irregular migrants fleeing conflict, authoritarian rule and economic hardship in their home countries. Legal humanitarian migration dropped "sharply" by 26 percent in 2025 compared with 2024, the report found. Labour migration increased by 13 percent. While 2025 marked an overall decline in migration.—**APP**

JazzWorld recognized for 5G leadership

ISLAMABAD : JazzWorld, Pakistan's leading digital services platform, has been named '5G Champion for Growth' in the Communication Service Provider category at The Fast Mode Awards 2026, recognizing its efforts to accelerate 5G deployment and expand next-generation connectivity across Pakistan. The recognition comes as part of an international awards program that attracted more than 500 entries across its categories, placing JazzWorld among this year's winners. It follows significant investments in spectrum, rapid network expansion, and a growing focus on delivering improved connectivity and customer experience through 5G. Since launching its 5G upgrade program in March 2026, Jazz has brought more than 1,200 5G sites on air, prioritizing Pakistan's ten largest commercial cities through a city-first, cluster-based deployment strategy. The expansion has been accompanied by a sharp increase in 5G usage, with daily data traffic rising more than sixfold from 14.8 TB in June to 89.3 TB in September 2026. The rollout is also delivering measurable network performance gains. Average 5G user throughput has reached up to 15 times that of the blended 4G experience, while growing 5G adoption is helping ease capacity pressures on the existing 4G network. Supporting this expansion is JazzWorld's significantly strengthened spectrum portfolio, which has grown from 94.4 MHz to 284.4 MHz across low, mid, and high frequency bands, providing greater capacity to meet Pakistan's increasing demand for high-speed connectivity. Khalid Shehzad, Chief Technology Officer, JazzWorld, said, "5G is an important milestone for Pakistan's digital infrastructure, but our ambition goes beyond network deployment. We are building the capacity to meet growing digital demand, improve everyday connectivity, and enable new opportunities for businesses and consumers. —**DNA**

Stay or leave? Ukrainians face hard choice ahead of what could be the war's toughest winter

KYIV: Matvii Yermolenko is 2, but he already knows the words for siren and air defense. This winter, his mother decided to take him out of Kyiv. "There is sadness, but even stronger is the understanding of what I have to do – leave," Matvii's mother, Kateryna Tsvihun, said, adding that they will come back in spring. "I cannot live without Kyiv and Ukraine. I am rooted here, my child is Ukrainian, and my husband is fighting for this." Ukrainians are bracing for what many expect to be the hardest winter of the war. Last year, heating disruptions left thousands of people in freezing apartments in Kyiv. Now, officials and analysts say, the badly damaged energy system is increasingly struggling to withstand attacks, putting the country's resilience to another test. With no end to the war in sight, many people are thinking only about getting through the coming months. Kyiv is already under strain. Since Aug. 22, not a single day has passed in the capital without an air raid threat, often followed by drone attacks during the day and missiles at night. Some residents have moved to other parts of the country or abroad for the winter. While it's impossible to calculate how many people left the capital, changes in the rental market offer a possible clue. "In September, we saw that the number of flats available to rent was increasing in Kyiv, whilst it was decreasing in a number of western cities," Liudmyla Kiriukhina, the head of the statistics department at LUN, a Ukrainian real estate platform, said. "This could have indicated that tenants were moving from the capital to the west of the country." Exploiting its advantage in jet-powered drones and ballistic missiles, Russia has expanded its targets in the city to include gas stations, data centers, warehouses, big-box stores and bridges that are crucial for civilian transport in a city divided by the Dnipro River. Electricity disruptions have caused problems on the subway, Kyiv's main transport artery, while water supply issues are increasingly common. Some residents have also criticized local authorities' winter preparations. But leaving costs money, and many more are staying, stocking up on power banks, water containers and portable gas stoves. Kateryna Tsvihun, 41, found last winter very difficult. She could not bear the thought of her son going through more power outages, let alone possibly losing heating as well. So she told her husband, a soldier since 2022, that she wanted to spend this winter elsewhere. She could not find a suitable option in Ukraine, but a Facebook group for mothers who like to travel led her to one in Albania. "The birth of a child is the ultimate game-changer," she said. "Before, no matter how scared I was, I stayed in Kyiv and did not even think about leaving." Russia recently struck an area near a subway station where she and Matvii often go for walks. "It's a bit scary to stay," she said. "But it's still our home, so we will come back this spring." She gave her portable power station, power banks and rechargeable lamps to relatives staying in the capital. For the trip, she bought a large, light-blue suitcase, packing only with practical things and a few of Matvii's small toys. "I see it as an opportunity to exhale, because the tiredness and pressure have been piling up over these years of war, the lonely waiting for my husband, and the attacks," she said. Ukraine's Energy Ministry said Wednesday that Russia had continued to attack power generation facilities and substations. "Attacks on the energy sector are not stopping," it said in a statement. "The situation in Kyiv is especially difficult right now: People and businesses are facing many hours of electricity and water outages," President Volodymyr Zelensky said. Repeated strikes and constant air raid alerts are making repairs take much longer, he said.—**DNA**

