LAHORE - KARACHI - ISLAMABAD

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Reducing Ukraine aid sets scene for more war: Macron

Detailed News On Page-08

Govt sincere in rooting out terrorism



Detailed News On Page-08

Organised crime to be checked, says Punjab CM

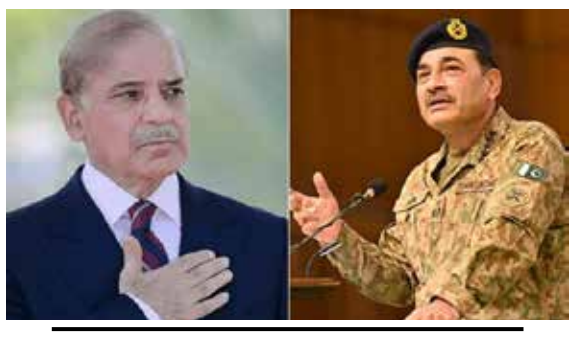


Detailed News On Page-02

Influential Muslims list

PM Shehbaz, Field Marshal share top spot

Jordan-based RISSC also places Saudi king, crown prince and Turkiye's Erdogan jointly at top, citing Makkah pact



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir have jointly secured top spots on the 2027 edition of the world's 500 most influential Muslims list, alongside Saudi King Salman, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The annual publication 'The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims' has released its 2027 list, ranking the most influential Muslims around the world.

The publication, compiled by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre in Amman, said this was the first time multiple individuals had jointly secured the top position. It attributed the joint ranking to the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye.

"This unified top spot features five individuals, it is actually divided into three shared entries that represent a massive shift in how Muslim nations are working together to protect one another. The main reason for this historic decision is the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement," the publication read. "Signed on August 7, 2026, and activated during an emergency summit in Riyadh, this mutual-defence pact unites the immense wealth of Saudi Arabia, the advanced tech and manufacturing of Turkiye, and the powerful military strength of Pakistan into a collective alliance.

"Modelled on a 'one for all, all for one' approach to security, this pact has completely reshaped regional politics," it added.

Meanwhile, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei is ranked fourth, followed by Jordan's King Abdullah II at fifth. Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani is placed sixth, while Pakistani religious scholar Sheikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani ranked seventh. United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan is ranked 12th, while Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi occupies the 22nd position. Pakistani religious scholar Maulana Tariq Jameel is ranked 32nd. Footballer Mohamed Salah is placed at 39th and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at 45th. New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani is ranked 49th on the list. The report also highlighted Pakistan's economic and diplomatic challenges over the past year, noting that the country had navigated economic stabilisation efforts, regional security pressures and diplomatic balancing between major powers.

Repolling held at three stations in GB

News Desk

GILGIT: Re-polling was held at three polling stations in Gilgit-Baltistan's GBA-16 (Diamer-II) on Sunday, with PPP staging protests in Diamer's Chilas, as well as Gilgit, against alleged electoral malpractice by the Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP). PPP's Attaullah Shah and IPP's Imam Malik are the main contenders vying for the seat in the partial repolling, held after an election tribunal accepted Malik's plea and suspended Shah's assembly membership.

The electoral process began at 8am and continued until 5pm, with voters present within the polling station premises at that time allowed to cast their votes. A total of 2,780 registered voters were eligible.

However, after polling concluded, supporters of Shah took to the streets in Diamer district's Chilas and Gilgit against the alleged removal of ballot boxes from a women's polling station in Thore Valley.

Another messy day for those travelling to US

News Desk

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration said on Sunday the air travel havoc triggered by a no-takeoff order could drag on for another day, pushing back its timetable for a return to normal.

Hundreds more flights were cancelled, and questions remained over how such chaos could unfold in the world's largest economy, a country that prides itself on its technological prowess.

Officials blame Friday's huge snafu on faulty work to upgrade air traffic control communication cables.

President Donald Trump on Sunday ended uncharacteristic days of silence on the ground stop, but only to blame his predecessor Joe Biden for the debacle.

Trump insisted he inherited a mess from the Biden administration and said Congress, which his party has controlled for two years, must approve funds to upgrade America's outdated air traffic control system. "The Biden Administration was an FAA disaster," Trump said, referring to the Federal Aviation Administration.

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ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meeting with the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Ismail Ould Cheikh, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. – DNA

ECO ministers' summit

Islamabad hosts foreign dignitaries

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Deputy Secretary General Ahmad Saidmurodzoda, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary General Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Musa Kulaklikaya, and Kyrgyz Republic's Deputy FM Kairat Erkinovich Tursunkulov are among those in Islamabad for the meeting

Ansar M Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Foreign dignitaries arrived in Islamabad on Sunday as Pakistan hosts the two-day 30th meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) Council of Ministers. Currently, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Iran, Turkiye, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan are part of the ECO. Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Deputy Secretary General Ahmad Saidmurodzoda, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary General Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed,

Continued on Page 06

OIC Secy General meets Deputy PM

Saifullah Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar @MIshaqDar50 held a meeting with the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, on the sidelines of the 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers in Islamabad today.

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Ukraine hits Russian city

News Desk

UKRAINIAN and Russian media said the strikes caused a fire at the Nizhnekamskneftekhim (NKNK) petrochemical complex, owned by leading Russian company Sibur. Videos published on social networks, which AFP has not authenticated, showed flames and thick smoke rising above the industrial site. An engineer at an electricity substation was killed in separate Ukrainian strikes overnight on Taganrog, an industrial port city in the Rostov-on-Don region, which borders Ukraine, regional governor Yuri Slyusar said. Taganrog mayor Svetlana Kambulova said a fire at a substation had been put out and a local state of emergency had been declared.

