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Lana enters race for the post of UN Secy General

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Gilani calls for global collaboration



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First lady opens grand festival



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Investment forum ends

PM Shehbaz invites foreign firms to Pak

Shehbaz Sharif declared that "Your safety is our safety," and pledged to address concerns and facilitate investment in the mining and minerals sector. He stressed that Pakistan must move beyond exporting unprocessed resources and establish facilities to convert raw materials into finished and semi-finished products, generating greater economic value, employment, technical expertise and technology transfer

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 concluded in Islamabad. Addressing the concluding day of the forum, attended by over 10,000 participants from more than 60 countries, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif invited international investors to explore Pakistan's mineral wealth. He also assured the investors of investment protection and government's support, while calling for a shift from exporting raw minerals to developing domestic processing and refining facilities.

Shehbaz Sharif declared that "Your safety is our safety," and pledged to address concerns and facilitate investment in the mining and minerals sector. He stressed that Pakistan must move beyond exporting unprocessed resources and establish facilities to convert raw materials into finished and semi-finished products, generating greater economic value, employment, technical expertise and technology transfer.

Referring to a Goldman Sachs projection that Pakistan could become the world's sixth-largest economy by 2075, the Prime Minister said he hoped the country would achieve the milestone earlier than 2050. The Prime Minister, accompanied by Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, also inaugurated the National Minerals

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Islamabad to become cashless city

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to make the federal capital the country's first fully cashless city, setting Dec 31 as the deadline for the transition. The decision was taken at an important meeting on the Cashless Capital project chaired by State Minister for Interior Tallal Chaudry, in Islamabad on Friday, according to an official statement by the Ministry of Interior on X.

Speaking on the occasion, Chaudhry said consultation and suggestions from all stakeholders were important for the success of the project, the statement said. "The implementation of the project is under way at a fast pace on the special instructions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi," Chaudhry was quoted as saying. Naqvi had promised the prime minister that Islamabad would be made Pakistan's first cashless

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ISLAMABAD: Founder and Executive Co-Chairman of Ivanhoe Mines, Mr. Robert Friedland called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad. – DNA

Copper, gold deposits identified

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Mining company National Resources Limited (NRL) on Friday announced that it had identified copper and gold deposits at eight sites in Balochistan's Chagai district, following nearly 25,000 metres of drilling that yielded encouraging results.

The company is now moving towards its first estimate of the area's mineral resources. One of the drill holes revealed a 295-metre stretch of mineral deposits containing 0.43 per cent copper and 0.13 grams of gold per tonne. Within this, a 132-metre section showed a higher copper concentration of 0.83pc, National Resources Limited Chairman Muhammad Ali Tabba told the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026.

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ISPR says

Security forces neutralise 74 India-backed terrorists in KP, Balochistan IBOs

Military says intelligence-based operations were carried out in Quetta, Mir Ali and Orakzai areas

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Security forces have neutralised at least 74 India-backed terrorists in multiple intelligence-based operations (IBOs) carried out in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Friday. The military's media wing, in a statement, said that IBOs were carried out in the Kurram area of Quetta district, as well as in Mir Ali and Orakzai areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The ISPR said security forces conducted a comprehensive intelligence-based area sanitisation operation in the Kurram area of Quetta district against Fitna al-Khawarij and Fitna al-Hindustan militants from November 3 onwards as part of their ongoing counterterrorism campaign in Balochistan.

"During the conduct of these intelligence-based operations, multiple terrorist hideouts were effectively engaged, and after multiple engagements, 31 India-sponsored Khawarij were sent to hell. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the Khawarij locations," the ISPR said. In separate IBOs, the military said security forces neutralised 43 India-backed terrorists in Mir Ali and Orakzai areas over the past 48 hours

"In a determined effort to eliminate terrorist threats and dismantle the terrorist networks, security forces are conducting a series of intelligence-based operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. These operations have been further expanded to the areas of Mir Ali and Orakzai," it said.

"Over the last 48 hours, during the conduct of these series of IBOs, troops effectively engaged multiple khwarij locations. Following intense and fierce exchanges of fire, 35 khwarij belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna-al Khwarij have been neutralised in Mir Ali and eight khwarij were sent to hell in Orakzai, thereby inflicting a significant blow to the khwarij networks operating in these areas," the ISPR added.

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Briefs

Bus, truck collision in India kills 24

NEWS DESK

GUWAHATI, India: A bus collided with a container truck in the northeastern Indian state of Assam on Friday, killing at least 24 people and 11 injuring others, authorities said. The crash occurred on a highway near Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for its one-horned rhinos, about 225 kilometers (140 miles) east of the state capital, Dispur. Children and the bus driver were among the dead, officials said. Deeply anguished by the tragic accident in Kaziranga, Assam. The loss of precious lives in this unfortunate incident is heartbreaking and deeply saddening. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. No words can truly ease the pain of losing loved ones. May they find the strength and courage to endure this difficult time.

Turkey, Qatar sign mutual defence pact

ISTANBUL: Turkiye and Qatar signed a mutual defense agreement on Friday, the office of President Tayyip Erdogan said, as the Turkish leader met the Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani in Istanbul. "President Erdogan stated that we would continue working together to prevent the resurgence of war in the Gulf region and establish a basis for dialogue and achieve peace," the presidency said in a statement on X, which did not provide details on the defense accord. The statement cited him as saying that Turkiye and Qatar were working to develop and diversify their energy partnership, and that their cooperation in the defense industry would continue to grow. "President Erdogan stated that the Mutual Defense Agreement signed today by Turkiye and Qatar would add another dimension to our brotherhood," it added.

CDF Asim Munir says

Pakistan aiming to become competitive destination for long-term investment

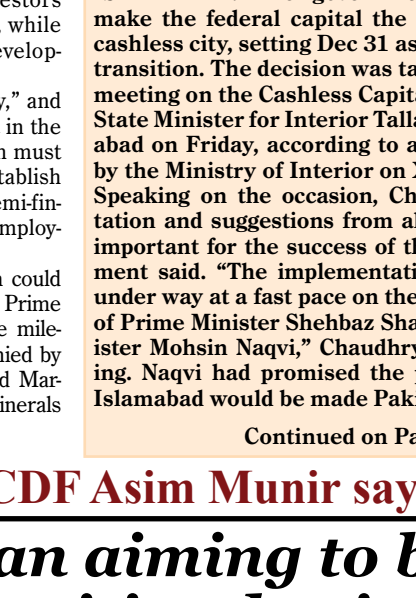
CDF Munir said all possible measures were being taken to ensure the security of the entire mining ecosystem. He said mines and miners, investments, industries, projects and all associated people would be provided adequate protection

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir said on Friday that Pakistan was aiming to become a competitive destination for long-term mineral investment.

He made the remarks while addressing the participants of the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 in Islamabad, according to state-run Radio Pakistan. Delegations, exhibitors and attendees have arrived from across the world to attend the event.

As the two-day event opened on Thursday, Pakistan showcased its vast mineral resources, ranging from coal and salt to gold and critical minerals, to attract international investment, promising predictable, investor-friendly policies, institutional support and security.



On Friday, CDF Munir said all possible measures were being taken to ensure the security of the entire mining ecosystem. He said mines and miners, investments, industries, projects and all associated people would be provided adequate protection.

He added that harnessing Pakistan's mineral wealth was a collective national objective. He also emphasised that the country's goal was not merely to export raw materials but to develop the entire value chain, including refining and manufacturing, it added. CDF Munir also said that Pakistan sought to foster long-term partnerships that created sustainable economic value for the country and its partners. "He stressed that mineral development must benefit local communities, adding that people living in mineral-rich areas

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Bombing in Russia kills officer

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: A car bombing on Friday in Moscow injured an adviser to Ukraine's former prime minister in the second such attack in as many days and part of a series linked to the conflict with Russia's neighbor.

The explosion struck a car driven by Sergei Zavorotnyi, who previously worked as an adviser to former Prime Minister Mykola Azarov, according to Russia's Investigative Committee. Zavorotnyi was hospitalized with injuries, the committee added. It didn't identify possible suspects pending a criminal inquiry. Azarov served as prime minister under Ukraine's Moscow-friendly

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IHC suspends Islamabad LG elections schedule, issues stay order

IHC judge Justice Umair Majeed Malik issues order, seeks ECP's response by November 26

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has suspended the local government election schedule in the federal capital by issuing a stay order against the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) notification dated October 21. IHC judge Justice Umair Majid Malik issued the order. The court also issued a notice to the ECP and sought its response by November 26.

The term of the last elected local government system in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) expired in February 2021, but owing to diverse legal and administrative reasons, fresh elections could not be held hitherto. The statutory requirement under Section 219(4) of the Elections Act, 2017, is that the Election Commission is required to hold new local government elections within 120 days of the term's expiration.

The development comes a day after Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja accused the federal government of trying to sabotage the upcoming local government polls in the federal capital and made it clear that the electoral exercise would be held as per schedule. He made this accusation as he headed a three-member bench and

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Japan announces US$ 4.3 million grant to support polio programme

Pakistan is one of only two countries in the world where wild poliovirus transmission has not yet been interrupted. The country has made significant progress in reducing polio transmission, with cases declining from 74 in 2024 to 31 in 2025, and 8 cases reported so far in 2026. Six of the eight cases in 2026 have been reported from south Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where insecurity and access constraints continue to pose significant challenges to reaching every child

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has announced a new US$ 4.3 million grant to procure essential oral polio vaccines as part of its continued support to Pakistan's polio eradication efforts. The Pakistan Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) will use these funds to procure more than 28 million vaccine doses to support polio campaigns in 2027. Pakistan is one of only two countries in the world where wild poliovirus transmission has not yet been interrupted. The country has made significant progress in reducing polio transmission, with cases declining from 74 in 2024 to 31 in 2025, and 8 cases reported so far in 2026. Six of the eight cases in 2026 have been reported from south Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where insecurity and access constraints continue to pose significant challenges to reaching every child.

The continued detection of poliovirus underscores the need for sustained efforts to interrupt transmission everywhere and protect every child. In an urgent effort to eradicate the incurable disease, the Government of Pakistan, with support from partners, has developed the National Emergency Action Plan 2026–27 under the Roadmap to Zero, setting out a focused approach to interrupting poliovirus transmission by the end of 2027. Each national immunization drive targets over 45 million children under five, supported by more than 400,000 frontline health workers who play a vital role in reaching communities and delivering vaccines.

"The Government of Japan's contribution comes at a critical time as Pakistan intensifies its efforts to interrupt poliovirus transmission and end this preventable disease," said Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq, the Prime Minister's Focal Person on Polio Eradication. "Every dose of vaccine supported through Japan's contribution brings us closer to a polio-free Pakistan. We are grateful to the Government and people of Japan for their continued commitment and partnership in Pakistan's efforts to eradicate polio and protect every child." His Excellency Akamatsu Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, reaffirmed Japan's continued commitment to supporting Pakistan's health priorities.



"Since 1996, Japan has consistently supported Pakistan's polio eradication efforts, working closely with UNICEF and other partners. Today's new grant, which has been increased from last year, demonstrates Japan's continued support for our shared goal of achieving a polio-free Pakistan" he said. "Japan fully supports Pakistan's determination to achieve the goal of interrupting poliovirus transmission by the end of 2027." The newly signed grant will provide critical funding to the PEI for the procurement and delivery of polio vaccines, supporting ongoing progress to interrupt the spread of poliovirus and sustain the gains achieved in recent years.

"Let us continue working together until the day when no child suffers from polio," said Mr. Yusuke Shinozaki, Chief Representative, JICA Pakistan Office. "We sincerely commend the strong commitment of the Government of Pakistan, the dedication of frontline health workers who continue to serve communities under challenging circumstances, and the tireless efforts of UNICEF and all other partners to deliver life-saving vaccines to every child."

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PHF elections to be held soon: Rana Sanaullah

Recalling Pakistan's glorious hockey history, the PM's adviser said the country once ruled world hockey, but the current performance of the national team had become deeply disappointing

Ansar Bhatti



ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister Rana Sanaullah has announced that the ad-hoc system in the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) will be abolished soon, paving the way for the appointment of a permanent president through elections. Addressing in the signing ceremony of an agreement between the Pakistan Hockey Federation and the International Hockey Federation (FIH), Rana Sanaullah said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had issued clear directives to ensure that Pakistan hockey regains its former stature. He added that the government would extend all possible support and resources for the promotion of the national game, including preparations for the upcoming FIH Nations Cup. Recalling Pakistan's glorious hockey history, the PM's adviser said the country once ruled world hockey, but the current performance of the national team had become deeply disappointing. He said the results of Pakistan's hockey matches were painful to hear, particularly when countries that were once relatively unknown in international hockey had moved ahead of Pakistan. He regretted that internal differences and disputes had severely damaged the national game, stressing that only individuals with commitment, passion and the required capabilities should be entrusted with the responsibility of running hockey affairs. Rana Sanaullah said the government had appointed Mohiuddin Wani as the ad-hoc president of the Pakistan Hockey Federation, but the federation must have a permanent president. He confirmed that elections would be held soon to end the ad-hoc arrangement and establish a regular leadership structure. He further emphasised that the government would not appoint anyone who lacked the ability and commitment to lead the federation. The objective, he said, was to bring forward competent leadership capable of taking practical steps to revive Pakistan hockey and restore its standing on the international stage.

KP disaster authority strengthens emergency response system, briefs adviser

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has strengthened its emergency response mechanism through modern monitoring systems, digital technology, early warning systems and improved disaster preparedness across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The authority informed Adviser to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations and Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Samar Bilour during her visit to the PDMA provincial headquarters on Friday.

During the visit, she reviewed the modern monitoring system at the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) and received a briefing on real-time data, digital dashboards and emergency response mechanisms.