Syria trials probe military hospitals' role in detainee deaths

Medical and forensic records could help identify victims, establish causes of death, document torture and determine whether official reports accurately reflected the circumstances surrounding detainees' deaths. Mustafa said such evidence is essential to establishing responsibility and safeguarding victims' families' right to truth and justice.

DAMASCUS: Trials of former forensic officials are examining allegations that military hospitals helped conceal detainees' identities and falsify causes of death under Syria's deposed regime, a senior transitional justice official said Wednesday. Radif Mustafa, director of the Accountability Department at the National Commission for Transitional Justice, said the proceedings could expose the involvement of medical personnel in abuses against detainees and efforts to conceal them. Mustafa said Damascus' Fourth Criminal Court for Transitional Justice held 10 hearings on Tuesday, continuing existing trials and opening new cases involving alleged serious violations committed under the ousted regime. Among the cases was the trial of former Brig. Gen. Akram Al-Shaar, who headed the forensic medicine division at Tishreen Military Hospital. Al-Shaar faces charges of complicity in repeated acts of torture resulting in death, offenses classified as war crimes and crimes against humanity, Mustafa said.
The indictment was read in his presence, and prosecutors submitted a six-page charge sheet identifying prosecution witnesses. Al-Shaar denied the charges and retracted his initial statements. The court ordered witnesses to appear and adjourned the hearing until Nov. 18.
Mustafa said the case was significant because of Al-Shaar's alleged role in leading three-member forensic committees responsible for examining the bodies of deceased detainees. The proceedings could shed light on how forensic personnel handled bodies, established identities, documented signs of torture and prepared death reports, he said.
The case is part of a broader investigation into alleged abuses linked to Hospital 601, Tishreen Military Hospital and Harasta Hospital, including the concealment of detainees' identities and remains and the issuance of potentially falsified death reports. The court also heard proceedings involving former Col. and forensic physician Ayman Khallu, highlighting investigations into the possible involvement of medical personnel in abuses committed in detention facilities and military hospitals. Mustafa said the trials aim to establish individual responsibility while uncovering the institutions and practices that enabled violations or helped conceal them. He stressed that accountability must be based on documented evidence and fair judicial procedures rather than defendants' former positions alone. Investigations into detainees who died in detention centers and military hospitals remain central to efforts to determine the fate of missing persons, he said. Medical and forensic records could help identify victims, establish causes of death, document torture and determine whether official reports accurately reflected the circumstances surrounding detainees' deaths. Mustafa said such evidence is essential to establishing responsibility and safeguarding victims' families' right to truth and justice.—**DNA**