Dar, Egypt FM talk on phone

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a telephone conversation with the Foreign Minister of Egypt, Dr. Badr Abdelatty, today [Sunday]. The two ministers exchanged views on regional and international developments. They also discussed the forthcoming R4 and R4+E4 meetings in Europe. Both ministers underscored the importance of strengthening coordination on regional issues and advancing efforts for peace and stability. The Egyptian Foreign Minister reiterated the invitation to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to visit Cairo. The Deputy Prime Minister thanked him and responded positively to the invitation. Both ministers agreed to maintain close contact and continue consultations on matters of mutual interest.

Iran says attacked military base in Bahrain with drones

While Iran and the United States are still trying to negotiate an end to the conflict, Moreira da Silva said he had the same message for both countries

News Desk

IRAN'S Revolutionary Guards said their forces carried out a drone attack on a US radar system at a base in Bahrain, according to a statement carried by the Iranian state broadcaster on Sunday. "The U.S. air defence radar system at the Al-Riffa helicopter base in Bahrain was targeted by six drones belonging to the IRGC Aerospace Force," the Guards said in a statement posted by the state broadcaster on Telegram.

Iran and the United States should "immediately" allow fertiliser shipments through the Strait of Hormuz to ease the crisis in some of the most vulnerable countries, a senior UN official said Saturday. Jorge Moreira da Silva, head of the UN Office for Project Services, told the COP31 climate talks in the Turkish resort city of Antalya that the lack of fertilisers could push millions into poverty. The Iranian blockade of the vital waterway, which started after the joint US-Israeli attack against Iran in late

Continued on Page 06

Three sentenced to death in Jordan

News Desk

AMMAN: A Jordanian court on Sunday sentenced three men to death by hanging over a deadly church shooting, as the kingdom's Christmas celebrations were canceled in solidarity with the victims' families. Gunmen killed nine people and wounded 25 others when they stormed a funeral at a Greek Orthodox church in southern Hammoud village, Karak governorate, on October 23.

Authorities said three men, two Jordanian brothers and their relative by marriage, had fled after the attack and were arrested three days later. They described them as followers of extremist ideology.

In a statement Sunday, the Jordanian military said the "State Security Court

Continued on Page 06

Bilawal says he is on Fazl side

The telephone conversation comes as tensions have remained high between the JUI-F chief and the PML-N-led federal government over the past month

Mehtab Pirzada

ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Sunday spoke to Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and condemned the "government's actions" against him. The telephone conversation comes as tensions have remained high between the JUI-F chief and the PML-N-led federal government over the past month. On Sunday, Fazl's party also held street protests in several cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa against "propaganda" directed toward the party and its leadership. According to a statement issued by PPP, Bilawal and Fazl exchanged views on the country's political situation. The Bhutto scion –

Continued on Page 06

Khawaja Asif hints at major political developments

Minister says consensus on provincial issue likely in coming weeks, hints at opportunity for Imran's return

Faisal Sheikh

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has hinted at major political developments by the New Year, saying significant progress has been made on the provincial issue and a political consensus is expected in the coming weeks. Asif said significant progress had been made on the provincial issue and political consensus was expected to emerge in the coming weeks. "My personal view is that the New Year will see this new system as well, God willing," he said.

Asked whether the developments were expected in 2026, the defence minister said some shape of the new system would emerge before the year ended, adding that around six weeks remained in 2026. Asif said the leadership of all four provinces should be taken on board to reach a consensus, regardless of whether their parties were currently represented in parliament. "I believe that some solution will emerge," he said, describing the discussions taking place in recent weeks as positive. The defence minister also suggested that the expected political developments could offer an opportunity for incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan to return to mainstream politics.

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Mustafa Kamal says referendum will be held

DNA

KARACHI/ISLAMABAD: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Mustafa Kamal has said a referendum will be held on the creation of new provinces, describing December as a crucial month for the proposed move. Addressing party office-bearers and workers in Karachi's District Central, Federal Health Minister Kamal said Pakistan was standing at a decisive historical juncture and that "dreams of the past are now turning into reality".

He alleged that opponents of new provinces wanted to pit the city's and province's linguistic communities against one another. Kamal said the time had come to end the feudal, landlord and capitalist systems in the country. He also claimed that the Pakistan Peoples

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APNS hosts print media advertising event



DNA

KARACHI: A special event highlighting the glorious tradition and future of print media advertising was organized by the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) at the historic Frere Hall, with Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab participating as the guest of honour. During the event, a special exhibition of memorable and historic newspaper advertisements from the past was displayed on the walls of Frere Hall. Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab took a detailed tour of the exhibition and greatly appreciated the rich history, artistry, and creative standards of print media.

Earlier, APNS President Senator Sarmad Ali, in his welcome address, highlighted the enduring credibility of print media and emphasized the need to protect genuine human creativity and quality copywriting within the advertising industry in an era of the rapidly growing trend of artificial intelligence (AI). Speaking at the event, Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has revitalized and restored several historic and public places across the city—including Frere Hall and Khaliqdina Hall—so that vibrant opportunities for educational and cultural activities can be made available to the youth, students, and creative institutions. He assured participants of his and KMC's full cooperation in resolving the issues faced by the print media industry, and also committed to collaborating in organizing a proposed week-long students' exhibition during the December winter holidays to foster creative thinking among the younger generation. At the conclusion of the event, APNS Secretary General A. Qazi of Kawish Media Group thanked all the distinguished guests for attending the event, after which a lavish refreshment was arranged in honour of the paticipnts.