The officials informed her that the PDMA remained active across all districts to deal with natural disasters and ensure an immediate response to emergencies. Its toll-free helpline 1700 operates round the clock to provide public information, guidance and address complaints. The authority has also identified 185 safe camp sites across the province to protect people during emergencies. Essential relief supplies have been stored at the Humanitarian Response Facility in Jalozai to meet emergency requirements. Bilour also received a detailed briefing on the digital compensation system, financial assistance for disaster-affected people, relief operations and rehabilitation projects. The officials highlighted the introduction of modern technology and early warning systems to ensure timely identification of natural hazards and an effective response. Speaking on the occasion, Bilour said Pakistan's Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE) Framework was the first of its kind in South Asia. _APP

Governor KP emphasizes youth empowerment

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday emphasized the importance of empowering the province's talented youth through quality education international scholarships technological advancement and employment opportunities. He expressed these views during a meeting with Dr. Najeeb Ullah Marwat Member (Science, Technology, ICT & Innovation) Planning Commission of Pakistan. Prof. Dr. Aurangzeb Khan Vice Chancellor, University of Lakki Marwat and Kalam Bibi Institute was also present.

The Governor said that the youth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are highly talented intelligent and capable of competing at the global level. He stressed that deserving students must be provided with scholarship opportunities and access to renowned international universities to enhance their knowledge, skills and exposure. He further emphasized promoting science technology, artificial intelligence and innovation among young people ensuring better access to modern education digital facilities and emerging employment opportunities. During the meeting, Dr. Najeeb Ullah Marwat shared proposals regarding international academic partnerships, technology transfer, carbon financing, startup development and global investment opportunities.–APP

35 traffic signal intersections to be upgraded

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is upgrading 35 traffic signal intersections across Islamabad, including the installation of 18 new Pelican pedestrian crossings, under a project scheduled for completion by the end of this year.

CDA Chairman and Islamabad Chief Commissioner Sohail Ashraf inspected the ongoing project on Friday and reviewed the progress of work at various locations.

Officials briefed him that the project aimed to improve traffic flow and provide safer and easier road-crossing facilities for pedestrians through modernised traffic signals and new Pelican crossing systems. They said 85 per cent of the traffic signal work at Daman-i-Koh Chowk had been completed, while civil work at Khayaban Roundabout, also known as Khyber Chowk, and Aabpara Chowk had been completed. Meanwhile, 50 per cent of the civil work for the installation of new Pelican pedestrian crossing signals at Radio Pakistan Chowk, Faisal Chowk-III and Pak Secretariat had been completed. Work at other locations was also under way. Sohail Ashraf directed the concerned departments to utilise all available resources to ensure timely completion of the project while maintaining construction quality and transparency.–APP

Pakistan, Turkiye discuss trade tied

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan Irfan Nezio lu, called on Honorable Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, H.E. Bilal Azhar Kayani, in Islamabad today. The meeting reviewed agenda related to cooperation in trade, investment and energy. Pakistan reaffirmed its commitment to the agreed USD 5 billion bilateral trade target and to attracting greater Turkish investments, especially in the Special Economic Zones. He appreciated Türkiye's strong interest in exploring investment opportunities in Pakistan and expressed the need to leverage the strong political goodwill on both sides to mutually enhance trade volumes. Minister of State appreciated the active participation of Turkish companies in the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026, as well the interest of Turkish enterprises in privatization of DISCOs. He underscored the importance of strengthening cooperation across multiple sectors including maritime and ship breaking where significant opportunities exist for mutually beneficial partnerships for the two brotherly countries.

Both sides agreed to renew the efforts on the expansion of Pakistan-Turkiye Trade in Goods agreement and discussed ideas to translate the political goodwill into actionable targets and deliver meaningful results. Both also agreed to hold further meetings to explore new avenues for strengthening the long-standing strategic partnership between Pakistan and Türkiye.

Weekly inflation decreases 0.46pc

ISLAMABAD: The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI)-based weekly inflation decreased by 0.46 percent during the week ended on November 12, 2026, for the combined consumption group, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported here on Friday.

According to PBS data, the SPI for the week under review decreased to 372.90 points from 374.61 points recorded in the previous week. On a year-on-year basis, the SPI increased by 11.21 percent. The weekly SPI, with base year 2015-16=100, covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. However, the SPI for the lowest consumption group (up to Rs 17,732) increased by 0.03 percent to 361.12 points from 361.00 points. Likewise, the SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,733–22,888, Rs 22,889–29,517, Rs 29,518–44,175 and above Rs 44,175 decreased by 0.09 percent, 0.17 percent, 0.32 percent and 0.68 percent respectively.–APP

Call for early completion of 14 new tourists destinations

PESHAWAR: Secretary Department of Tourism, Culture, Archaeology and Museums Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Raja Fazal Khaliq said that instructions have been issued to accelerate measures on priority basis for promotion of tourism and culture in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, to introduce adventure tourism at international level and to benefit youth from it to the maximum. Measures should be accelerated for early construction of 14 new tourist destinations in the province and construction of rest areas at tourist places.

He expressed these views during his visit to the office of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority KP CTA. On this occasion, Director General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority Shahid Khan Mohmand gave him a detailed briefing. He was accompanied by Additional Secretary Rahimullah Mehsud, Chief Planning Officer Abdul Basit, Director Admin and Finance Shahryar Mahmood and other staff.

During the briefing, Secretary Tourism Department Raja Fazal Khaliq, while speaking, said that like Tirich Mir Summit, Falak Sair Summit should be introduced at international level. While increasing the number of existing Tourist Facilitation Centers in the province, he said that more new rest areas should be constructed for tourists at tourist places, while 14 new tourist destinations should also be completed as soon as possible. Appreciating the performance of Tourist Services Wing, he said that they have collected excellent revenue in a short time, however, along with making SOPs at district level, registration of unregistered hotels, restaurants, rent-a-car, tour operators and tour guides should also be completed. Director General Tourism Authority Shahid Khan Mohmand, while reviewing the performance of Tourism Authority, said that training has been started for promotion of adventure tourism in Chitral and Swat, in which training will be provided in various adventure tourism including rock climbing, paragliding.–APP

PRA to launch reward scheme for customers

LAHORE: The Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) on Friday decided to introduce a reward scheme for customers in the hotels and restaurants sector to encourage digital payments and promote a culture of tax compliance.

The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by PRA Chairman Moazzam Iqbal Sipra,which reviewed digital monitoring and database management initiatives. The meeting was briefed on measures being undertaken on a priority basis to promote tax compliance and electronic payments across various service sectors. The chairman directed the relevant departments to ensure priority monitoring of consumer complaints regarding digital payment facilities and establish an effective mechanism for their prompt resolution. –APP

Samar pays tribute to security forces for killing terrorists

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for Information and Public Relations Samar Bilour on Friday paid tribute to security forces for killing 35 terrorists in a successful intelligence-based operation in the province.

She said the operation reflected the professional capabilities, preparedness and effective intelligence-based strategy of security forces. Samar said the sacrifices and services of security personnel were highly commendable in the fight against terrorism and efforts to establish lasting peace in the country. She said the killing of 35 terrorists demonstrated the effectiveness of the security forces' strategy and their timely action based on intelligence. The adviser said the efforts of security institutions to maintain peace and protect citizens in KP deserved appreciation. She added that the courage, professional expertise and national commitment of security forces in the war against terrorism served as a source of strength for the entire nation. Samar expressed confidence that the nefarious designs of terrorist elements seeking to undermine Pakistan's peace and stability would be foiled. She stressed that national unity, effective coordination among institutions and sustained joint efforts were essential to completely eliminating terrorism. She said the entire nation stood alongside security forces in the fight against terrorism and their sacrifices, particularly the services of martyrs, would always be remembered.–APP

Pakistani youth close to my heart as Saudi youth: Alahmed

Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed said the university is not merely an institution of education

DNA

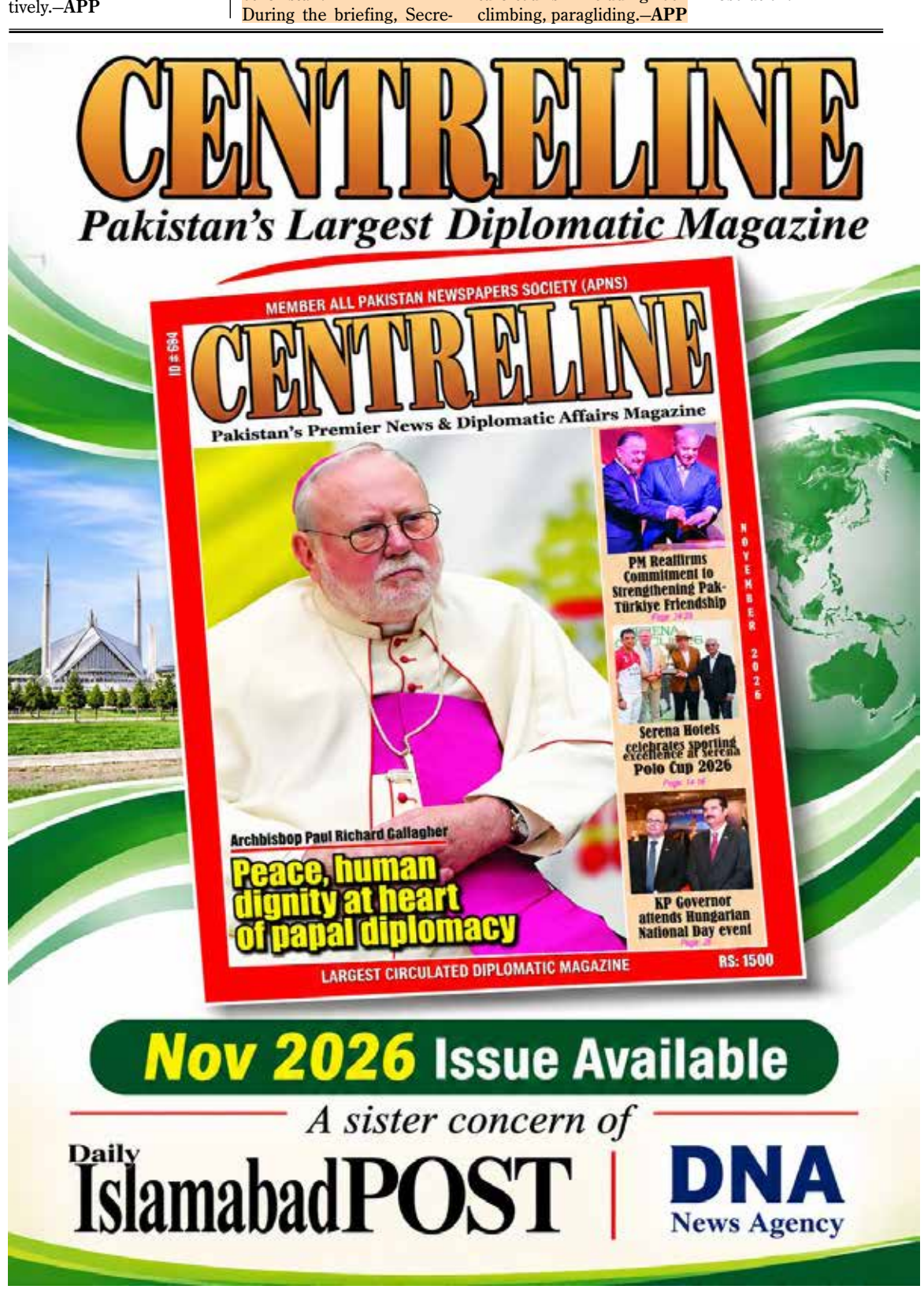
ISLAMABAD: Acting Rector and President of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed, has said the youth of Pakistan are as close to his heart as the youth of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, calling Pakistan his home away from home.

He said this in a special message to the youth on Friday. He urged upon Pakistani youth to take interest in learning modern knowledge and excel in all professional fields. International Islamic University Islamabad has witnessed a steady trend of considerable improvements in the standard of its hostels and classrooms. The IIUI President said unity, faith and discipline hold the key to the Ummah's rise among the comity of nations. He urged the youth to embrace these principles and build a future worthy of their ideals. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed said the university is not merely an institution of education. He described it as a fortress of the Ummah's values, norms and vision. He said IIUI gives students a platform to excel in a wide range of disciplines, including basic sciences, engineering, computing, artificial intelligence, Shariah and law, Islamic studies and the Arabic language. He added that the university's programmes blend academic rigour with moral grounding and prepare graduates who are both competent professionals and principled human beings.

Highlighting the university's international character, the IIUI President said its campuses host students from more than 40 countries, and over 30,000 students receive quality education there. He said female students make up the largest share of the student body, and they study at a dedicated campus that provides a safe, supportive and enabling environment.

He said IIUI aims to shape a new international community of future leaders who carry knowledge with humility, ambition with ethics, and diversity with unity.

Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed said Muslims need unity now more than ever, and no outside power can help them unless they strengthen themselves with faith and a shared purpose. He said other nations take pride in geography, race or tribe, but Islam unites its followers through the Kalima, which links a believer to his Creator, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and his brothers in faith.



Islamabad POST
METROLITE
Saturday November 14 , 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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Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



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



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



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Additional Foreign Secretary Abdul Hayee, Representative TRNC Buket Kop, Ambassador of Turkiye Dr Irfan Neziroglu and others cutting cake on the occasion of the 43rd Anniversary of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. DNA

PIDE for export-oriented approach to trade agreements

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) on Friday called for an export-oriented approach to trade agreements, stressing the need to align negotiations with industrial policy, exporters' requirements and global market demand to translate preferential market access into tangible export growth.