Israeli strike near Al-Shifa Hospital kills one

GAZA CITY: One Palestinian was killed and others were injured when Israeli warplanes struck a vehicle near the entrance gate of Al-Shifa Hospital in western Gaza City on Thursday, the Palestinian news agency WAFA reported. Earlier on Thursday, an Israeli strike killed six people and wounded around 20 at Nasser Hospital in southern Gaza, a civil defense official told AFP.
The Gaza Strip's civil defense, a rescue agency operating under Hamas authority, said the bodies of those killed and "more than" 20 people wounded in the strike had been recovered from a building at the medical complex. "The death toll from the Israeli strike inside Nasser Medical Complex, west of Khan Younis in southern Gaza, has risen to six," civil defense spokesperson Mahmoud Bassal told AFP. Nasser Hospital confirmed the six deaths in a statement.
A spokesperson for Israel's military said they were checking for information on the incident when asked for comment by AFP.
Israel and Hamas have accused each other of violating the ceasefire that came into effect in October 2025, after two years of war triggered by an attack of unprecedented scale carried out by the Palestinian Islamist movement against Israel on October 7, 2023. On Tuesday, Israeli forces killed seven people, including a 13-year-old boy, in the Gaza Strip, according to local emergency services, while the Israeli military said it had targeted "military operatives." More than 1,590 Palestinians have been killed since the start of the ceasefire, according to the Gaza Ministry of Health, which operates under Hamas authority and whose figures are considered reliable by the UN. During the same period, the Israeli military has reported the loss of seven soldiers, as well as one civilian contractor.—**APP**

Erdogan urges return to diplomacy to end Iran-US conflict

ANTALYA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday said diplomacy should resume "without further delay" to end the US-Iran war after talks with his Iranian counterpart.
Erdogan met Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of UN climate conference in the Turkish province of Antalya, his office said. During their discussion, Erdogan underscored "the importance of getting to the negotiating table without further delay" and said Turkiye would continue to support efforts aimed at securing peace. "Common ground for agreement must be strengthened and diplomacy given a chance," he said, expressing hope that the conflict with the US "would end as soon as possible."
The Middle East war broke out on February 28 with US-Israeli strikes that killed Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.
Iran responded by launching missiles and drones at countries across the region, while the militant groups it backs in Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq also entered the fray.
In an address to the UN climate summit on Wednesday, Pezeshkian accused the United States and Israel of inflicting severe environmental damage during attacks on the Islamic republic. "The recent criminal and illegal aggression against Iran by America and the Zionist regime... has inflicted severe damage on the environment, releasing massive quantities of pollutants and greenhouse gases into the atmosphere," he said.
Diplomatic efforts led by Qatar and Pakistan have sought to negotiate an end to the war.
Tehran wants Washington to accept a raft of demands including unfreezing assets and lifting sanctions in return for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, the vital energy conduit it has blockaded since the start of the conflict._**APP**

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Briefs

White House confronts Democrats over planned probes

WASHINGTON: The White House has issued a warning to Democrats over their planned probes into the Trump administration, going as far as claiming that such investigations — a standard oversight function of Congress — may amount to "blatant criminality."

White House counsel Will Scharf issued the warning in a letter dated Monday to Rep. Robert Garcia, the top Democrat on the House Oversight Committee.

Garcia most likely would chair the powerful panel in the new Democratic-controlled Congress that is seated in January. Garcia warned Trump officials to "lawyer up" as his party was on the way to stunning victories in last week's midterm election.

In response, Scharf wrote that "threats to executive branch officials designed to deter them from public service, or process designed merely to abuse or instill fear in the recipient may cross the line into blatant criminality." The letter's existence was first reported by Punchbowl News.

It's just the latest shot across the bow as the White House prepares to square off against newly empowered Democrats in the House and Senate next year, a showdown with major implications for congressional authority and the balance of power between the branches of government. – **APP**

Indonesia's VP quits as cracks deepen

JAKARTA: Indonesian Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka resigned on Thursday amid a scandal over his academic qualifications, adding to a series of political upheavals in Southeast Asia's largest economy.

The 39-year-old son of former President Joko Widodo formally delivered his resignation letter to the People's Consultative Assembly, or MPR, the country's highest legislative body, setting in motion a process to elect a successor who will serve the remainder of the term ending in 2029.

"During the meeting, Gibran conveyed the reason he came to meet with the leadership of the People's Consultative Assembly, which is to deliver a letter of resignation from his role as the vice president of Indonesia," MPR Speaker Ahmad Muzani told reporters.