PUC condemns Houthi attacks on Makkah, Madinah

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council and Secretary General of the International Tazeem-e-Haramain Sharifain Council, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, has said that Houthi rebels have so far made seven attempts to attack Makkah Mukarramah and four attempts to attack Madinah Munawwarah, which are extremely alarming and condemnable.

He, in a video statement, strongly condemned these attempts and paid tribute to the vigilance of the Saudi defence forces and their operations to foil the attacks.

He said the recent attempts to target Saudi Arabia through two ballistic missiles, three cruise missiles and four drones were also extremely alarming.

Ashrafi said the protection of Haramain Sharifain is a matter of faith and belief for the entire Muslim Ummah and is our red line.

He said the Government of Pakistan, the Pakistani people, Muslim scholars and religious leaders, and Muslim governments consider the Houthis a terrorist and rebel organization that is carrying out attacks against the government and people of Yemen and Saudi Arabia. The Muslim world and the international community must take every possible effective step to eliminate Houthi terrorism and establish peace and stability in the region. He called upon the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the United Nations and the international community to take immediate and practical measures to protect Haramain Sharifain, Saudi Arabia and the innocent people of Yemen and to prevent further attacks.—**APP**

Three confiscated falcons released into natural habitat

PESHAWAR: The Wildlife Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Saturday released three falcons, previously confiscated from poachers, into their natural habitat. Muhammad Niaz, Conservator Wildlife, Central Circle Peshawar, and Mrs. Manahil Wahab, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Wildlife Peshawar, jointly released the birds. The released birds included one Peregrine Falcon and one Shaheen Falcon, which were confiscated on November 13, 2026, along with another Peregrine Falcon seized on November 14, 2026, at Peshawar Toll Plaza. The initiative reflects the commitment of the Peshawar Wildlife Division to wildlife protection, conservation and the safe rehabilitation of confiscated birds by returning them to their natural habitat. Speaking on the occasion, Conservator Wildlife, Central Circle Peshawar, Muhammad Niaz said that strict vigilance and monitoring would continue to curb illegal hunting and poaching of protected wildlife species. He warned that violators would be dealt with in accordance with the law, adding that the Wildlife Department was committed to strengthening conservation efforts and protecting precious wildlife resources across the province.—APP

CM for intelligence sharing to combat organized crime

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Sunday said that organised crime poses a serious threat to social peace, stability, and development, stressing the need for coordinated efforts at every level to curb such activities.

In her message on the International Day for the Prevention of and Fight against All Forms of Transnational Organized Crime, she said combating human trafficking, drug smuggling, and other illegal activities was an urgent need.

The chief minister noted that Punjab had witnessed a declining trend of up to 70 per cent in the overall crime rate, terming it encouraging. She stated that crime had declined by 41 per cent in Lahore, 16 per cent in Dera Ghazi Khan, 52 per cent in Bahawalpur, and 32 per cent in Sheikhupura.

Similarly, crime had decreased by 47 per cent in Multan, 36 per cent in Rawalpindi, 42 per cent in Sahiwal, 67 per cent in Gujranwala, and 58 per cent in Gujrat, she added.

CM Maryam Nawaz said the establishment of District Safe City Authorities, mobile police stations, and digital smart policing initiatives in Punjab was yielding positive results. She stressed that law enforcement agencies needed to play a more effective and proactive role in establishing a crime-free society, adding that modern technology, intelligence sharing, and a coordinated strategy were essential to dismantle criminal networks. The chief minister stated that the rule of law, protection of citizens, and indiscriminate action against criminal elements were essential for a peaceful and secure society. She highlighted that protecting women and children from human trafficking and exploitation, as well as safeguarding young people from drugs and criminal activities, remained key priorities.

CM Maryam Nawaz emphasized that public awareness, enhanced capacity of police and law enforcement agencies, and cooperation among international organizations and relevant countries were vital to combating organized crime, reiterating her commitment to building a peaceful, secure, and just society.—**APP**

Varsities asked to uphold merit in admin appointments

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan has advised the universities to ensure merit and institutional integrity in faculty and administrative appointments by properly presenting the proceedings of Selection Boards before their Syndicates or other relevant statutory forums for detailed deliberation and decision-making. In a letter addressed to Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of universities, HEC has emphasized circulation of agendas of Syndicate and other relevant statutory forum meetings among members promptly, so that the members have sufficient time for due deliberations. The letter reads: "The Commission is committed to ensuring that appointment decisions are made through the prescribed statutory forums in a manner that upholds merit and institutional integrity." The letter underlined that HEC is mandated to guide institutions in establishing minimum standards for good governance and management to provide guidelines regarding minimum criteria and qualifications for appointment and promotion of faculty and to review their implementation, and to cause evaluation of the performance of institutions.