The recommendation was made during a roundtable titled "From Signing to Exporting: Exploring the Export-Promoting Role of Trade Agreements," which brought together policymakers, trade experts, academics and private-sector representatives to discuss ways to improve Pakistan's performance under Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs). The discussion was based on PIDE's forthcoming report, "Trade Agreements of Pakistan: A Critical Review of RTAs' Export Performance," authored by Dr Amjad Masood and Aneela Zubair of PIDE's Centre for Trade, Logistics and Infrastructure (CTLI). Presenting the report's findings, Dr Amjad Masood, Chief of Research and Director CTLI, said imports from RTA partners had grown significantly faster than exports since 2000, with every dollar of imports now matched by only around 20 cents in exports.

The report proposed an Export-Oriented RTA Framework focusing on export-led negotiations, alignment with industrial policy, demand-based selection of trading partners, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) market access alongside tariff reductions, deeper agreements and key performance indicator (KPI)-based reviews at the Ministry of Commerce.

Opening the discussion, Dr Manzoor Ahmad, former Pakistan Ambassador to the WTO and Chair of the WTO Trade Dispute Arbitration Panel, termed the study timely, observing that Pakistan's latest trade agreement with Türkiye covered only around two per cent of its trade. He noted that, apart from the agreement with China, Pakistan's RTAs had largely failed to deliver the desired results, partly due to high domestic protection that encouraged business interests to favour weaker agreements. He stressed that effective negotiations and implementation were as important as the concessions secured.

Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Member of the Economic Advisory Group and Team Lead, Oxford Policy Unit, observed that zero tariffs alone could not ensure sustained growth, while greater frequency of trade could. He suggested using free trade agreement offers as a step towards unilateral trade liberalisation, strengthening connectivity with neighbouring countries and involving all provinces in the process. Dr. Hassan Butt, Senior Advisor, CEEC, highlighted the importance of economic diplomacy and inter-ministerial coordination, pointing out that several memorandums of understanding signed through embassies remained unimplemented. Sarrah Javad of APTMA said the market access secured by Pakistan often failed to cover tariff lines relevant to its exporters. She cited Phase II of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement, which added access to 313 tariff lines, many covering products Pakistan did not export.

Javed Kureishi, CEO of the Pakistan Business Council, called for clearly designated leads for review processes, supported by effective follow-up mechanisms.

Sarmad Pretu of the EXIM Bank of Pakistan identified collateral requirements as a major constraint on small and medium enterprises' access to export financing, while outlining the bank's evolving support for exporters.

Dr Zafar Mahmood, Professor at NUST, said Pakistan's challenge was not a shortage of trade agreements but its inability to translate preferential market access into export competitiveness, calling for more active economic diplomacy.

Dr Adil Nakhoda, Chairperson of the Economic Advisory Group, urged Pakistan to pursue deeper trade agreements and reduce its most-favoured-nation (MFN) tariffs to facilitate integration into global value chains.

The roundtable was moderated by Dr Uzma Zia, Senior Research Economist at PIDE, and attended by representatives of the WTO, Economic Advisory Group, Pakistan Business Council, APTMA, EXIM Bank of Pakistan, Pakistan Single Window, IBA and SPRC, among others.

Participants appreciated PIDE's initiative to bring together government, industry and academia, with the views and recommendations shared during the discussion to be incorporated into the final version of the report.

Gilani emphasizes int'l collaboration for skills development

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Friday emphasised that fair wages, decent working conditions, and investment in youth development are essential to sustainable economic growth and social progress.

He expressed these views during a meeting at Parliament House with a delegation from the Global Fair Pay Foundation and London Tea Exchange, led by Professor Sheikh Aliur Rahman.

Welcoming the delegation, the Chairman of the Senate appreciated the Foundation's efforts to promote workers' rights and fair remuneration globally, particularly its initiative aimed at lifting three million tea workers out of extreme poverty by 2030. He also acknowledged the contributions of . Asif Bajwa, Charter Ambassador for Pakistan, and Mr. Farhan Farhani, Co-Chair of the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group, towards strengthening Pakistan–UK parliamentary engagement.

Highlighting Pakistan's demographic potential, Chairman Senate observed that nearly 60 percent of the country's population comprises young people, describing them as its greatest national asset. "Our youth must be equipped not merely to seek opportunities, but to compete, innovate and succeed in the global economy," he remarked.

He underscored the importance of market-driven skills development, particularly in information technology and emerging sectors, to enhance employability and create sustainable economic opportunities.

The Chairman Senate called for enhanced cooperation between the Senate, Global Fair Pay Foundation and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in vocational training, human resource development and labour welfare.

He also welcomed the proposed training centre and model tea plantation initiatives, encouraging exploration of similar approaches to benefit Pakistan's agricultural workforce and informal economy.

Referring to Multan's rich cultural heritage, he highlighted its internationally renowned blue pottery and mangoes as examples of Pakistan's potential to promote indigenous craftsmanship and agricultural products in global markets.

The delegation briefed the Chairman Senate on the Foundation's objectives and ongoing initiatives and expressed willingness to explore training opportunities for Pakistani youth. The delegation thanked the Chairman Senate for his warm welcome and support for greater international collaboration.

Chairman Senate reaffirmed the Senate's commitment to advancing workers' welfare, equitable economic opportunities and inclusive development.–**DNA**

PCP issues warnings to five pharmacy institutions

ISLAMABAD: The Pharmacy Council of Pakistan (PCP) has issued warning letters to five pharmacy institutions and deferred the accreditation renewal of three others over regulatory compliance matters.

According to an official of the Council, the regulatory action was taken following a review conducted under its statutory mandate to ensure quality standards in pharmacy education across the country.

The five institutions issued warning letters to Prime Institute of Health Sciences, Islamabad, Nazar College of Pharmacy, Islamabad, Riphah International University, Gulberg Green Campus, Islamabad, HBS College of Pharmacy, Islamabad and Hamdard University, Islamabad Campus.

The Council also deferred the accreditation renewal of Mohi-ud-Din Islamic University, Mirpur, AJK, Akson College of Pharmacy, Mirpur, AJK and Riphah International University, G-7/4 Campus, Islamabad.

The PCP reiterated its commitment to maintaining the quality of pharmacy education through effective regulation, institutional accountability and strict adherence to prescribed standards.

It emphasized that all pharmacy institutions were required to comply with the applicable rules, regulations and requirements of the Council.–**APP**

DHO to organize diabetes awareness walk

ISLAMABAD: The District Health Office (DHO) Islamabad, in collaboration with the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, will organize a 'Walk & Run to Defeat Diabetes' on November 14 (Saturday) to raise public awareness about diabetes prevention and promote healthy lifestyles.

The event will be held at F-9 Park, Islamabad, from 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm, on the occasion of World Diabetes Day, with participants invited to take part in 2.5-kilometre and 5-kilometre races.

According to the organizers, online registration has been opened through the official event portal, while participants will also have the facility of on-site registration at F-9 Park before the event. The starting point will be Bara Dari, near the F-10 Gate of F-9 Park. The initiative aims to encourage physical activity, promote healthier lifestyle choices and highlight the importance of preventing and managing diabetes through regular exercise, balanced nutrition and timely health screening. The District Health Office has invited citizens, families, health professionals and fitness enthusiasts to participate in the activity and contribute to building a healthier Islamabad.–**APP**

Morocco seeks stronger mining coop with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Morocco on Friday expressed its willingness to strengthen mining cooperation with Pakistan, highlighting opportunities for partnerships, investment and the exchange of expertise in the mineral sector.

Secretary General of Morocco's Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development Mohamed Ouhmed, addressing the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 (PMIF26), said the forum provided an opportunity for both countries to exchange experiences and explore new avenues for cooperation and partnerships.

He said Morocco had a long mining history and significant mineral potential, with a wide range of mineral resources.

Highlighting Morocco's experience in the mining sector, he said the country was one of the world's leading phosphate producers and had developed a strong industry that met international standards.–**APP**



Briefs

Diabetes burden reaches 34.5m: WHO

ISLAMABAD:World Health Organization (WHO) has urged families across Pakistan to adopt healthier lifestyles and prioritize regular medical screening as an estimated 34.5 million people, or one in three adults, are living with diabetes in the country.

In a statement issued ahead of World Diabetes Day, observed annually on November 14, WHO called for stronger efforts to prevent, detect and manage diabetes through healthy diets, regular physical activity and timely medical check-ups.

Under this year's theme, "Early Action on Diabetes", the organisation has highlighted the importance of prevention and early diagnosis to ensure timely treatment, improve quality of life and reduce the risk of serious health complications.

According to WHO, Pakistan has the highest diabetes burden globally in percentage terms and accounts for more than 40 percent of the estimated diabetes cases in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

The organisation noted that four in 10 people living with diabetes in the region were unaware of their condition, increasing their risk of complications, including blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks, strokes and lower limb amputations.

WHO Representative in Pakistan Dr Luo Dapeng said diabetes posed a serious threat to public health and called on families to adopt healthy lifestyles to secure a healthier future for themselves and their children.

He said more than 95 percent of people with diabetes had type 2 diabetes, which could often be prevented through healthy dietary choices, regular exercise and avoiding tobacco.

He particularly emphasized limiting sugar and saturated fats, maintaining physical activity and avoiding unhealthy habits, adding that type 2 diabetes, previously considered predominantly an adult disease, was increasingly affecting children due to poor diets and lack of physical activity.

Dr Luo reaffirmed WHO's commitment to working with the Government of Pakistan and its people to strengthen diabetes prevention, early detection and timely treatment.

Globally, the number of people living with diabetes increased from 200 million in 1990 to 830 million in 2022, with the prevalence rising more rapidly in low- and middle-income countries than in high-income nations. WHO stressed that type 2 diabetes could be prevented, while complications associated with all forms of diabetes, including type 1 and gestational diabetes, could be minimized or delayed through healthy lifestyles, early diagnosis and appropriate medical care.–**APP**

PPA hails proposed Punjab Drug Rules

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Pharmacists Association (PPA) has welcomed the proposed Punjab Drugs and Therapeutic Goods Rules, 2026, terming them a positive development for the pharmacy profession and public healthcare.

According to the Pakistan Pharmacists Association, the draft rules offer an opportunity to introduce important reforms in pharmacy services, professional responsibilities and patient care. The proposed framework includes greater recognition of pharmacy services and pharmacists' professional responsibilities, along with clearer definitions and distinctions between registered pharmacists and pharmacy technicians or assistants. It also proposes revisions to drug classifications and prescription categories, with greater emphasis on pharmacist-supervised dispensing and generic substitution. The draft further encourages the adoption of digital pharmacy practices, electronic record-keeping and pharmacovigilance to improve transparency, regulatory oversight and patient safety. The association described the proposed provisions as positive steps towards improving regulatory clarity.–**APP**

First Lady opens PNWA annual grand festival 2026



ISLAMABAD: First Lady Bibi Asifa Bhutto Zardari inaugurating the PNWA Annual Grand Festival 2026 by cutting the ribbon. Begum Chief of the Naval Staff, Fouzia Naveed, is also present.

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Bibi Asifa Bhutto Zardari on Friday inaugurated the Pakistan Navy Women Association (PNWA) Annual Grand Festival 2026 Begum Chief of the Naval Staff, Fouzia Naveed, received the First Lady and briefed her on the activities and welfare initiatives of PNWA. The first lady visited various stalls displaying handicrafts and household items prepared by women associated with the initiative. She appreciated their craftsmanship, dedication and hard work, acknowledging their efforts in developing skills and contributing to the welfare of their families.

During the visit, the first lady was informed that PNWA also operates a vocational institute to equip women with practical skills. She was briefed that proceeds from the sale of products made by these women are channelled back to PNWA to support the welfare of the women involved. Established in 1970, PNWA is dedicated to the welfare of families of serving and retired Pakistan Navy personnel, particularly the families of Shuhada. Over the years, the association has developed into a self-sustaining organisation, undertaking initiatives aimed at the socio-economic uplift of naval families.

Women diplomats and wives of ambassadors also attended the festival.–**DNA**

Kamal reviews performance of health helpline

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services Syed Mustafa Kamal has reviewed the latest developments, system upgrades and overall performance of the 1166 Health Helpline, emphasizing the need to make the public service more efficient, transparent and responsive. The minister was given a detailed briefing on the latest progress of the helpline dashboard, newly introduced features and improvements made to the system. The briefing also covered mechanisms for registering public complaints, monitoring their progress, ensuring timely resolution and improving the overall functionality of the helpline.

Syed Mustafa Kamal directed the concerned authorities to further strengthen the 1166 helpline system and make it more active, transparent, efficient and citizen-friendly.