MPR leaders will meet to prepare to convene a session to determine the next steps, which will involve the president nominating two candidates. "Under our constitution, there are 60 days following the resignation to select a vice president to replace Gibran," Muzani added. – **APP**

France refuse entry to Israeli settler chief Yossi

LONDON: French authorities last week denied entry to Israeli far-right settler leader Yossi Dagan due to his activities in Israeli settlement expansion and violations of Palestinian rights.

Dagan's office said on Wednesday that he was questioned by border control officials at Charles de Gaulle Airport and was refused entry due to his role in the building of 35 settlements in the northern occupied West Bank and for promoting the reestablishment of illegal Jewish settlements in Gaza.

Dagan heads the Shomron Regional Council, one of six bodies that manage settlement affairs in the West Bank. He has recently spearheaded the resettlement of Ganim, Sa-Nur and Homesh, which were evacuated in 2005.

Dagan said that he was questioned by authorities at the airpot and surprised by their decision to refuse him entry, the Israeli news website Ynet and other media reported.

During questioning he boasted that he had established 50 settlements, rather than the 35 suggested by a border control officer, Ynet said. – **APP**

Pakistan, Malaysia reaffirm strategic partnership

In his welcoming remarks, the High Commissioner said the gathering was more than an expression of appreciation, reflecting Malaysia's commitment to building a better world founded on peace, progress and prosperity



Saifullah Ansar

ISLAMABAD: The High Commission of Malaysia in Pakistan, H.E. Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan hosted an Appreciation Hi-Tea, bringing together diplomats, Pakistani government officials, business leaders, think tank representatives and friends of Malaysia to celebrate longstanding friendship, strengthen partnerships and acknowledge continued cooperation between Malaysia and Pakistan.

The event was hosted by, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, H.E. Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, who welcomed guests and expressed gratitude for their continued support and contributions to the High Commission's diplomatic, economic and cultural engagements. In his welcoming remarks, the High Commissioner said the gathering was more than an expression of appreciation, reflecting Malaysia's commitment to building a better world founded on peace, progress and prosperity.

He reiterated that dialogue, peaceful coexistence, negotiation and mutual understanding remain central pillars of Malaysia's foreign policy. He also extended heartfelt appreciation to the Government and people of Pakistan for their hospitality and support towards the High Commission and the Malaysian community.

He particularly acknowledged the cooperation extended by Pakistan's Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Interior, alongside provincial authorities.

Highlighting recent diplomatic engagements, Dato' Azhar referred to the visit of ASEAN Heads of Mission to Sindh, which included meetings with the Governor and Chief Minister of Sindh, interactions with Karachi's business community and engagements with university students. He emphasised the importance of involving young people in discussions on economic development, regional security and peace.

Speaking about Malaysia-Pakistan relations, he recalled the historic friendship between the two nations, noting Pakistan's early recognition of Malaysia's independence in August 1957 and the elevation of bilateral ties to a Strategic Partnership in 2019. He also recognised the valuable contributions of Pakistanis to Malaysia over the decades, particularly the approximately 100,000-member Pakistani community residing in the country.

On regional cooperation, the High Commissioner commended the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad for its active engagement with Pakistani institutions and stakeholders.

He also highlighted the anticipated maiden visit of the ASEAN, Secretary-General to Pakistan later in November, describing it as an important opportunity to deepen regional engagement. With ASEAN now comprising 11 member states, including Timor-Leste, and representing a combined economy of approximately USD 4 trillion, Dato' Azhar underscored the significant potential for stronger economic cooperation with Pakistan, a country of around 250 million people.

He further promoted Malaysia as a leading destination for tourism, education and investment under the Visit Malaysia campaign, extended through 2027. He noted that Malaysia welcomed approximately 42 million international visitor arrivals in 2025 and was targeting 47 million in 2026.

Encouraging more Pakistani visitors to explore Malaysia, he highlighted the country's rich cultural heritage, diverse attractions and renowned hospitality.

He also recalled his participation as chief guest at an event organised by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Kuala Lumpur, reflecting the growing business connections between the two countries. Education was another key area highlighted during his address. The High Commissioner noted that approximately 5,000 Pakistani students are currently pursuing higher education in Malaysia, making Pakistan one of the significant contributors to Malaysia's international student community. He encouraged more Pakistani students to benefit from Malaysia's quality educational institutions, cultural similarities and welcoming environment.