HEC has further stressed the need for ensuring no compromise on the integrity and transparency of decision-making in appointments to faculty and administrative positions, warning that any omission "is viewed with serious concern by the Commission." The letter reads: "All universities are advised to ensure that such important and significant agenda items are shared with the members of the Syndicate and other relevant statutory forums strictly in accordance with the timelines prescribed in the Statutes of the university. Members of the Syndicate and other statutory forums shall be given sufficient time to review the agenda items and to prepare adequately for the meeting date and time." It underlines that compliance with the advisory will earn the universities a reputation for merit and transparency in the appointment process and will ultimately contribute to the quality of education. Moreover, HEC has also linked compliance with the advisory to the Institutional Performance Review (IPR) planned during the next two months by the Quality Assurance Agency of HEC._**APP**

Regular diabetes screening to reduce disease burden

ISLAMABAD: Doctors have called for increased public awareness and regular diabetes screening, particularly among people at risk, warning that delayed diagnosis can lead to serious health complications and place an additional burden on the healthcare system.

They said diabetes was becoming a major public health challenge in Pakistan, with millions of people living with the condition, many of whom remained unaware of their health status.

According to health experts, Type 2 diabetes can develop without noticeable symptoms, making regular screening essential for early diagnosis and timely intervention.

Dr Aslam Awan, a General Physician, said maintaining a healthy weight, adopting a balanced diet and engaging in regular physical activity could significantly reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

He advised people to limit sugary drinks and processed foods and make healthier dietary choices.

Dr Saleem Jawad, a Medical Practitioner, emphasized that early diagnosis was crucial, as many people discovered they had diabetes only after developing complications.

He recommended regular blood glucose testing and HbA1c screening, particularly for people at increased risk.—**APP**

Doctors' services to humanity can't be measured in money

LAHORE: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has lauded the invaluable services of doctors to humanity, saying their dedication, professional commitment and sacrifices cannot be measured in monetary terms.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the three-day 39th Annual Conference of the Pakistan Society of Neurosurgeons at a local hotel here on Friday, he said doctors often stayed awake throughout the night to serve patients and devoted their lives to saving precious human lives.

He said Pakistan had some of the finest doctors in the world, but unfortunately, they were overburdened with work and inadequately compensated for their services.

He observed that doctors faced tremendous work pressure but continued to deliver excellent healthcare services despite challenging circumstances. Their contribution to humanity had no substitute, he added.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said becoming a doctor required the courage of a lion and the expertise of a highly skilled professional.—**APP**

Edu key to progress, says BOI Minister

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Investment Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Sunday said education was the only way forward for Pakistan, urging graduates to play their role in national development and build their future in the country.

Addressing the convocation ceremony at FAST University Chiniot, the minister said all countries that had achieved remarkable economic progress had done so through education, investment in human capital and the development of knowledge-based economies.

Citing China as an example, he said its emergence as one of the world's largest economies was largely driven by investment in education and human resource development.

He assured graduating students that their future was secure and promising in Pakistan, adding that international institutions were projecting the country to become a member of the G20 within the next 20 years. The Minister said global institutions were also anticipating Pakistan's economic growth and its emergence as a prominent player on the international stage. Qaiser said the present government was working to transform Pakistan's geographical and diplomatic significance into tangible economic opportunities, creating new avenues for investment, growth and employment. Addressing the graduates, he urged them not to lose hope or consider leaving Pakistan as the only option for a successful future.

The Minister said that Pakistan offers excellent opportunities for the bright future of its young generation," he said, assuring students that they would not be disappointed if they chose to build their careers and contribute to national progress. Recalling his efforts to establish FAST University in Chiniot, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said setting up the institution in the city had been his long-standing dream.—**APP**

Crackdown on vehicles with tampered number-plates

LAHORE: The Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA) has intensified its crackdown on motorists concealing or tampering with vehicle registration number-plates to evade traffic laws, issuing images of such vehicles and motorcycles for public awareness.

According to a PSCA spokesperson, surveillance cameras had recorded several instances in which motorists used their hands, clothes, tape and other objects to conceal their number plates or alter their appearance.

The spokesperson said the authority's advanced artificial intelligence (AI) technology could identify vehicles and motorcycles despite attempts to hide or tamper with their registration plates.

He said no leniency would be shown to those involved in such violations, adding that Safe City cameras were continuously monitoring traffic violations and alerts were being promptly shared with the relevant police for legal action. Concealing number plates was not merely a traffic violation but also a deliberate attempt to hide one's identity and evade the law, he said, adding that such practices could hinder crime prevention and the identification of offenders. The spokesperson urged citizens to follow traffic regulations and ensure that their vehicle number plates remained clearly visible and complied with the prescribed standards._**APP**

Cardiac surgeries continuing uninterrupted at RIC

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology (RIC) on Friday clarified that cardiac surgery services at the hospital are continuing without interruption, rejecting reports aired on a private television channel regarding alleged delays in emergency procedures.

In an official statement, the RIC spokesperson explained that the patient featured in the news report was awaiting an elective surgery, where immediate surgical intervention is not medically urgent, rather than an emergency case. The spokesperson emphasized that essential cardiac valves are readily available for all emergency and urgent patients, confirming that no emergency procedure has been halted due to a shortage of valves. Surgical prioritization is determined strictly by clinical condition and registration seniority, without any discrimination based on payment mode or healthcare program._**APP**