He stressed that effective use of the system should ensure timely responses to public complaints and facilitate the prompt resolution of citizens' healthcare-related issues.–**APP**

Ayaz lauds security forces for eliminating 74 terrorists

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday paid rich tribute to the security forces for eliminating 74 terrorists belonging to Fitna al-Hindustan during successful counter terrorism operations in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In a statement, the Speaker lauded the professional expertise, operational capabilities and courage demonstrated by the security forces in the successful operations against terrorists. He said the sacrifices and achievements of the security forces in the war against terrorism were highly commendable. Ayaz Sadiq said the brave operations being carried out by the security forces to completely eliminate terrorism from the country were a matter of national pride. He emphasized that the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with the security forces in the fight against terrorism. The Speaker said terrorists and their facilitators would never succeed in achieving their nefarious designs. He also appreciated the unwavering commitment of Pakistan's armed forces and law enforcement agencies to eradicating terrorism from the country. –**APP**

Genetic causes of rare eye diseases in 225 families identified

Al-Shifa Trust detects over 50 genetic conditions in 18 months

RAWALPINDI: Families who have spent years searching for answers to unexplained illnesses are finding new hope at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, where genetic testing has helped identify more than 50 genetic conditions in just 18 months. The Department of Ophthalmic Genetics has analysed 297 individuals from 225 families using specialised tests that examine DNA to identify the causes of inherited and other genetic conditions, many of which remain undiagnosed despite repeated medical investigations. Led by Dr Rutaba Gul, head of the department, the facility has established a fully functional genetic testing laboratory supported by a specialist team. It has received referrals from more than 30 doctors across multiple hospitals and cities, as well as different departments within Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, reflecting growing demand for genetic diagnosis in complicated cases. The department is also developing a genetic database of patients and families to improve understanding of inherited conditions affecting the local population. It includes rare and unusual genetic findings that could help improve diagnoses and clinical decisions for future patients. Genetic testing can help doctors identify diseases when routine investigations fail, assess the risk of complications and guide treatment. Where appropriate, it can support targeted therapies or personalised medication while reducing unnecessary investigations and associated costs.These tests are particularly valuable for families affected by incurable genetic conditions. Even when no cure is available, identifying the underlying cause can help doctors explain the disease, assess potential complications and guide patients towards appropriate care. The department also provides genetic counselling and prenatal testing, helping families understand inherited diseases, reproductive risks and available options. This is particularly important for households in which genetic eye conditions have affected several generations, enabling informed decisions about future pregnancies and early identification of genetic risks. For families, a genetic diagnosis can bring an end to years of uncertainty, explain illnesses affecting relatives and provide a clearer understanding of possible future health risks. Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital offers these services free of cost in some cases and at highly affordable rates for others, making genetic diagnosis more accessible in Pakistan. Dr Rutaba Gul said the department was combining modern technology, specialist expertise, counselling and a growing patient database to address an important healthcare gap and bring hope to families affected by rare and inherited diseases.–**DNA**

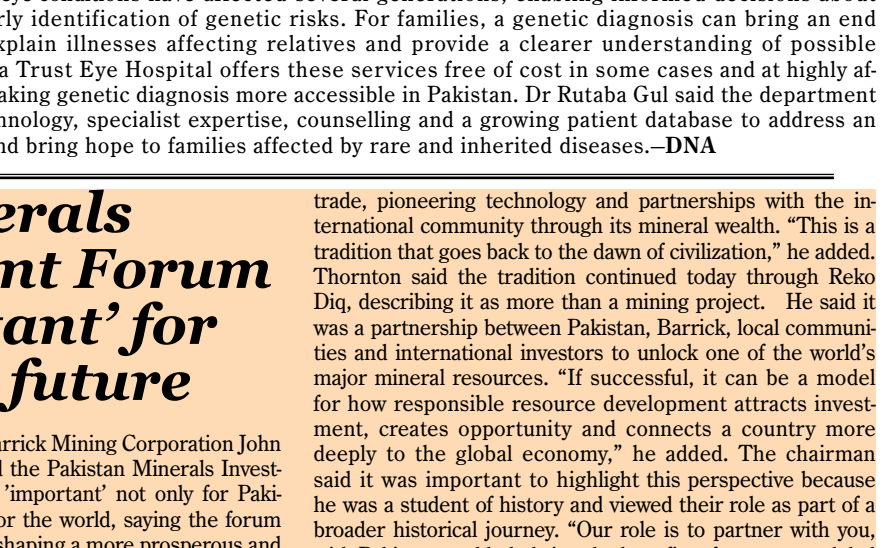
Ban trans fats to fight diabetes

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of World Diabetes Day, civil society organisations in Pakistan have called for decisive action to ban partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs), a major source of industrially produced trans-fatty acids (iTFAs), from Pakistan's food supply. The organizations stressed that creating healthier food environments must be an integral part of the country's efforts to address its escalating diabetes burden. Led by Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA), the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign is supported by CPDI, PANAH, Heartfile and other civil society organisations working for public health, environment and human rights in Pakistan. According to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), an estimated 35 million adults in Pakistan were living with diabetes in 2025, placing the country among those with the highest diabetes prevalence rates globally. Without urgent and effective policy action, this figure is projected to reach 70 million by 2050. Beyond its devastating health consequences, the diabetes crisis is also imposing an enormous economic burden, with the annual cost of diabetes management in Pakistan exceeding US$2.6 billion. Mr Munawar Hussain, Senior Health and Nutrition Policy Expert, said: "Pakistan's diabetes crisis is not merely a healthcare or economic challenge; it demands urgent action to transform the food environment that shapes people's diets and everyday food choices. Prevention must begin with evidence-based, conflict-of-interest-free food policies and standards that reduce consumption of ingredients of public health concern in processed foods.–**APP**

Minerals Investment Forum 'important' for global future

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Barrick Mining Corporation John L. Thornton on Friday termed the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 (PMIF26) 'important' not only for Pakistan and the region but also for the world, saying the forum could play a significant role in shaping a more prosperous and peaceful future. Addressing the two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026, he said, "This forum is, of course, important to Pakistan. It's important to the region, but it's important to the world today, and even more in the future." "We all know we need a more prosperous and peaceful world, and I believe this forum is ground zero for that undertaking. The chairman said Khewra was home to the world's second-largest salt mine and was the source of Himalayan salt lamps enjoyed around the world. He said Pakistan had a rich history of global trade, pioneering technology and partnerships with the international community through its mineral wealth. "This is a tradition that goes back to the dawn of civilization," he added. Thornton said the tradition continued today through Reko Diq, describing it as more than a mining project. He said it was a partnership between Pakistan, Barrick, local communities and international investors to unlock one of the world's major mineral resources. "If successful, it can be a model for how responsible resource development attracts investment, creates opportunity and connects a country more deeply to the global economy," he added. The chairman said it was important to highlight this perspective because he was a student of history and viewed their role as part of a broader historical journey. "Our role is to partner with you, with Pakistan, and help bring the benefits of your great global traditions and your mineral exports to the world," he said. He said Barrick was one of the world's leading mining companies and had remained a steadfast partner to Pakistan through difficult times, adding that the company intended to continue this partnership. Referring to recent developments in the energy sector in Pakistan, he said discoveries in oil and gas had increased significantly over the past 24 months. "These are plain facts, and they have not gone unnoticed," he said.–**APP**

Margalla Avenue extension project 36pc complete



ISLAMABAD: Work on the Margalla Avenue extension from N-5 to M-1 and Sangjani Interchange project has reached 36 per cent completion, with construction activities continuing round the clock, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) chairman was informed on Friday. CDA Chairman and Islamabad Chief Commissioner Sohail Ashraf visited the project site to review the pace of development and inspect various sections of the ongoing construction. During the visit, officials briefed the chairman that work on the approximately 2.7-kilometre main highway extension was progressing, alongside construction of the adjoining service road. They said the structural work of the underpass at Sangjani Interchange, including its concrete walls and footing slabs, had been completed, while earthwork and filling remained to be carried out. The piling work for abutments on both sides of the N-5 Interchange Bridge had also been completed, with steel fixing and framework work under way. Of the five culverts included in the project, work on four had been completed, while construction of the fifth was in progress. Work on the loops and ramps was also continuing, officials informed the chairman. Sohail Ashraf directed the concerned departments to remove all bottlenecks to ensure timely completion of the project, stressing that construction standards, pace of work and transparency must be maintained.

He said the project would improve access to Islamabad for commuters travelling from different parts of the country, particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and facilitate connectivity with Islamabad International Airport. The project would also serve as an important entry point to the federal capital for people travelling from other cities, he added.–**DNA**



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Deadlock between US, Iran must be broken

Hassan Al-Mustafa

A SETTLEMENT, even a gradual one, between the US and the Islamic Republic of Iran remains elusive, but this does not mean it is impossible. Political and security developments, as well as statements emerging from both sides, are adding to the uncertainty surrounding the situation, despite the Qatari mediator's efforts to prevent the details of the messages conveyed or specific proposals being leaked. On Nov. 12, US President Donald Trump said that his country "does not need a deal" with Tehran and that the current Iranian leadership remaining in power until the end of his term would amount to a "defeat for him." Although the latter statement does not constitute an official declaration by Trump that he has definitively adopted the policy of regime change advocated by outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, this position could deepen Tehran's doubts about the merits of making concessions in exchange for an agreement that does not guarantee an end to the military threat it perceives as existential. This is one of the dilemmas facing the mediation efforts, given the lack of trust and the conviction among a broad segment of Iran's leaders that any new negotiations with Washington would inevitably lead to a third military strike, as they view negotiations as merely a cover for a surprise military action.

This explains the current political deadlock and the continuation of the naval blockade and sanctions that have crippled the Iranian economy. Trump has expressed his willingness to pursue this policy for an extended period, suggesting that Washington sees no pressing need to make concessions it considers unnecessary at present, despite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps forces continuing to target vessels that fail to follow the route designated by the IRGC. This has resulted in damage to several oil tankers that have struck naval mines or come under Iranian missile and drone attacks. On the Iranian side, Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf stood firm on the seven conditions announced by Tehran, stressing that strategic decisions are subject to the decisions of the Supreme National Security Council and the approval of Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei. The position of Ghalibaf, who heads the Iranian negotiating team, is in line with that of Supreme National Security Council Secretary Mohsen Rezaei, suggesting a united front among the leaders of the regime. This unity undoubtedly derives its strength and legitimacy from the supreme leader; otherwise, such alignment between two key figures at this critical juncture in Iran's history would not exist. For his part, the head of the Basij Organization, Hossein Taeb, revealed the existence of a US message that he said Russian President Vladimir Putin had conveyed to Khamenei, before Rezaei carried an Iranian message to Putin.



Taeb is considered one of the most influential hard-line clerics. He previously headed the IRGC's intelligence organization and is among the figures close to the current supreme leader, lending further significance to his account of the message, the details of which have not been disclosed. This is particularly relevant given that Moscow is seeking to play some role in mediating between Washington and Tehran, hoping to leverage this role to gain an advantage on the front of its war with Ukraine. Coinciding with Qatar's efforts, the six-party meeting held in Paris on Nov. 10, with the participation of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, France, Germany, Italy, and Britain, provided a framework for supporting any potential understanding. The participants stressed the need to reach a diplomatic settlement, prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, and restore free and safe navigation through the Strait of Hormuz in accordance with international law.

These diplomatic efforts were complemented by a notable Saudi-Chinese meeting. On Nov. 13, Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan held talks with Chinese Special Envoy on the Middle East Zhai Jun, during which they "reviewed the latest developments in the region, foremost among them the ongoing attacks by the terrorist Houthi militia against civilian objects and civilians in the Kingdom, and their repercussions for regional security and stability." They also stressed "the importance of strengthening energy security and the stability of energy markets, and ensuring the safety of maritime waterways and freedom of navigation, particularly in the Straits of Hormuz and Bab Al-Mandab, in a manner that preserves the smooth flow of global trade and supply chains."

Continued Saudi consultations with international powers, in coordination with Qatari mediation efforts, will strengthen the prospects for successful diplomatic solutions while providing regional guarantees against a resumption of hostilities toward the Arab Gulf states. At the same time, however, the main obstacle will remain the divergence in the political objectives that Washington and Tehran each seek to achieve through negotiations, making it difficult to find common ground for an initial understanding that would pave the way for a lasting future agreement. This does not mean, however, that the state of "neither war nor peace" can continue indefinitely, as the current fragile equilibrium will inevitably be broken, either by an interim agreement that satisfies the parties concerned or by a more economically and militarily painful war that forces the warring parties to opt for a diplomatic exit, particularly given that neither side has achieved a decisive military outcome so far.

The Deadly Hypocrisy of Western Sanctions

Qamar Bashir



The historical record provides compelling illustrations. Cuba has endured decades of American economic restrictions without the political transformation Washington originally sought. North Korea developed nuclear weapons despite extensive international sanctions. Iran survived successive campaigns of maximum pressure while expanding alternative economic relationships. Venezuela experienced devastating economic hardship without the immediate political collapse anticipated by proponents of sanctions. Iraq suffered catastrophic economic and humanitarian deterioration during the sanctions...

"POWER tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Lord Acton's enduring maxim finds devastating confirmation in a major study published in The Lancet Global Health, which estimated that unilateral economic sanctions were associated with approximately 38 million excess deaths worldwide between 1971 and 2021. This staggering human toll exposes the contradiction at the heart of the Western-led international order: nations that proclaim themselves guardians of human rights, champions of democracy and defenders of human dignity have employed economic coercion associated with the deaths of millions of innocent people. The self-appointed protectors of humanity have become instruments of extraordinary human suffering.

The contradiction is staggering. Countries that lecture the world on morality, international law and humanitarian responsibility frequently reserve for themselves the privilege of violating those very principles. Their economic dominance becomes an instrument of punishment, their military superiority a license for destruction, and their political influence a shield against accountability. The victims are overwhelmingly ordinary people who have neither declared war nor formulated the policies for which they are punished. The instruments of coercion are principally two: military aggression and economic strangulation. The first destroys cities, infrastructure, hospitals, schools and livelihoods through bombs and missiles. The second accomplishes comparable devastation more slowly, through financial blockades, trade restrictions, frozen assets, banking prohibitions and the systematic deprivation of essential economic resources. One kills through explosions; the other through hunger, disease, poverty and the collapse of public services. Both can devastate entire generations.

The cruelty of economic warfare becomes particularly apparent when its architects openly celebrate the suffering it produces. In remarks attributed to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the devastating impact of sanctions and economic restrictions on Iran was presented as pressure that compounds with time. The argument was that economic deprivation would eventually undermine the government's ability to sustain its institutions, compensate its personnel and maintain political control. Such reasoning exposes the disturbing logic underlying economic strangulation. When workers cannot receive wages, families cannot afford food, hospitals struggle to obtain medicines and inflation destroys purchasing power, civilian suffering becomes an instrument of geopolitical pressure. Human deprivation is no longer treated merely as an unfortunate consequence; it becomes part of the mechanism through which political objectives are pursued.