He also identified the halal industry as a promising avenue for bilateral collaboration, highlighting Malaysia's internationally recognised halal ecosystem, expertise in food technology and experience in halal product development. He said these strengths could complement Pakistan's agricultural and food production capabilities, creating new opportunities for trade and investment. Towards the conclusion of his address, Dato' Azhar thanked the officers and staff of the High Commission for their dedication and efforts in organising the event and delivering various diplomatic, economic and cultural initiatives throughout the year.

Flynas Jeddah-Sialkot flights from Nov 29

SIALKOT: Saudi airline Flynas will commence flight operations from Sialkot International Airport on November 29, 2026, further expanding the airport's international connectivity.

According to Sialkot International Airport Limited (SIAL), the airline will operate flights on the Jeddah-Sialkot-Jeddah route, offering passengers additional travel options between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The new service is expected to benefit business travellers, pilgrims and people visiting family in Saudi Arabia.

SIAL said the addition of Flynas reflected growing international airline confidence in Sialkot's aviation potential and rising demand for air travel in the region.

The airport management reiterated its commitment to improving passenger facilities and services while strengthening Sialkot's international connectivity. – **APP**

8 killed in Brooklyn building collapse

NEW YORK: Death toll of a three-storey building collapse in Brooklyn, New York, rose to eight as firefighters kept digging through the rubble to find others who may be trapped beneath the wreckage, Mayor Zohran Mamdani said.

At least 17 people were hospitalized with injuries, including four in critical condition after the building came down at the edge of a construction site Wednesday afternoon. The New York City Fire Department confirmed the additional deaths, and the other two deaths were announced Wednesday.

Scores of firefighters and police officers wielding pickaxes and power saws clambered over the rubble pile overnight, punching holes through the ruins to pull dust-covered people from beneath piles of twisted wood and brick.

Rescuers used dogs to sniff for survivors. "This has been an incredibly challenging and fast-moving situation, with precarious wreckage to navigate and dangerous voids beneath the surface," Mamdani said at a news conference Wednesday. "This type of rescue is exactly what the FDNY trains for."

The cause of the collapse was under investigation, but New York City's buildings commissioner, Ahmed Tigani, noted that when the building fell, construction workers were excavating an empty lot next door for a new building. Much of the rubble from the collapsed building — a mixed-use structure with apartments sitting atop ground-floor commercial space — wound up in a huge pile inside the construction pit. – **APP**

JD Vance considers direct diplomacy with Iran to end war

The WSJ said Vance sent a letter in October to Iran's secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Mohsen Rezaei, requesting a meeting

DUBAI: US Vice President JD Vance is contemplating talks with a senior Iranian security official as Washington seeks a way out of the war with Iran, reported the Wall Street Journal on Wednesday. According to the report, US President Donald Trump told foreign counterparts he was open to Vance taking the lead in renewed negotiations with Tehran, giving his vice president authority to pursue diplomatic efforts. Washington and Tehran are communicating through mediators and regional allies about the next steps, according to the report, but no official date has been set yet.

The WSJ said Vance sent a letter in October to Iran's secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Mohsen Rezaei, requesting a meeting. The report notes that the move is a high-stakes gamble for Vance, where failed talks could leave him tied to a diplomatic breakdown, and a successful deal could boost his standing for helping end an unpopular conflict.

It also said Trump expressed skepticism regarding the June framework agreement brokered with Vance's participation, reportedly contending that it enabled Iran to recuperate and accrue oil revenues prior to the imposition of a US naval blockade.

A White House official disputed assertions that Trump harbored doubts about the accord, stating that negotiators operated in good faith. Vance has publicly connected the ongoing war in Iran to the Republican Party's underwhelming performance in last week's midterm elections, pointing to intensifying political pressure on the administration to resolve the conflict. – **APP**

Minerals, mining to drive Pak's eco growth: Aurangzeb

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday said the minerals and mining sector would play a crucial role in driving Pakistan's sustainable economic growth, boosting exports and attracting foreign investment.