Team HN clinches Bolan Polo Cup 2026 title

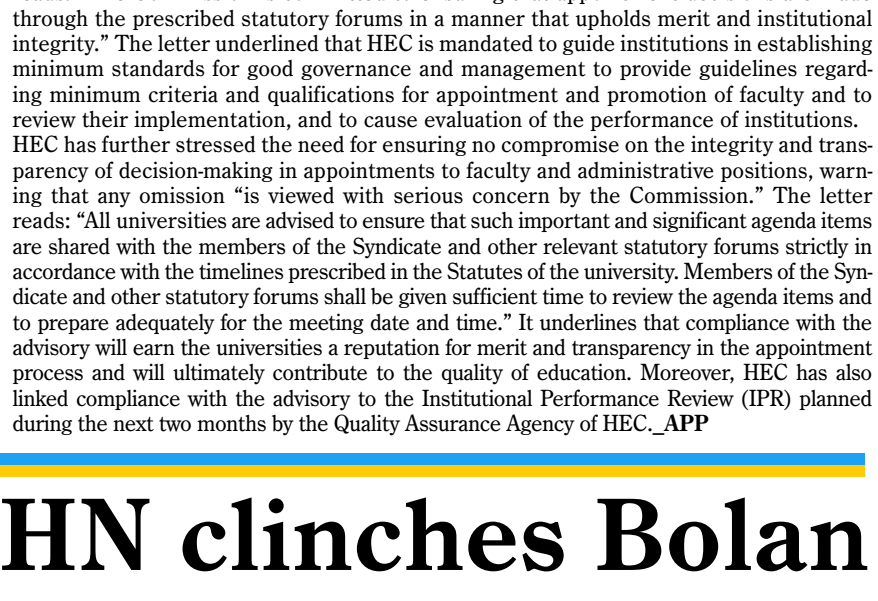
DNA

ISLAMABAD: Team HN claimed the Bolan Polo Cup 2026 title today, defeating Team ASEAN 8-5 in a competitive final at the Islamabad Club. The tournament brought together six teams, who competed over the course of the event for a place in the final. Team HN and Team ASEAN emerged as the two finalists, setting up a highly anticipated showdown on the final day.

Both sides played with skill, speed, and determination throughout the match. Team HN built a decisive lead and finished with eight goals to ASEAN's five. Team ASEAN, despite the loss, showed great spirit and kept the contest lively until the closing stages. Members of the Islamabad Club and polo lovers gathered to watch the final, creating a vibrant atmosphere at the grounds. The turnout reflected the growing enthusiasm for the sport and the club's role in promoting polo in the capital. Team HN (Champions) incuded Hashim Asad, Rezan Raza Akram, Raja Samiullahand Babar Naseem.

Team ASEAN (Runners-up) included Haider Asad, Abdullah Numan, Abdullah Faisaland Piru Navarro.

The Islamabad Club congratulated the winners and thanked all participating teams, members, and spectators for making the Bolan Polo Cup 2026 a success.





Islamabad POST
METROLITE
Monday November 16 , 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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MH.....561116
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



Departments

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



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



SLAMABAD: A digital screen of Jinnah Avenue displaying the message of 30th Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Council of Foreign Ministers under the theme of "Reviving Regionalism for a Resilient ECO" at Pak-China Center.

Bakhtawari commends Naqvi, CDA chief for Islamabad uplift

DNA

ISLAMABAD:Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Chairman of the Clean and Green Islamabad Movement, Member of the UBG Central Core Committee and former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has said that the development projects completed recently and those progressing rapidly towards completion in the federal capital reflect the effective leadership, vision and commitment to public service of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and CDA Chairman Lt. (Retd.) Sohail Ashraf.

He said that the progress made in modern infrastructure, roads, underpasses, flyovers, educational institutions, sports facilities and other public amenities in Islamabad was commendable.

Speaking to a delegation of business representatives, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that several projects, including Serena Chowk Interchange, F-8 Interchange, Tayyab Erdogan Interchange, Murree Road Interchange, T-Chowk Flyover, Shaheen Chowk Underpass, Kashmir Chowk Underpass, Jinnah Square Interchange and the improvement of Jinnah Convention Centre Chowk, had given a new dimension to the infrastructure of the federal capital. Referring to the high membership fees in Islamabad, he appealed to the authorities to immediately open the Citizens Club, whose building has already been completed, so that residents of the capital could benefit from quality recreational, social and other facilities. He said that several other projects, including the improvement of the Islamabad Expressway from PWD Underpass to GT Road, construction of the road from Korang to PWD Interchange, expansion and rehabilitation of Park Road from Tramri Chowk to Rawat Chowk, expansion of the loops at Faizabad Interchange, renovation of the Convention Centre, construction of parking plazas in commercial centres and the establishment of a Business Facilitation Centre, would provide significant benefits to residents and the business community. Bakhtawari said that projects such as the Islamabad Model Jail, Islamabad Danish School, a modern cricket stadium near Sector D-12, state-of-the-art sports arenas in F-8, G-11 and D-12, and the extension of 11th Avenue and Margalla Avenue up to the M-1 Motorway would play an important role in aligning the city's future with modern urban development requirements. He further said that the upgradation of the Diplomatic Enclave in accordance with international standards, development of sectors E-12, C-14 and I-12, improvement of Park Enclave, upgradation of Daman-e-Koh, Faisal Mosque Underpass, expansion of Ataturk Avenue and rehabilitation and expansion of Service Road East along Islamabad Expressway were also welcome initiatives. He highlighted the completion of the first phase of Islamabad Model Jail, establishment of Danish School, the proposed cricket stadium near D-12 with a seating capacity of more than 35,000 spectators, and the development of three modern sports arenas as particularly significant projects. These initiatives would not only provide modern facilities to citizens but also create new opportunities for young people in education and sports. Paying tribute to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that bringing the development of the federal capital into the national priority agenda under his patronage was a commendable step. He said that Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi had accelerated development activities through his exceptional interest, continuous monitoring and timely decisions, while CDA Chairman Lt. (Retd.) Sohail Ashraf's hard work, professional supervision and practical measures were playing an important role in the timely completion of these projects.