The scientific evidence behind this indictment is particularly disturbing. The study, titled Effects of international sanctions on age-specific mortality: a cross-national panel data analysis, examined 152 countries over five decades. Its researchers estimated an average annual mortality burden of approximately 564,258 deaths associated with unilateral sanctions in recent years.

These were not primarily battlefield casualties. They represented the consequences of deteriorating economic conditions, restricted access to essential goods, weakened healthcare systems and the broader deprivation associated with sanctions. Most horrifying was the disproportionate suffering of children. According to the research estimates, children younger than five accounted for approximately 51 percent of sanction-associated deaths. Children and older people together represented an overwhelming proportion of the estimated mortality burden.

These findings expose the enormous distance between the declared objectives of economic sanctions and their actual humanitarian consequences. Measures supposedly directed against political leaders, military organizations and governing elites fall most heavily upon infants, patients, workers, pensioners and families struggling to survive.

The political leadership that sanctions are designed to weaken frequently retains privileged access to resources. Security institutions continue functioning, influential elites exploit alternative commercial networks, and politically connected businesses benefit from scarcity. Meanwhile, independent enterprises collapse, ordinary employees lose their livelihoods, and the middle class gradually disappears. Economic punishment can therefore strengthen the very structures it claims to dismantle. Governments consolidate control over scarce resources, black markets flourish, and populations become increasingly dependent upon political authorities for survival.

The historical record provides compelling illustrations. Cuba has endured decades of American economic restrictions without the political transformation Washington originally sought. North Korea developed nuclear weapons despite extensive international sanctions. Iran survived successive campaigns of maximum pressure while expanding alternative economic relationships. Venezuela experienced devastating economic hardship without the immediate political collapse anticipated by proponents of sanctions. Iraq suffered catastrophic economic and humanitarian deterioration during the sanctions imposed throughout the 1990s. Yet Saddam Hussein remained in power until the American-led military invasion of 2003. The civilian population paid an enormous price for policies that failed to achieve their central political objective through economic pressure alone. Iran now stands at the center of another confrontation between geopolitical ambition and humanitarian consequences. American restrictions on banking, oil exports, financial transactions and international commerce have imposed severe economic difficulties. Currency depreciation, inflation, weakened purchasing power and obstacles to essential imports have placed immense pressure upon ordinary Iranian households. The people suffering these consequences are not necessarily participants in government decisions. They are teachers, doctors, laborers, students, shopkeepers, children and elderly citizens whose fundamental aspiration is to live with dignity. The same contradiction extends to Israel's military conduct across the Middle East. Gaza has suffered immense civilian casualties, widespread displacement and the destruction of essential infrastructure. Israeli settlement expansion and occupation in the West Bank continue to deprive Palestinians of land, security and political rights. Israeli military operations in Lebanon and Syria have further intensified regional instability. Israel's military capabilities are sustained substantially by American assistance, weapons supplies and diplomatic protection. Washington's professed commitment to civilian protection consequently stands in sharp contrast to its continued support for military operations that have produced catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

This is not merely a question of contradictory foreign policy. It concerns the concentration of international power in the hands of governments that claim universal moral authority while resisting equivalent scrutiny of their own conduct. International human rights cannot remain credible when their application depends upon the identity of the perpetrator. The right to food, healthcare, livelihood and human dignity cannot be defended selectively. Nor can the suffering of children become acceptable because their governments refuse to submit to external political demands.

The most disturbing revelation of the Lancet research is that economic warfare can produce a human toll comparable in magnitude to armed conflict without attracting equivalent international outrage. Its victims die quietly, in hospitals without supplies, homes without adequate food and communities whose economic foundations have been systematically undermined. A world order that condemns violence while normalizing mass civilian deprivation has surrendered its moral legitimacy. When powerful nations can devastate populations through bombs or blockades and still present themselves as champions of humanity, Lord Acton's warning becomes more than a historical observation. Absolute power has not merely corrupted the guardians of human rights; it has enabled them to transform human suffering into an instrument of policy while demanding that the world applaud their moral leadership.

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

Unrestricted humanitarian aid to Gaza can be delayed no longer

Daoud Kuttab

The images of tent camps underwater are heartbreaking, especially when one realizes that hundreds of prefabricated homes are sitting idle just on the other side of the border. The Netanyahu government's delay in allowing these homes to cross into the territory is a cruel collective punishment that makes little sense. For the right-wing Israeli leader and his settler-dominated government, any humanitarian act in Gaza is considered a reward...

IT is not clear what was the motive behind US President Donald Trump's call to Benjamin Netanyahu regarding the need to progress the Gaza peace plan. It is possible that, after the major defeat of the Republican Party in last week's midterm elections, the White House was looking for a scapegoat. Furthermore, with the results of the Israeli elections, blaming Israel will have little cost with Tel Aviv, since the tide is already turning against Trump's friend Netanyahu, who does not look like he will stay in power for much longer.

The reporting of the phone call also shows the influence of the Israeli prime minister on a project that is often referred to as the Trump plan for Gaza. This development came as tens of thousands of Gazans were once again left tentless as the season's first big downpour in the Strip flooded many of the makeshift shelters that have replaced the homes Israel has destroyed in its ongoing genocidal war.

The images of tent camps underwater are heartbreaking, especially when one realizes that hundreds of prefabricated homes are sitting idle just on the other side of the border. The Netanyahu government's delay in allowing these homes to cross into the territory is a cruel collective punishment that makes little sense. For the right-wing Israeli leader and his settler-dominated government, any humanitarian act in Gaza is considered a reward for Hamas, even though the group has agreed to disarm and end its rule of the Strip. For Netanyahu and his government, any humanitarian act in Gaza is considered a reward for Hamas

The 15-member technocratic government created by the Trump team and agreed to by Israel and the Palestinian government in Ramallah is also still being denied entry into Gaza for no apparent reason, except the continuous rejection by Netanyahu of any act that might appear humanitarian to Palestinians by his voters.

Now that Netanyahu has been rejected by Israeli voters, including a strong showing by Palestinian citizens, it is not clear whether Trump's call will be sufficient to move the Gaza process from phase one to phase two.

Phase two, according to the plan authorized by the UN Security Council, includes the use of heavy equipment to help remove the rubble that the Israeli war on the people of Gaza has caused. International agencies have also regularly complained, including to the UNSC, that Israel is still not permitting sufficient humanitarian aid to enter the Strip. Instead, Israel has given a monopoly to four Israeli companies to deliver all sorts of humanitarian and nonhumanitarian goods. This monopoly, which is being contested in Israeli courts by Palestinian business owners, has caused a huge spike in prices that the beleaguered population has little choice but to pay. Despite three years of suffering, the international community continues to fail to properly address the Gaza crisis. The only obstacle is the Israeli occupation forces, with clear direction from the Netanyahu administration and with total complicity from Washington.

Trump needs to turn his words into action and cooperate with the Palestinian leadership and international agencies Trump might find it necessary to verbally blame Israel for his party's loss in last week's midterm elections. But the reality is that he cannot assign blame to others when he and his administration have given the criminal Israeli regime their total backing. The American overreach has included supplying Israel with weapons, defending it in the UNSC and sanctioning the international tribunals that are investigating the crimes committed by its ally.

What Trump needs to do is to turn his words into action and cooperate with the Palestinian leadership and international agencies, as well as major allies like the UK and the EU, to bring an immediate end to the senseless suffering the Palestinians in Gaza are enduring.

The borders need to be opened in both directions. The Palestinian security forces under Mahmoud Abbas are ready and able to move in quickly to restore order and take over from Hamas. If this option is rejected, then the International Stabilization Force that is part of the Trump plan should be allowed to immediately enter Gaza and take over all aspects of the security plan initiated by Nickolay Mladenov, the high representative for Gaza under the Board of Peace plan. The security plan Mladenov submitted has been approved by all relevant Palestinian groups, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, but Israel under the rejectionist Netanyahu scuttled the plan without any serious commentary by Washington. Now, with all excuses regarding elections over, the international community must insist on the need for the full and speedy entry of humanitarian aid at all levels, including prefabricated homes and heavy equipment. There is no more room for excuses.

– Daoud Kuttab is an award-winning Palestinian journalist and former Ferris Professor of Journalism at Princeton University. He is the author of "State of Palestine Now: Practical and Logical Arguments for the Best Way to Bring Peace to the Middle East." X: @daoudkuttab

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Japan announces US$ 4.3 million...

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The new funding underscores the importance of sustained international partnerships as Pakistan works to build on the progress achieved and maintain the momentum needed to end poliovirus transmission. "Japan has been a steadfast partner in Pakistan's efforts to end polio, and this contribution will help sustain the high-quality vaccination campaigns needed to interrupt transmission," said Ms.Pernille Ironside, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan. "UNICEF deeply appreciates Japan's continued partnership. By ensuring every child is reached with the polio vaccine, we can bring Pakistan closer to a polio-free future and leave no child behind." The Government of Japan has been a longstanding partner in Pakistan's polio eradication efforts. Since 1996, Japan has contributed more than US$ 248 million in grants and loans through UNICEF to support polio vaccination and help Pakistan achieve a polio-free future.

Pakistan aiming to become...

FROM PAGE 01

should witness tangible improvements in their lives," the report said. He also emphasised that Pakistan must move from potential to productivity, from promises to action and from raw exports to value-added growth. Addressing the same event, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed hope that Pakistan could become the world's sixth-largest economy "earlier than 2050". In his remarks, he recalled a Goldman Sachs assessment, which had projected Pakistan to become the sixth-largest economy in the world by 2075 and said: "I would like to make a small amendment here — instead of 2075, it will be earlier than 2050." 'Mineral exploration increasingly focused on strategic resources' Earlier in the day, Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik addressed the forum and stated that Pakistan's exploration efforts were increasingly focused on minerals that were of strategic importance to global investors.

Islamabad to become cashless city

FROM PAGE 01

city and the world's first cashless capital, the state minister added. "After Nov 30, no cash payment will be accepted in any department of the Islamabad Capital Territory administration and the Capital Development Authority (CDA)," Chaudhry stated. "The target is to bring all merchants in Islamabad into the cashless system by Dec 31," he said. He said the cashless system would improve financial transparency, tax monitoring and the transaction system, adding that 26,000 merchants in Islamabad had already been connected to the digital payments system. "Digital payment facilities will be provided at every level, from street vendors to major business centres," the state minister affirmed. "All relevant institutions will work together to make Islamabad a modern digital city." According to the statement, CDA Chairman Sohail Ashraf, representatives of the banking sector and other senior officials attended the meeting. Representatives of the banking sector appreciated the government's Cashless Islamabad initiative and assured full cooperation for its success, it added.

PM Shehbaz invites foreign...

FROM PAGE 01

Data Centre and the Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP) GeoPortal. The digital platforms are designed to improve access to geological information, support mineral exploration, reduce uncertainty for investors and facilitate informed investment decisions.

Pak, Sri Lanka play out draw in weather-hit opening Test

Saud Shakeel falls three runs short of century as hosts build 272-run lead

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Sri Lanka played out a draw in the weather-hit opening Test at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday after the hosts declared their second innings at 284-8, extending their overall lead to 272 runs. Experienced batter Saud Shakeel narrowly missed out on a century, falling for 97 as Pakistan consolidated their position before both teams agreed to a draw. The hosts resumed their innings in the final session with Shakeel closing in on his fifth Test century. However, Lahiru Kumara ended his impressive knock by clean bowling the left-hander for 97 off 210 deliveries, including seven boundaries.

Razaullah remained unbeaten at the other end as Pakistan declared their innings at 284-8, after which both teams agreed to a draw. Earlier, Shakeel and Ghazi Ghori continued Pakistan's batting charge in the second session, putting together a crucial 92-run partnership to take the hosts' lead beyond the 200-run mark.

Shakeel registered his 13th Test half-century, while Ghori provided valuable support before Milan Rathnayake broke the partnership by dismissing the latter for 35 off 69 deliveries, including three boundaries.

Arafat Minhas joined Shakeel and contributed to a 44-run stand, taking Pakistan past the 250-run mark. However, Dhananjaya de Silva ended the partnership by dismissing Minhas for 16 off 29 deliveries after hitting three boundaries.

Earlier, Pakistan resumed day five at 57-1, holding a 45-run lead, but suffered a top-order collapse. Azan Awais fell for 22 to Lahiru Kumara, while Asitha Fernando dismissed Mohammad Taha for 24. Babar Azam and Shakeel then added a valuable 50-run partnership before Rathnayake removed Babar for 34 and Salman Ali Agha for 13, reducing the hosts to 125-5.

Earlier in the match, Sri Lanka recovered strongly after Pakistan's bowlers made early inroads. However, debutant Saqib Khan's sensational seven-wicket haul helped the hosts regain control, although the visitors secured a 12-run first-innings lead.

In reply to Pakistan's first-innings total of 434-9 declared, Sri Lanka were reduced to 65-3 before Kamindu Mendis scored 58 and shared a 90-run partnership with Dhananjaya de Silva. De Silva and captain Kusal Mendis subsequently combined for a remarkable 249-run partnership, with both batters scoring centuries to put Sri Lanka in a commanding position.

owever, Pakistan fought back on the fourth morning, bowling out the visitors for 446. Saqib was the standout performer with figures of 7-130, dismissing De Silva for 167, Kusal for 119 and three lower-order batters. Mohammad Abbas claimed two wickets, while Razaullah chipped in with one.