Addressing the two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 (PMIF26), he said the country had made significant progress towards macroeconomic stability and was now focused on achieving sustainable, export-led growth through structural reforms and investment in productive sectors.

Highlighting the government's economic achievements, the finance minister said Pakistan had reduced its twin deficit from around 12.5 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) a few years ago to 2.6 per cent by the end of June 2026. He said the fiscal deficit had reached a 22-year low, while the country had recorded primary surpluses for three consecutive years.

Aurangzeb said Pakistan had also strengthened its external position, increasing foreign exchange reserves to US$ 21.5 billion, equivalent to slightly more than three months of import cover. He described the reserves as the highest in the country's history and said the improved fiscal and external buffers had helped Pakistan withstand economic shocks, including the October 2025 floods and the ongoing conflict in the Gulf region. The minister said international confidence in Pakistan's economy was reflected in three credit rating upgrades since April 2025 and the country's successful return to international capital markets.

He recalled that Pakistan had raised US$ 750 million through a private placement in April 2026, accessed the Chinese capital market through its inaugural Panda bond in May, and issued $3 billion in Eurobonds in September after a gap of around four years.\

He said the Eurobond issue received bids worth twice the amount offered, with participation from major investors in Europe, the United States, Asia and Middle East. – **APP**

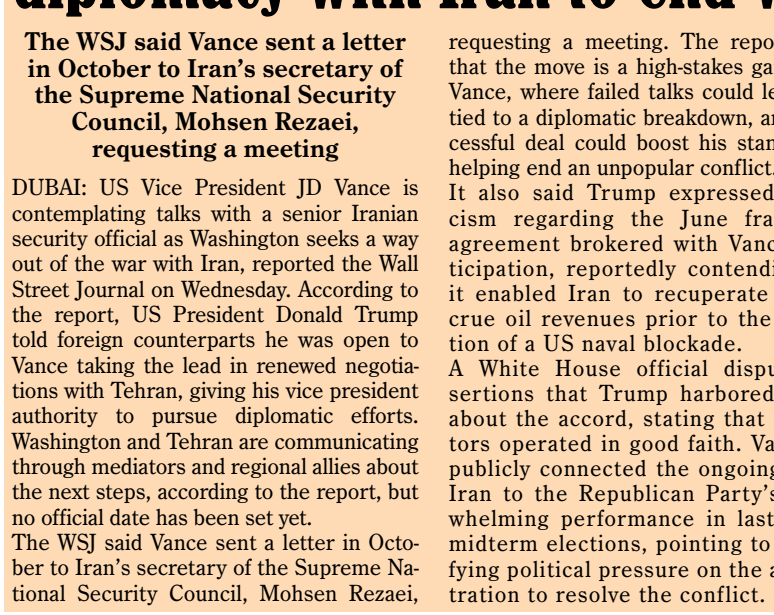
Pakistan, Iraq reaffirm longstanding bilateral ties

ANTALYA: Pakistan and Iraq on Thursday reaffirmed the longstanding brotherly relations between Pakistan and Iraq, rooted in shared faith, historical bonds and strong people-to-people contacts. In a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President of the Republic of Iraq Nizar Mohammed Saeed Amidi, on sidelines of 31st COP31, the two leaders expressed satisfaction over the positive momentum in bilateral relations, and underscored the importance of sustained high-level exchanges and institutional engagement.