He said that Islamabad was the face of Pakistan and represented the country's identity before the international community. Foreign diplomats, investors, tourists and other visitors coming to the capital would have a positive experience through modern roads, an improved traffic system, attractive interchanges, a green environment, quality educational institutions and modern urban facilities. He added that these development projects would not only save citizens valuable time but also promote business activities, investment, tourism and Pakistan's international image. The development of modern infrastructure would further strengthen the business and investment-friendly environment in Islamabad.

Edu Secy orders urgent repair of dilapidated schools

ISLAMABAD: Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Nadeem visited various educational institutions functioning under the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) in Nilore Sector, Islamabad, where he expressed serious concern over the deteriorating condition of school buildings.

Taking notice of crumbling structures, inadequate sanitation facilities and damaged boundary walls posing a risk to students and staff, the Secretary directed the concerned authorities to initiate immediate remedial measures and ensure repair and rehabilitation of the affected buildings on a priority basis.

He further directed that appropriate alternative arrangements be made to accommodate students wherever school buildings are declared unsafe, ensuring that their educational activities are not disrupted.

Furthermore, during the visit, the Secretary inspected IMSB (I-X), Jagiot, and IMSG (I-X), Darkala. He also visited classrooms, science laboratories, and libraries and reviewed the overall physical condition of the school buildings. He also held interactive discussions with the Heads of Institutions to obtain feedback on the outcomes of recent teachers' training programmes, the integration of technological interventions in teaching and learning, and the effective utilization of science laboratories. As part of his visit, the Secretary also inspected two educational institutions where renovation and rehabilitation work is being carried out by the CDA under the directions of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.—**APP**

Free Hepatitis C screening continues

ISLAMABAD: Free screening for Hepatitis C is continuing at designated health centres across the federal capital under the Prime Minister's National Programme for the Elimination of Hepatitis C, providing citizens with an opportunity to get tested and access timely diagnosis and treatment. The initiative aims to identify infected individuals at an early stage, prevent further transmission of the virus and ensure access to free treatment, particularly for people belonging to low-income and vulnerable segments of society. Under the programme, citizens can avail themselves of free screening facilities at designated centres. Individuals testing positive are referred for further diagnostic confirmation through PCR testing and subsequent treatment. Hepatitis C is a viral infection that primarily affects the liver and can lead to serious complications, including liver cirrhosis and liver cancer, if left untreated. The virus is mainly transmitted through contact with infected blood, including the use of contaminated syringes, unsafe medical procedures and unsterilized instruments used for shaving and other personal care services. Health experts have stressed that timely screening is essential to identify infections before serious complications develop, adding that Hepatitis C is now a curable disease with appropriate medical treatment. They have urged citizens to avoid sharing razors, needles and other personal-use items, ensure the use of sterilized instruments at barber shops and seek screening if they suspect possible exposure to the virus. The programme is part of the government's broader efforts to eliminate Hepatitis C through free screening, diagnosis, treatment and public awareness, with the ultimate objective of reducing the disease burden and protecting public health. —**APP**

FIA books 8 deportees from Türkiye

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Immigration Islamabad has registered a case against eight Pakistani nationals deported from Türkiye for allegedly violating the conditions of their work visas by taking up employment at unauthorised locations.

An FIA official told on Sunday that the eight individuals had travelled to Türkiye on work visas but allegedly started working at places other than the companies for which their visas had been issued.

During initial investigations, it was revealed that Turkish police arrested the individuals and sent them to jail before deporting them to Pakistan.

The official said a case had been registered against the eight individuals under Sections 3 and 4 of the Passport Act, 1974.

He added that further investigations were underway to determine the possible involvement of other individuals or agents in the case.

Police nab key member of motorcycle theft gang

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have arrested a key member of an organised motorcycle theft gang and recovered five stolen motorcycles worth hundreds of thousands of rupees, cash, a weapon and ammunition during an operation in the Bani Gala area.

An ICT Police official told APP on Sunday that the Bani Gala police team arrested the suspect for his alleged involvement in several motorcycle theft cases and recovered the stolen motorcycles, cash and a weapon used in criminal activities. He said cases had been registered against the accused, while further investigation was underway to trace other possible members of the gang and establish his involvement in other incidents. The official said the operation was part of an ongoing crackdown launched on the special directions of SSP Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza against criminals involved in theft, robbery, street crime and other serious offences across the federal capital. SSP Qazi Ali Raza directed police officers to intensify operations against criminals involved in depriving citizens of their valuable belongings and ensure their arrest. He said protecting citizens and their property remained a priority for Islamabad Police, adding that action against criminal elements would continue.—**APP**

Citizens urged to learn facts on HIV transmission

ISLAMABAD: Citizens have been advised to acquire proper knowledge about HIV transmission and adopt preventive measures to protect themselves from the virus, an official of the Common Management Unit (CMU), Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, said. He said that numerous myths and misconceptions about HIV persisted in society, while even many educated people had limited knowledge of how the virus spreads and how it could be prevented. The official emphasized that HIV does not spread through casual contact, including handshakes, hugging, sharing food, using common toilets, or sitting and working alongside people living with HIV. He said the virus is primarily transmitted through unprotected special contact, contaminated needles and syringes, infected blood and from an HIV-positive mother to her child during pregnancy, childbirth, or breastfeeding. He stressed that awareness about actual transmission routes was essential to dispel misconceptions, prevent unnecessary fear and eliminate the stigma and discrimination faced by people living with HIV. The official urged people to adopt safe practices, avoid sharing needles and syringes.—**APP**

Briefs

Islamabad markets get facelift, focus shifts to pedestrian facilities

ISLAMABAD :The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is upgrading commercial centres across the federal capital, with a focus on improving pedestrian facilities, lighting and public spaces alongside renovation of roads and other civic infrastructure.