Batting first, Pakistan declared their opening innings at 434-9, with five batters registering half-centuries, including three debutants. Saud Shakeel top-scored with 93 off 199 deliveries, while Tayyab Arif contributed 57 off 51 balls. Arafat Minhas scored 52 off 72 deliveries, Mohammad Taha made 51 off 105, and captain Babar Azam added 50 off 58 balls.

Security forces neutralise...

FROM PAGE 01

The military said that a huge cache of weapons, ammunition and explosives, including homemade explosives and improvised explosive devices were also recovered during sanitisation, thwarting Khwarij nefarious designs to use these materials in terrorist activities. Sanitisation operations continue to eliminate holed-up Khawarij from these areas, as a relentless counter-terrorism campaign under the vision "Azm-e-Istehkam by security forces and law enforcement agencies will continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism from the country. Pakistan has witnessed a surge in terror activities, particularly in its KP and Balochistan provinces, since 2021, when the Afghan Taliban came into power. According to a report by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), the two provinces remained the country's main hotspots for violence during the second quarter of 2026, with KP emerging as the worst-affected region.

Ghana beat Somalia to end 37-month winless AFCON qualifying run

DNA

JOHANNESBURG: Four-time champions Ghana ended a 37-month winless run in Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers by beating minnows Somalia 2-0 in Essipong on Thursday.

Defender Adjei Adjetey from German second-tier club VfL Wolfsburg scored his first goal for the Black Stars in the second minute of first half added time.

Turkiye-based Felix Afena-Gyan doubled the lead on 62 minutes to seal a first victory in Group C for Ghana after losses to the Ivory Coast and the Gambia two months ago.

Later, Ivory Coast beat Gambia 2-1 in Bouake to top the table with nine points after three rounds. Gambia have six, Ghana three and Somalia none.

Somalia have ceded home advantage to Ghana when they meet again on Monday, offering the Black Stars a good chance of securing another win as they seek a top-two finish and qualification. Assuming they complete a double over the Somalis, Ghana will then host Ivory Coast and visit Gambia in the final two matchdays next March.

While victory was a huge relief for Ghana and acting coach Kim Lars Bjorkegren, who was seconded from the women's national team, the performance left much to be desired.

Both goals stemmed from defensive shortcomings by Somalia, who are ranked 200th in the world, 130 places below Ghana.

A Somali aerial weakness was exposed for the first goal with Adjetey given time and space to nod a headed pass into the net after a corner.

Goalkeeper Ibrahim Hussein, who saved a weakly struck early penalty from veteran Ghana captain Jordan Ayew, was to blame for the second goal.

The 20-year-old allowed a shot from Afena-Gyan that lacked power to slip under his body and trickle into the net.

Meanwhile, Equatorial Guinea were without regular goalkeeper Jesus Owono when they dominated Zimbabwe in a 0-0 Group E draw in Yaounde.

Owono has not decided whether to continue playing football after his collision with Jesus de Miguel in a Spanish second division match this month led to the death of the forward.

Marcos Ondo replaced Owono, who has been capped 47 times by the central African country, and was barely troubled as Zimbabwe concentrated on defending.

The match was staged in Cameroon because Equatorial Guinea lack an international-standard stadium, 11 years after having four CAF-approved venues when hosting the 2015 AFCON.

Pakistan pavilion highlights brass crafts at Yiwu import fair

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Pavilion is drawing a steady stream of visitors at the 2026 China Yiwu Imported Commodities Fair, which opened on November 13 at the Yiwu International Expo Center and runs through November 15, showcasing the country's traditional brasswork alongside a range of other products. According to China Economic Net (CEN), the fair covers an exhibition area of 40,000 square meters with 1,660 international standard booths, bringing together nearly 800 exhibitors from 69 countries and regions. The event features four themed halls covering imported consumer goods, food and beverages, coffee and wine, apparel and accessories, as well as cross-border e-commerce and international trade services. It has attracted 160 exhibitors from previous China International Import Expos, along with national pavilions from the United Kingdom, Germany, Vietnam, Nepal, Pakistan, Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece, among other institutional participants. At the Pakistan National Pavilion, displays include brass ornaments in various animal shapes, brass vases, onyx ornaments and jewellery.

The pavilion places particular emphasis on Pakistan's brass craftsmanship, illustrating a traditional process in which a single sheet of brass is transformed into a family heirloom through five stages of handwork and tens of thousands of hammer strikes in old workshops. Beyond the fair, a permanent Pakistan National Pavilion was established in Yiwu in 2019 with the objective of showcasing Pakistani traditional and exportable products and culture while promoting bilateral trade. Operated by Eman Logistics Co. Ltd., the permanent pavilion primarily offers imported Pakistani food, handmade carpets, handicrafts, clothing and jewelry. – **APP**

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PSB Imposes Ad-Hoc on Pakistan Badminton Federation

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) has constituted a six-member Ad-Hoc Committee to take immediate control of the day-to-day affairs of the Pakistan Badminton Federation (PBF) earlier led by Wajid Ali Chaudhary, following the Islamabad High Court's directions, paving the way for fresh elections and administrative reforms in the national federation. According to an official notification, the committee has been constituted in compliance with paragraphs 14(c) and 14(d) of the Islamabad High Court's judgment dated November 3, 2026, in Writ Petition No. 5409 of 2026, titled Imtiaz Ahmed Gill and another vs Pakistan Sports Board through its Director General and others. The Additional Secretary, Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), Islamabad, will head the committee, while Director (NF), Pakistan Sports Board, will serve as a member. The committee also includes former national badminton champions Riaz Khan from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Aamir Islam from Punjab, Ahsan Qamar from Sindh, and former national doubles champion Ateeq Chaudhary from Balochistan, ensuring representation from all four provinces. Under the notification, the committee will immediately assume responsibility for the federation's administrative and operational affairs, including the preparation of national teams for international competitions, until fresh elections are conducted and the newly elected body formally takes charge. The existing officials currently holding administrative charge of the federation have been directed to hand over all relevant records, documents and property to the committee without delay.

IHC suspends Islamabad...

FROM PAGE 01

heard the case of alleged violation of the code of conduct in the recent NA-77 by-election in Gujranwala, The News reported on Thursday. He added that the federal government had ordered that teachers would not be assigned duty in the Islamabad local government elections. He wondered: "Where will the Election Commission bring staff from? The Election Commission issues directions to the prime minister and the government; directions do not come from them to us." He took strict notice of the federal government's order and charged that the federal government wanted to sabotage the Islamabad local government elections. "I make it clear that the local government elections will be held in Islamabad," he had observed.

Record-breaking Kane fires England into Nations League knockouts

LONDON: Harry Kane celebrated his record-breaking 126th England appearance with a goal from the penalty spot as England beat Croatia 2-1 on Thursday to book a place in the Nations League quarter-finals. Slaven Bilic's team were determined to avoid the embarrassment of their 7-0 mauling by England in Rijeka last month and looked much more solid from the kick-off.

But goals from Morgan Rogers and captain Kane kept England second in their group, confirming their place in the Nations League last eight in March.

Neither side got out of second gear in the opening stages of the match at Wembley. Elliot Anderson fired over in the 16th minute and Croatia's Josip Misic flashed a shot wide midway through the first half. Chelsea forward Rogers broke the deadlock in the 24th minute in slightly fortuitous fashion following a neat move by the home side.

Kane floated a ball to Jude Bellingham on the right of the penalty area and the Real Madrid man cushioned the ball first time across the area toward Rogers

Manchester City's Josko Gvardiol had a chance to clear but got in a tangle and Chelsea's Rogers poked the ball past goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic. England started to find some rhythm as they went in search of a second goal but failed to add to their tally before half-time. Thomas Tuchel's men were again the more potent team at the beginning of the second period. But the visitors levelled against the run of play just before the hour mark after a glaring error by England defender Jarell Quansah, who misdirected a header from close range toward Jordan Pickford following a Croatia corner. The ball fell to Petar Sucic, who stabbed home.

Minutes later England were back in front, with Bayer Leverkusen defender Quansah again at the heart of the action after his shirt was tugged in the penalty area. Referee Morten Krogh initially did not award a penalty but he was sent to the monitor by the VAR and pointed to the spot. Kane made no mistake, drilling home for record-extending 92nd England goal.

Nikola Vlasic gave England a scare, firing just wide of Jordan Pickford's goal as Croatia showed they were still alive. James Garner thought he had scored a third for England after a Bellingham cut-back but Bellingham was in an offside position when he received the ball.

Ballon d'Or winner Kane won his 126th cap when the game kicked off — taking him clear of his tie with former goalkeeper Peter Shilton. A giant banner was raised before kick-off with a picture of the 33-year-old and the words "England's Finest." Shilton was part of a pre-match presentation to honor the Three Lions skipper, along with Football Association patron Prince William.

England remain second in Nations League Group A3, after leaders Spain beat the Czech Republic 2-0 but are now assured of a place in the quarter-finals. Spain and England face each other in Madrid on Sunday. – **APP**

Copper, gold deposits...

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The discoveries cover an area of 5.6 square kilometres in Darigwan, adjoining the company's earlier discovery at the Tang Kaur copper-gold site. Tabba said further exploration at the exploration licence EL214 was expected to help establish the size of the mineral deposits, subject to the completion of exploration work and a formal assessment of the resources. A joint venture between Fatima Fertilisers, Liberty Mills and Lucky Cement Ltd, NRL holds five exploration licences in Balochistan. These comprise two copper-gold projects, one lead-zinc project and two antimony projects, with exploration work under way. NRL plans to begin environmental, hydrogeological, metallurgical and geotechnical studies in 2027, with the aim of completing a bankable feasibility study by the end of the decade.

Bombing in Russia kills officer

FROM PAGE 01

President Viktor Yanukovych, who was forced from office by protesters and fled to Russia in February 2014. Azarov also lives in Russia. On Thursday, a military serviceman was killed in St. Petersburg by a bomb in his vehicle, according to the Investigative Committee. It didn't identify the victim or say who could be behind the bombing. The Fontanka news outlet said the victim was a colonel and a bomb in his car went off as he was driving. It claimed the bomb used for the attack had been flown over the border from Ukraine into Russia in a balloon and hidden before it was picked up and used in the attack. The device was planted on instructions from Ukraine's spy agency by a man who had gotten a job at a grocery store near the apartment building where the victim lived, Fontanka said.

Islamabad exhibition showcases Chinese porcelain and contemporary art

Chinese porcelain has historically played a role in cultural exchange along the ancient Silk Road, connecting societies through trade, artistic traditions and craftsmanship

ISLAMABAD: The National Museum Islamabad has inaugurated a joint exhibition of Chinese porcelain artefacts and contemporary art to mark the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China.

Organised under the National Heritage and Culture Division, Government of Pakistan, in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology and Museums (DoAM), the exhibition brings together traditional Chinese ceramic art and contemporary artistic creations, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. Parliamentary Secretary for National Heritage and Culture Farah Naz and Cheng Peng, counsellor at the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, addressed the inauguration ceremony.

The exhibition features Chinese porcelain artefacts, including Tang Sancai horse and camel figurines, Ru porcelain celadon wares, blue-and-white floral vessels, sculpted peony plates and contemporary dinnerware.

Chinese porcelain has historically played a role in cultural exchange along the ancient Silk Road, connecting societies through trade, artistic traditions and craftsmanship. As part of the programme, students from IMCG F-7/2 participated in a ceramic painting workshop, where they explored Chinese motifs and traditional artistic designs. – **APP**



Islamabad POST
Saturday November 14 , 2026

Briefs

PSX gains over 500 points

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Friday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index gaining 500.11 points, a positive change of 0.28 percent, to close at 177,873.88 points against 177,373.76 points recorded in the previous trading session.
The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 1,042.810 million shares, compared to 1,070.480 million shares traded in the previous session. The traded value of the ready market stood at Rs31.001 billion, slightly down from Rs31.636 billion a day earlier.
Meanwhile, total market capitalisation increased to Rs19.336 trillion from Rs19.224 trillion recorded in the previous session.
Out of 497 companies that traded in the ready market, 284 posted gains, 184 suffered losses, while 29 remained unchanged, reflecting the dominant bullish trend across the market.
WorldCall Telecom led the volume chart with 303.196 million shares, followed by Kohinoor Spinning with 59.505 million shares and LSE Financial Services with 46.791 million shares.
Among the top gainers in the ready market, PIA Holding Company Limited surged by Rs298.00 to close at Rs14,342.00, while Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited advanced by Rs157.93 to settle at Rs26,457.91.
On the losing side, Bhanero Textile Mills Limited declined by Rs76.42 to close at Rs1,207.41, while Ghandhara Industries Limited fell by Rs25.13 to Rs1,262.05.
In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 165.933 million shares with a traded value of Rs6.658 billion, compared with 172.914 million shares worth Rs6.718 billion in the previous session. Of the 312 companies traded in the DFC market, 137 advanced, 169 declined, and six remained unchanged._**APP**

Gold prices decline by Rs4,900 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The prices of gold witnessed a significant decline in the local market on Friday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola falling by Rs4,900 to settle at Rs411,636, 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 Rs4,201 to Rs352,911, while 10 grams of 22-karat gold declined by Rs3,851 to Rs323,513.
In the international market, the price of gold decreased by $49 to $3,891 per ounce, the association._**APP**

Ladakh autonomy crisis deepens

ISLAMABAD: Altaf Hussain Wani, Chairman of the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), has criticised India's decision to hold elections to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDC) on November 21 and December 4, 2026, amid severe winter conditions, arguing that the exercise seeks to project democratic normalcy while ignoring Ladakh's unresolved demands for statehood and constitutional safeguards.
With temperatures expected to plunge to minus 30 degrees Celsius and heavy snowfall threatening to isolate remote villages, Wani maintains that New Delhi is prioritising electoral optics over genuine political representation and the protection of Ladakh's land, tribal identity and fragile environment. In his assessment, the proposed elections cannot be viewed in isolation from the political transformation imposed on Ladakh following India's August 5, 2019, decision to revoke Jammu and Kashmir's special constitutional status and reorganise the former state into two Union Territories. The separation of Ladakh from Jammu and Kashmir and its conversion into a Union Territory without an elected legislative assembly, Wani argues, marked a fundamental shift from representative governance to direct central administration. What New Delhi presented as administrative integration.—**APP**