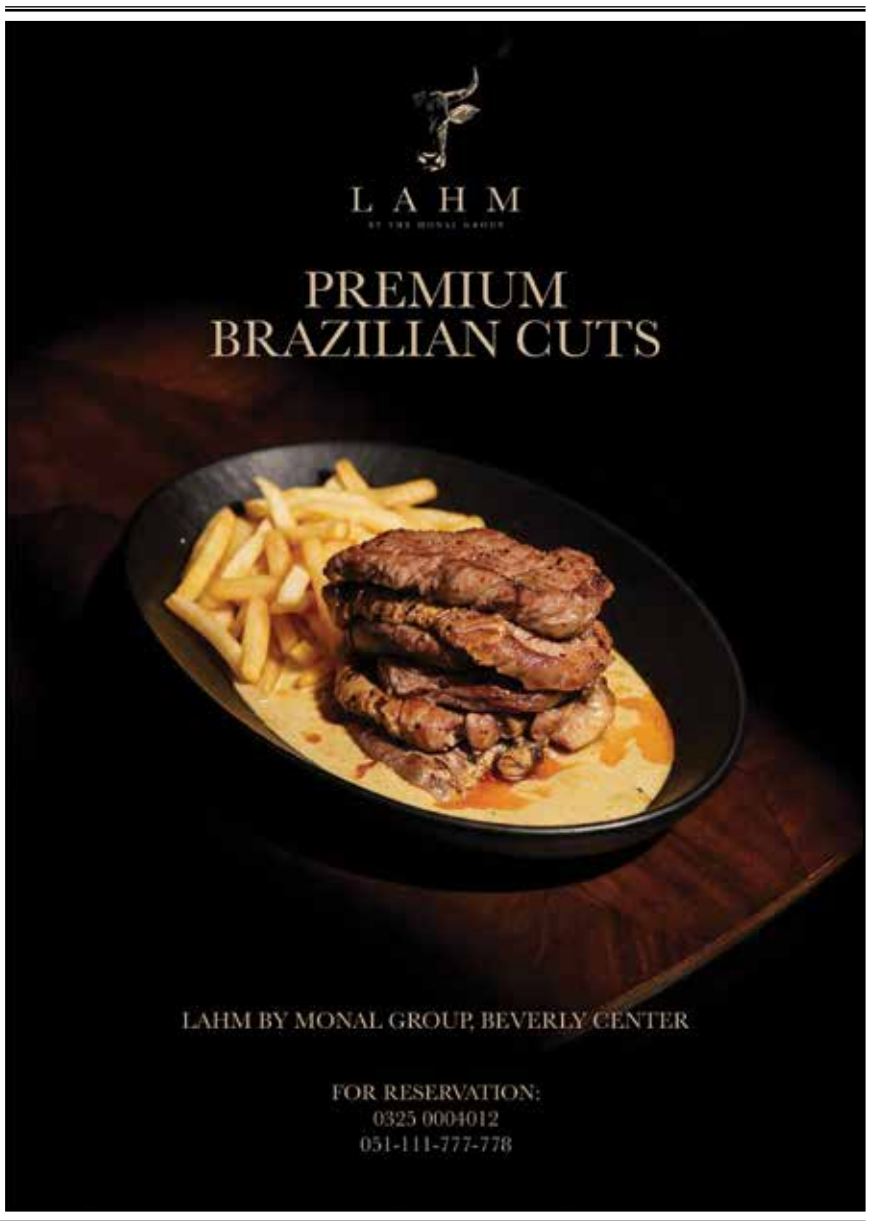
On the occasion, the prime minister also extended an invitation to President Amidi to visit Pakistan at a mutually convenient time. He congratulated President Amidi and the brotherly people of Iraq on successful conduct of parliamentary elections and formation of the new Government. He reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity, national unity and stability.

The two sides reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation, with particular focus on trade, investment, manpower, reconstruction, agriculture, and defence. The prime minister appreciated Iraq's facilitation for Pakistani Zaireen. The two leaders also exchanged views on regional and international developments and reaffirmed their commitment for close coordination at multilateral fora.

Earlier, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a bilateral meeting with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Türkiye on Thursday on the sidelines of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP31 Leaders Summit. The two leaders reaffirmed the deep-rooted, historic and brotherly ties between Pakistan and Türkiye and expressed satisfaction at the positive trajectory of bilateral relations, said a Prime Minister's Office news release. They held wide-ranging discussions on ways to further enhance cooperation, with particular focus on trade and investment, defence collaboration, energy cooperation and connectivity. Both leaders stressed the importance of expediting the implementation of ongoing initiatives and exploring new opportunities to deepen economic engagement.



ANTALYA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a bilateral meeting with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Türkiye on Thursday on the sidelines of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP31 Leaders Summit. – DNA



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