The facelift programme covers Kohsar Market, F-7 Markaz's Jinnah Super Market and Aabpara Market, with the authority completing major portions of work at the first two locations.

According to the CDA, upgradation work at Kohsar Market has been completed, with finishing work under way. At Jinnah Super Market, work extending up to Bhittai Road has been completed, while the remaining portion is expected to be completed soon.

The project includes reconstruction of footpaths and installation of decorative electric poles and lighting to improve facilities for pedestrians and visitors.

Renovation work is also under way at Aabpara Market, where landscaping and horticulture are being carried out alongside improvements to sewerage and parking facilities. The authority is also undertaking patchwork on damaged roads in the commercial centres and installing benches and dustbins to improve public convenience. CDA Chairman and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Sohail Ashraf has directed the relevant departments to complete the projects within the stipulated timelines while ensuring construction quality. –APP

New PIMS Emergency Deptt starts operation

ISLAMABAD: The newly established Emergency Department at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has started operations, providing patients with access to improved emergency healthcare facilities.

The operationalization has been welcomed by citizens, who have expressed hope that the administrative shortcomings and lapses witnessed in the past will not be repeated.

The launch has also brought a wave of excitement among doctors, nurses and other hospital staff.

According to the hospital administration, more than 69 patients were examined and treated during the initial hours of operation, while another 258 patients have received medical attention since this morning.

The operation theatre's functionality was also assessed, and a successful appendectomy was performed under general anaesthesia in the new department.

PIMS Executive Director Professor Dr Tanveer Khaliq visited the newly operational emergency department and reviewed the arrangements. A dedicated dashboard has been installed to ensure continuous monitoring of services, while additional security and sanitation arrangements have also been completed to facilitate patients and hospital staff.–**APP**

Pharmacists waned against duplicate drug licences

ISLAMABAD: The Pharmacy Services and Drug Control (PS&DC), Islamabad, has advised pharmacists applying for a Drug Sale Licence (DSL) or working as approved pharmacists to ensure that no existing licence has been issued in their name anywhere in Pakistan. According to an advisory issued by PS&DC, drug sale licences issued by provincial and territorial authorities are digitally traceable through its system. The authority has initiated a crackdown against such violations and urged pharmacists to comply with the law and uphold professional ethics to avoid legal consequences. However, voluntary disclosure of any existing licence will not entail legal action, the advisory clarified. PS&DC, Islamabad reiterated its commitment to professionalism, regulatory compliance and public health protection.–**APP**

Pak's ECO chairmanship to boost regional trade: Zikria

He emphasized that meaningful progress on the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) and Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) was essential to simplifying trade procedures, reducing transportation costs and facilitating the movement of goods across member countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Muhammad Zikria Akbar Zia, has welcomed Pakistan's hosting of the 30th Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Council of Ministers, describing it as a landmark opportunity to strengthen regional economic integration, expand trade and attract investment. He said Pakistan's assumption of the ECO Chair for 2026-27 should be utilized to translate regional commitments into tangible economic gains through enhanced private-sector engagement, stronger trade linkages and removal of barriers to cross-border commerce.

He said the expected adoption of the Islamabad Declaration and approval of ECO Vision 2035 could provide a strategic roadmap for regional connectivity, economic cooperation and sustainable development.



He emphasized that meaningful progress on the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) and Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) was essential to simplifying trade procedures, reducing transportation costs and facilitating the movement of goods across member countries.

Highlighting Pakistan's strategic geographical position, the ICCI President said the proposed Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (UAP) railway project could be a game-changer for regional connectivity by linking Central Asian markets with Pakistani seaports. He observed that improved transport infrastructure and efficient transit arrangements would enhance Pakistan's role as a regional trade and logistics hub while providing landlocked Central Asian economies with greater access to international markets.

Muhammad Zikria Akbar Zia noted that Pakistan's growing economic engagement with Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan had created promising opportunities for expanding exports, investment and industrial cooperation. He stressed that bilateral agreements and diplomatic engagements must translate into practical business partnerships, joint ventures and increased trade volumes. He proposed regular ECO business forums, trade exhibitions, B2B meetings and exchange of business delegations to connect entrepreneurs and promote commercial opportunities across the region.The ICCI President emphasized that the private sector and chambers of commerce must be active partners in advancing ECO's economic agenda, as sustainable regional integration was impossible without meaningful business-to-business collaboration. He expressed confidence that Pakistan's ECO chairmanship would strengthen the country's economic and diplomatic standing, adding that the real success of regional cooperation would be measured through increased intra-regional trade, investment flows, employment generation and shared prosperity.

Namaz-e-Janaza of Major Omar, Havildar Adnan offered

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said brave sons of the motherland who laid down their lives for defense of the country are pride of the entire nation



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Namaz-e-Janaza of Major Omar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havildar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed, who embraced Shahadatnear District Nushki, Balochistan, was offered at Chaklala Garrison, Rawalpindi.