APNS demands immediate release of PID outstanding payments to newspapers

The Executive Committee further demanded that the PID provide newspapers with complete details of payments made against their published advertisements. The members also urged the PID not to release advertisements to advertising agencies whose APNS membership had been suspended



DNA

KARACHI: The Executive Committee of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS), at its meeting held under the chairmanship of Senator Sarmad Ali expressed its disappointment over delays by the Press Information Department (PID), Islamabad, in clearing outstanding dues, observing that the continued withholding of payments had plunged the print media into a serious financial crisis. It demanded the immediate release of all outstanding payments.
APNS members also pointed out that the newspaper registration process had become excessively slow. They proposed that the relevant rules and regulations be simplified and made more accessible through consultations with all stakeholders. The committee requested the Ministry of Information to convene meeting of the Joint Committee at the earliest.
The Executive Committee further demanded that the PID provide newspapers with complete details of payments made against their published advertisements. The members also urged the PID not to release advertisements to advertising agencies whose APNS membership had been suspended.
The Executive Committee expressed serious concern over delays in the payment of bills for May and June by the Sindh Information Department, stating that the prolonged delays had pushed newspapers into severe financial difficulties and threatened their very survival.The members also expressed grave concern over the continued neglect of the longstanding issues faced by newspapers and periodicals. They observed that the volume of advertisements being released by the Sindh Information Department had declined to an extremely low level, contrary to the agreed allocation, while APNS member publications were being systematically ignored in the distribution of government advertisements. The Executive Committee considered applications for Associate Membership submitted by Daily Ghaznavi, Rawalpindi, and Daily Qaum, Multan, and approved associate membership of the above publications.The Committee also approved provisional accreditation for Olive Digital (Private) Limited, Karachi.
The following members attended the meeting,Senator Sarmad Ali, President APNS; Muhammad Athar Qazi, Secretary General; Mohsin Bilal, Joint Secretary; Naveed Kashif, Finance Secretary; Mohsin Siyal (Daily Aftab); Bilal Farooqi (Daily Aghaz); Owais Razi (Weekly Azm); Fauzia Shaheen (Monthly Dastak); Najmuddin Sheikh (Daily Deyanat); Muhammad Younus Mehr (Daily Halchal); Kazi Asad Abid (Daily Ibrat); Syed Akbar Tahir (Daily Jasarat); Faisal Shahjahan (Daily Jiddat); Javed Mehr Shamsi (Daily Kaleem); Aamir Malik (Daily Mashriq, Quetta); Tahir Qureshi (Monthly Naye Ufaq); S.M. Munir Jilani (Daily Paigham); Mubashir Mir (Daily Pakistan); Humayun Gulzar (Daily Siyadat); Irfan Athar (Daily Tijarat); Muhammad Irfan (Weekly Takbeer).
The following members participated in the meeting through Zoom:Waseem Ahmed (Daily Awam); Ansar Mahmood Bhatti (Monthly Centreline); Zahida Abbasi (Daily Nau Sijj); and Irfan (Daily Sahafat). Dr. Jabbar Khattak (Daily Awami Awaz) attended the meeting as special observer.

Burhan earns PhD in renewable energy from Australian varsity

ISLAMABAD: Burhan Asghar Abbasi, who hails from the Birote area of Circle Bakote in Abbottabad district, has successfully earned a PhD in Renewable Energy from the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Wollongong, Australia. His academic achievement has been widely welcomed by family members, relatives and



friends, who have congratulated him on completing his doctoral studies at one of Australia's recognised universities. Burhan's achievement marks an important milestone in his academic and research career, reflecting years of dedication, hard work and commitment to higher education. His specialisation in renewable energy is particularly significant at a time when countries around the world are increasingly focusing on sustainable energy sources, energy efficiency and technological innovation to address growing energy demands and environmental challenges. An especially noteworthy aspect of his achievement is that he has dedicated his PhD degree to his parents in recognition of their sacrifices, guidance, prayers and unwavering support throughout his educational journey. He acknowledged that the encouragement and confidence provided by his parents had played a vital role in enabling him to pursue higher education and achieve his academic goals. His gesture reflects his gratitude and deep respect for his parents, whose support remained a source of motivation throughout his studies. Renewable energy has emerged as a key area of scientific research worldwide, with growing emphasis on developing sustainable alternatives to conventional energy resources. Research in this field is considered essential for addressing energy security, reducing environmental impacts and supporting long-term economic development. Burhan's doctoral qualification in this specialised discipline is being viewed as a source of pride for his family and his native area of Birote, Circle Bakote, in Abbottabad.—DNA

Baghdad's first Jewish museum draws crowds

BAGHDAD: Dozens of Iraqis visit Baghdad's first Jewish museum each day to view faded school certificates, handwritten documents and family photographs. The exhibits offer a glimpse into a once integral part of Iraqi life that has all but disappeared. The museum occupies the historic Shamash Jewish School, founded in 1928 on Al-Rashid Street, a prominent thoroughfare in Baghdad. Iraq's Jewish community opened the museum last month in a rare public celebration of the country's Jewish heritage.Inside the restored building, visitors move between display cases holding personal photographs, identity cards, graduation certificates and records of Jewish students who studied at the school, which the Jewish philanthropist Yacoub Shlomo Shamash founded. A brass menorah sits above archival documents, and another seven-branched candelabrum is displayed against polished wooden panels. Framed black-and-white portraits line the walls, among them an image of Sassoon Heskel, a Baghdad-born Jew who served as Iraq's first finance minister after the modern state was founded in 1920. The museum also pays tribute to prominent figures from Iraq's Jewish heritage, including celebrated singer Salima Murad. Born into a Jewish family in Baghdad, Murad rose to fame in the 1920s and 1930s as one of Iraq's most acclaimed vocalists, known for performing the traditional Iraqi Maqam, a classical Arabic musical form, and lighter popular songs. Her career reflected the prominent role Jews once played in Iraq's cultural life. No Jewish visitors have come yet, but Iraqis have arrived in significant numbers since the museum opened, said Ammar Al-Tamimi, legal representative of the Jewish community in Iraq.
Nabil Abdul Hameed, a 71-year-old Baghdad resident who has visited twice, said he did not believe the museum existed until he saw it himself. He first visited alone and later returned with his daughter, a physician, and her children. "I saw people's interest in this subject, and I hope it is a seed of goodness that grows in the future, because the Jews were among the founders of this country," he said.
"I hope those in charge will think about bringing the Jews back. The Jews have property, history and heritage. I wish they would come and take part in the revival of the country." Tamimi said the museum was created to preserve the school's memory after demographic and economic changes transformed the surrounding area. The building is now part of a commercial district with warehouses and can no longer operate as a school, he said. The project was led by Khalida Fouad Eliyahu, a 64-year-old dentist born in Baghdad to a Jewish family who heads Iraq's small remaining Jewish community. She wants to restore other landmarks linked to the country's centuries-old Jewish presence, Tamimi said, adding that all funding for the museum came from Jewish community resources. Historian Saadi Al-Iraqi welcomed the opening and called for wider preservation of Iraq's Jewish heritage. "This step is wonderful and beautiful, and we want more," he said. "I want the synagogues to open. We want their houses of worship to open too."
Under Ottoman rule and into the first half of the 20th century, Jews made up roughly a fifth of Baghdad's population. Jewish communities in the Middle East stretch back over 2,500 years, but anti-Jewish violence, fanned by Arab nationalism, started to sweep through the region in the early 1940s, gradually driving out most Jews. Iraq's Jewish community numbered about 150,000 in 1947. Between 1950 and 1952, around 125,000 Iraqi Jews were airlifted to Israel.
Nowadays, official Iraqi figures show only a handful of Jews remain in Baghdad, living quietly for safety reasons, while around 90 Jews of Kurdish origin still live in the Kurdistan region.
The legacy of Iraq's Jewish community remains visible across the capital, from old commercial districts to riverside villas, where six-pointed Stars of David are etched into stucco facades.—**APP**

Govt committed to ensuring infrastructure for mining sector: Ali

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik on Friday said the government was committed to ensuring security and safety at mine sites, along logistics routes and, above all, for trained human resources to support uninterrupted mining operations in a conducive environment.
Addressing the two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 (PMIF26), he said special arrangements had been made to strengthen the security framework for mining operations.
He said the government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was investing in improving geological data through the Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP), recognising that investors could not accurately assess project risks without reliable scientific information.
He said more than 40 mineral exploration licences had recently been granted in the Chagai and Khuzdar districts of Balochistan alone, reflecting growing private sector participation in strategic and critical minerals. The minister said the government was developing road connectivity between Chagai's mineral-rich belt and Gwadar Port, as well as linking Thar coal resources with power plants, to facilitate transportation and connect Pakistan's mineral resources with international markets. He said Pakistan had traditionally exported raw ore and concentrates while importing finished products to meet domestic requirements.
The government was now advancing copper smelting to capture greater value across the supply chain, from mining to finished metal.
He said the government was also strengthening the scientific foundation of the mineral sector through accelerated geological mapping, including detailed surveys at a scale of 1:50,000, to identify mineral prospects across the country.
He said exploration efforts were increasingly focusing on minerals of strategic importance to global investors, including copper and gold in Chagai and western Balochistan, lithium, tin and tungsten in Gilgit-Baltistan, and antimony and base metals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
The minister said these efforts were being complemented by modern geochemical and geophysical surveys, exploratory drilling and the upgrading of advanced geoscience research laboratories with sophisticated analytical technologies.
He said international technical cooperation, including the UK-Pakistan Geoscience Capacity Building Programme, was helping strengthen expertise in digital mapping, airborne surveys and mineral assessment.
The government was also digitising decades of geological information to provide investors with better access to reliable data, reduce exploration uncertainty and support informed investment decisions, he added. Ali Pervaiz Malik said discovering a mineral deposit was only the beginning, as commercially viable mining projects required power, water, roads, railways and access to international markets.
He said infrastructure development was therefore being aligned with the country's mineral sector ambitions.
He identified the planned upgradation of the Rohri-Nokundi Railway Corridor, connectivity to Port Qasim and supporting infrastructure around Reko Diq as important steps towards connecting mineral-rich regions with global markets.
"Our objective is very clear: to build not just individual mines, but an integrated, competitive and sustainable mineral industry," he said.
The minister said the government wanted investment, wherever commercially and technically viable, to support processing, refining, downstream industries, technology transfer and integration into global value chains.
He said the sector should also strengthen Pakistani capabilities through technical skills, vocational training, engineering services, a stronger supplier base and career opportunities for young people, including women entering the sector.
He stressed that the development of the mineral industry must also benefit communities in producing regions through improved livelihoods, skills, services and local opportunities.
He said environmental management, safety standards and transparent community engagement were essential requirements for responsible mining.
"We expect that of every partner we work with here, and it is part of how we expect this sector to compete internationally," he said, adding that projects earning the trust of surrounding communities were more likely to be successfully developed and sustained.
He said his team was available to facilitate investors through follow-up meetings, technical discussions, site visits and project evaluations.
He urged participants to visit the exhibition hall, attend technical sessions and raise their questions during the forum to facilitate meaningful engagement.
Addressing international investors, including Barrick, Ivanhoe and Minmetals, he said Pakistan was open to long-term mining investment and hoped to earn their confidence through practical delivery and effective follow-up after the forum.—**DNA**

UK approves asylum center despite village 'independence' vote

LONDON: The British government on Thursday approved a plan to convert an old defense facility into accommodation for more than 1,200 asylum seekers, despite a nearby village symbolically voting to leave the United Kingdom in protest against the project.
The Labour government, which has pledged to rehouse asylum seekers currently accommodated in hotels, plans to open a number of reception centers on former military sites.
On Thursday the government said it had approved one near the village of Piddington, a community of 350 inhabitants 25 kilometers (15 miles) from Oxford, which held a ballot in September to oppose the plan.
The housing and communities minister Angela Rayner "has granted full planning permission for the temporary, phased use of the former MOD Bicester storage site," a spokesperson said.
The government plans to house around 1,250 asylum seekers on the former Ministry of Defense site, all single men between 18 and 65.
This summer, Piddington residents held protests to oppose the project, saying they were worried about their safety, particularly that of women.
In the referendum in September, 285 out of 312 votes were cast in favor of seceding from the United Kingdom and "pursuing self-determination."
The vote had no legal weight but made headlines around the world, putting the village at the center of the UK's debate on asylum and immigration for a few days. Greg Smith, an MP for the opposition Conservative Party whose constituency is near the site, condemned the decision as a "disaster." "This is totally outrageous and proves this government don't give two hoots about us," he posted on X, vowing to challenge the decision.—**APP**

Respiratory illnesses rise in Gaza with worst to come

GENEVA: The World Health Organization warned on Friday of surging respiratory illnesses in Gaza, with worse expected after heavy rains flooded tens of thousands of tents housing displaced Palestinians.
"The numbers already show the pressure. Acute respiratory infections are 33,000 cases higher than at the same time last year," Dr. Reinhilde Van De Weerdt, WHO Representative in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, told reporters in Geneva from Jerusalem.
Poor living conditions and severe overcrowding are driving up infections as Gaza's population is squeezed into an ever-smaller area, WHO said. The crunch has worsened as the Israeli military expands its control by advancing the "yellow line" — a demarcation established under October's US-brokered ceasefire. "That means people are living in more crowded conditions, where of course the spread between humans of a virus is much more prone to spread," Van De Weerdt explained. The Israeli military and COGAT, the Israeli military agency that coordinates aid, did not immediately respond to Reuters request for comment. Last week COGAT said that it had stepped up efforts to improve sanitary conditions before the heavy rain, in coordination with international organizations.
Respiratory infections currently make up 11 percent of all consultations, with the WHO expecting cold weather, flooding, overcrowded shelters and poor ventilation to push these numbers higher.
"It is shocking that just a few days of rain really showed us what the coming months will bring. And winter has not even fully set in. The worst really is yet to come," Van De Weerdt said.
Nearly a million displaced people in Gaza live in flood-exposed areas, and 400,000 of them are in locations that are considered at extremely high risk, according to the WHO. The agency said flooding heightened the risk of contaminated water, while standing water gave mosquitoes and pests more places to breed.—**APP**

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Lana Nusseibeh enters race for UN Secy-General

Nusseibeh served as the UAE's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 2013 to 2024, becoming the first woman to hold the post. During the UAE's 2022–2023 term as an elected member of the Security Council, she twice presided over the Council (in March 2022 and June 2023) and co-authored six resolutions

DNA

ABU DHABI: As the United Nations prepares to select its next Secretary-General to succeed António Guterres, whose second term ends on 31 December 2026, Lana Nusseibeh has emerged as a notable late entrant. Nominated by the United Arab Emirates in October 2026, the veteran diplomat brings more than a decade of hands-on experience at the world body and a clear emphasis on earlier action, concrete results, and institutional reform.

Nusseibeh served as the UAE's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 2013 to 2024, becoming the first woman to hold the post. During the UAE's 2022–2023 term as an elected member of the Security Council, she twice presided over the Council (in March 2022 and June 2023) and co-authored six resolutions. These include Resolution 2720 (2023) on humanitarian access to Gaza, which established a UN mechanism to scale up and streamline aid delivery, as well as resolutions addressing Afghanistan and the links between hate speech, discrimination, and conflict.



Her platform focuses on practical steps: acting earlier on emerging crises, securing "first agreements" such as humanitarian corridors, local truces, or prisoner exchanges that save lives and create space for broader settlements, and reforming the UN for clearer priorities, faster decisions, reduced duplication, and stronger accountability. She has described the goal as restoring the Organisation's role as a problem-solver rather than a spectator to global crises.

If elected, Nusseibeh would be the first woman to lead the United Nations and the first Gulf national in the role (and only the second Arab Secretary-General after Boutros Boutros-Ghali). All six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council have unanimously endorsed her candidacy. Of Palestinian descent–her family has roots in Jerusalem–she has also drawn support from the Palestinian delegation.

The selection process remains competitive. Informal Security Council straw polls have shown no candidate yet securing the support of all five permanent members, and Nusseibeh joined a field that includes several other nominees. She has taken a leave of absence from her role as UAE Minister of State and Envoy to the UN and EU to focus on the campaign.

Briefs

Dar receives phone call from Uzbekistan FM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar received a telephone call last night from Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister Bakhtiyor Saidov.

According to the Foreign Office, the two leaders discussed upcoming multilateral meetings, including the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Council of Foreign Ministers meeting scheduled to be held in Islamabad.

During the conversation, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation and enhancing mutual contacts and coordination at multilateral forums. The 30th meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers is set to take place on 15 and 16 November in Islamabad.

Iran urged to allow inspectors

VIENNA: The UN's nuclear watchdog urged Iran to take "incremental steps" to allow inspectors to return to key nuclear facilities in the Islamic republic, adding such access was "critical" in a report seen by AFP Friday.

"The director general encourages Iran to consider technical and gradual measures by which conditions are achieved that allow for the return of agency inspectors to Iran," the report said, adding "such incremental steps could pave the way to normal safeguards implementation in Iran." – **APP**

Delhi overtakes Lahore as world's most polluted city

DNA

NEW DELHI: India's capital Delhi overtook Lahore in Pakistan to become the world's most polluted city on Friday, with air quality reaching hazardous levels and visibility dropping as smog blanketed the city of 20 million people.

Air quality index (AQI) in Delhi was "hazardous" at 334, making it the most polluted major city globally, according to Swiss group IQAir, which measures air quality levels based on the concentration of toxins

An AQI reading up to 50 is considered good with little or no health risk India's official Central Pollution Control Board pegged the AQI higher at 403 and rated it "severe". The Swiss and Indian readings vary due to the different AQI scales and methodologies used to calculate and classify air pollution levels.

UN relief chief warns against delay in delivering winter aid to Gaza

Fletcher stated that a clear plan exists to deliver essential supplies to Gaza, including durable shelter, warm clothing, blankets, safe heating, fuel, generators, and pumps to remove floodwater, clear rubble, and dispose of unexploded ordnance

RAMALLAH: The UN has called for all Gaza Strip crossings to open and for increased humanitarian mobilization to address winter needs. UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher stated that the organization has warned for months about the urgent need to deliver winter supplies to Gaza.

In a statement on X, Fletcher noted that several foreign ministers and partners reaffirmed their support but cautioned that progress may be limited before the Israeli elections. He stressed that delaying action until a new government is formed is unacceptable under international humanitarian law.

Fletcher stated that a clear plan exists to deliver essential supplies to Gaza, including durable shelter, warm clothing, blankets, safe heating, fuel, generators, and pumps to remove floodwater, clear rubble, and dispose of unexploded ordnance.

He warned that many risks could be prevented with adequate shelter, suitable tents and winter supplies, and access to open areas less prone to flooding.

Fletcher called for urgent action, demanding that all crossings open, key nongovernmental organizations be allowed to operate, what he described as an end to collective punishment, and funding for the winter response plan. Initial estimates indicate that over 200,000 people in Gaza have been affected by recent rains and flooding and require humanitarian assistance.

Flooding has caused several deaths and damaged shelters for more than 40,000 families. Meanwhile, Israeli naval forces opened fire on Palestinian fishermen off the coast of Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza on Thursday, detaining several and taking them out to sea. According to preliminary reports, Israeli forces threw five fishermen into the sea after interrogating them aboard a military vessel, while the others remain in detention aboard the vessel. Their whereabouts and fate remain unknown. – **APP**

Trump threatens to double Mexico tariffs

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Thursday threatened to double tariffs on Mexico unless it can keep migrant caravans from reaching the common border, something the Mexican government has been regularly doing.

The Mexican government has intervened to block several groups of migrants traveling up from Central America since September, but at least two more groups have attempted the journey in recent days.

"Here we go again! With the perceived loss by the Republicans in the Midterms... the INVASION of our Country is taking place again," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. "They will not be accepted! MEXICO MUST STOP THEM, NOW, and if they do not do so, the Tariffs on Mexico will be IMMEDIATELY DOUBLED."

Democrats swept both chambers of Congress and won the governorship of Texas for the first time in more than three decades. Mexican security personnel intervened against the group of 100 people on Tuesday after they crossed a river separating Mexico from Guatemala, reportedly detaining dozens of people.

Two days earlier, however, the group of 1,000 people crossed into Mexico without encountering resistance. On Thursday, they were making their way across Mexico's southern state of Chiapas, which borders Guatemala. Another caravan is expected to leave Honduras on Sunday. Mexico is Washington's top trading partner, and the neighbors are currently renegotiating the terms of their free trade deal. – **APP**

Global outage hits Microsoft Outlook

Microsoft initially said it was investigating outage reports "in the Americas," but later confirmed that the issue apparently affected "Microsoft 365 service connectivity for users in any region"

WASHINGTON: Microsoft Outlook suffered a major outage across the world Thursday, with tens of thousands of users struggling to access their email as the company said it was working "aggressively" to reduce the impact. The compoany said it was not aware of any "malicious activity" behind the hours-long disruption of its Outlook services.

"As of now, we are not aware of any malicious activity that is causing this incident. We will continue to treat this incident with urgency and priority until full resolution," Microsoft said. The disruption, which Microsoft attributed to "elevated load" on its infrastructure, dragged on for much of the US workday and also affected other company products such as Teams and the AI assistant Copilot. The disruption went global within a span of an hour, knocking out Microsoft products in 74 countries and territories, outage tracker Downdetector reported. A map posted by Downdetector on X showed the outage affected users across the Americas, and parts of Europe, Asia and Africa.

Microsoft initially said it was investigating outage reports "in the Americas," but later confirmed that the issue apparently affected "Microsoft 365 service connectivity for users in any region." Microsoft 365 is the company's cloud-based subscription service that includes popular applications such as Outlook and Teams.

"We've determined a portion of infrastructure is experiencing elevated load across multiple regions, which is likely contributing to the connectivity errors," the company wrote on X. "We're aggressively pursuing all pathways to reduce impact," it added. "We've paused all deployments, we're moving additional traffic off the affected infrastructure, and we're restarting affected servers to return them to service." In the United States, around 130,000 users reported issues with Outlook shortly after 1 p.m. Eastern Time (1800 GMT), according to Downdetector. Outage reports have since declined, with about 37,000 users reporting experiencing issues with Outlook as of 6 p.m. Eastern Time (2300 GMT). Thousands of users also reported issues with Teams and Copilot, according to Downdetector. As the outage dragged on for hours, Microsoft posted a series of updates on X, detailing continued but unsuccessful efforts to restore full service.

In one update shortly after 6 p.m. Eastern Time, Microsoft said it was "observing limited recovery" as it sought to route user traffic away from affected servers. – **APP**

Iran's Guards say they targeted US radar system in Bahrain

TEHRAN: Iran's Revolutionary Guards said their forces had targeted a US early warning radar system in Bahrain, according to a statement carried by the Iranian state broadcaster on Friday. There was no immediate confirmation of a strike on Bahrain by Manama or the United States, whose bases and equipment in the Gulf were repeatedly targeted earlier in its eight-month war with Iran.

"A few hours ago, IRGC Aerospace Force fighters targeted and destroyed the US aggressors' early-warning radar on the island of Bahrain in response to the enemy's air aggression against a telecommunications tower in Sirik," the Guards said in the statement, referring to a port city in southern Iran.

"This is a serious warning to the aggressor enemy to stop its aerial provocations and oil smuggling in the Strait of Hormuz," it added in the statement, posted by the state broadcaster on Telegram. The US Central Command, which oversees American military operations in the region, said last month that it had helped Gulf countries export 1.5 billion barrels of oil since the summer via Hormuz, a key energy trading route. – **APP**

US records 37 executions

HUNTSVILLE, Texas: Two executions in Texas and Oklahoma on Thursday pushed the US tally to 37 this year, putting the country on track to exceed 40 for a second consecutive year, a pace driven by Florida. Texas put to death John Allen Rubio, 46, who was convicted of fatally stabbing and beheading three young children in 2003. Hours earlier, Oklahoma executed James Pavatt, 73, for the 2001 fatal shooting of his girlfriend's estranged husband.

The death penalty has drawn renewed attention since the failed execution of Christa Pike in Tennessee in September. Last week, California Gov. Gavin Newsom announced he would commute hundreds of death sentences before leaving office in January, which experts say would be the largest mass clemency in American history. – **APP**



Pakistan denounces Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia

At UNSC session, Ambassador Shah calls for immediate & unconditional end to "reprehensible" Houthi attacks

PAKISTAN has denounced Houthi terrorist attacks on Saudi Arabia, while reaffirming its support for Yemen's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity, according to an official statement issued on Friday. Addressing the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) session, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Syed Haider Shah, called for an immediate and unconditional cessation of Houthi attacks against the kingdom. The Pakistani envoy stated this after the adoption of a UNSC resolution renewing the sanctions measures established under resolution 2140 (2014) and extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts supporting the 2140 Committee. Ambassador Shah welcomed the resolution and underscored the importance of the committee's work in promoting peace, security and stability in Yemen.

Highlighting the grave security situation in the region, the Pakistani envoy condemned in the strongest terms the continued Houthi terrorist attacks against Saudi Arabia.

The development comes as Houthis claimed on Thursday they had attacked a pumping station on the Saudi East-West oil pipeline, an oil facility in the Saudi Red Sea city of Yanbu, and an Aramco building in the capital, Riyadh.

The Saudi-led military coalition fighting the Houthis said later on Thursday it had intercepted and destroyed two drones launched by the group, one in the Riyadh region and another in the kingdom's oil-rich Eastern Province.

The ambassador expressed Pakistan's full and unwavering solidarity with the leadership, government and brotherly people of the kingdom, reaffirming Pakistan's resolute support for Saudi Arabia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, security and stability. Ambassador Haider Shah underscored Saudi Arabia's legitimate right to defend its territory and protect its citizens and residents in accordance with the UN Charter and international law. He called for an immediate and unconditional end to the reprehensible Houthi attacks. The ambassador appreciated the constructive efforts of the United Kingdom, as the penholder, throughout the negotiations leading to the adoption of the resolution.

He said Pakistan had voted in favour of the resolution to reaffirm the importance it attached to the work of the 2140 Committee, emphasising that holding accountable individuals and entities threatening Yemen's peace, security and stability was essential to creating conditions for durable peace. On the implementation of the sanctions regime, he stressed the importance of upholding the institutional framework established by the Security Council. He emphasised that the Panel of Experts must discharge its responsibilities strictly in accordance with its mandate, with professionalism, impartiality and consistency, to strengthen the credibility and effectiveness of its work.

Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to peace and stability in Yemen, Ambassador Shah underscored the importance of UN-led efforts to advance an inclusive political process that is Yemeni-owned and Yemeni-led. He reiterated Pakistan's readiness to support all efforts aimed at restoring peace, stability and security in Yemen and alleviating the immense humanitarian suffering of its people. – **APP**

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