The funeral prayers were attended by Honourable Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, COAS & CDF, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, senior civilian, military officials and relatives of the Shuhada.

The Armed Forces of Pakistan and the entire nation pay solemn tribute to the supreme sacrifice of our Shuhada. Their courage, dedication and unwavering commitment to the motherland remain a source of enduring pride.

The Shuhada will be laid to rest in their respective native towns with full military honours.

Earlier,Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said brave sons of the motherland who laid down their lives for defense of the country are pride of the entire nation. He made these remarks on his official account on X following his participation in the funeral prayers of Major Umar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havaldar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed at Chaklala Garrison, Rawalpindi. The funeral ...

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said brave sons of the motherland who laid down their lives for defense of the country are pride of the entire nation.

He made these remarks on his official account on X following his participation in the funeral prayers of Major Umar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havaldar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed at Chaklala Garrison, Rawalpindi.

The funeral was also attended by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir. Following the prayers, the minister also met with the bereaved families of the martyrs to offer his deepest condolences.

"The nation will never forget the supreme sacrifices of our martyrs," said the minister while reaffirming unshakable resolve to eradicate terrorism completely.

He prayed to the Almighty to elevate the ranks of the martyrs in Jannah and grant patience to their grieving families.

Railways to add 36 locomotives to operational fleet

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways is planning to bring up to 36 non-operational locomotives back into service by June 2027 in a bid to improve train operations, facilitate passengers and enhance the department's revenue. "Pakistan Railways currently has a fleet of 439 locomotives, of which 267 are operational while 172 remain non-operational," an official in the Ministry told APP. He said the department was taking several measures to restore out-of-service locomotives to operational condition to strengthen its capacity and generate additional revenue. Giving details, the official said that 16 non-operational locomotives were expected to become operational by February 2027, while another 20 locomotives would be available for service after major overhauls by the end of 2026. The official said that one accidental locomotive, bearing No. 9021, was also expected to be restored after necessary repairs and fitment by June 2027. Regarding the modernization of the existing fleet, he said that a PC-I for the modernization of 35 locomotives had been submitted to the MPD&SI and the Ministry of Planning; however, it had not yet been considered. Meanwhile, he said Pakistan Railways has also contacted the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) to explore the restoration of 69 locomotives, with efforts underway to bring them back into operation. He said the restoration of these locomotives is expected to improve the availability of engines, strengthen train operations and help Pakistan Railways increase its passenger and freight earnings. To a question, he said to enhance on-board passenger facilitation, state-of-the-art dining cars and modern coaches have been introduced on Shalimar Express, Pak Business Express, and Islamabad Express. LED screens with preloaded programs and water dispensers have been installed, while comprehensive janitorial services are now provided on all trains, he added. He said the enhanced services are also available on outsourced trains, including Green Line, Pak Business, Shah Hussain, Subak Raftar, Subak Kharam, Rawal Express, and Islamabad Express. The premium dining cars are operational on Khyber Mail, Allama Iqbal Express, and Rehman Baba, while complimentary services such as high tea, bedding, newspapers, hygiene kits, and mineral water are being offered on seven premium trains. Train hostesses have also been introduced on Islamabad Express, he added. The official said the significant improvements have also been made in off-board passenger facilitation. Escalators have been installed at Karachi and Lahore railway stations, while information desks and free Wi-Fi facilities now cover stations accounting for nearly 80 percent of total passenger footfall.–**APP**

CJ interacts judicial officers selected for judicial training

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), Justice Yahya Khan Afridi, on Sunday briefed the first batch of 25 top-performing judicial officers selected from across the country for a bilateral judicial exchange and training programme in China, aimed at recognising professional excellence and strengthening the capacity of the district judiciary. The pre-departure briefing was held to acknowledge the dedication, professionalism and outstanding performance of judicial officers, particularly those serving in underserved, remote and conflict-affected areas under challenging circumstances, said a press release. The judicial officers have been nominated in consultation with the respective High Courts. The delegation represents Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Islamabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, and also includes officers serving at the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Federal Judicial Academy. During the interaction, the Chief Justice appreciated the professionalism and resilience of the selected officers and described them as ambassadors of Pakistan's judiciary. He urged them to uphold the dignity and values of the judicial institution while gaining insights into China's judicial practices, technological advancements and case management systems. He emphasised that exposure to international judicial systems would broaden their professional perspectives and introduce them to innovative approaches in adjudication, court administration and institutional efficiency. He encouraged the participants to translate their learning into practical improvements in the administration and delivery of justice in their respective jurisdictions. The delegation will participate in the "Seminar for Judges from Pakistan", organised by the National Judges College of China from November 18 to December 1, 2026. The two-week programme will feature specialised interactive discussions with senior Chinese judges and legal experts, along with visits to courts in Beijing and other designated locations, including Quanzhou. The initiative is being undertaken under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Supreme People's Court of China, providing a framework for enhanced bilateral judicial cooperation through professional exchanges, institutional engagement and capacity building. The selection of the first batch marks an important step towards expanding international exposure and professional development opportunities beyond the superior judiciary, recognising the district judiciary as the foundation of the justice system. Through this initiative, the Supreme Court aims to promote professional excellence, strengthen institutional capacity and advance the vision of accessible, efficient and people-centred justice across the country.–**APP**

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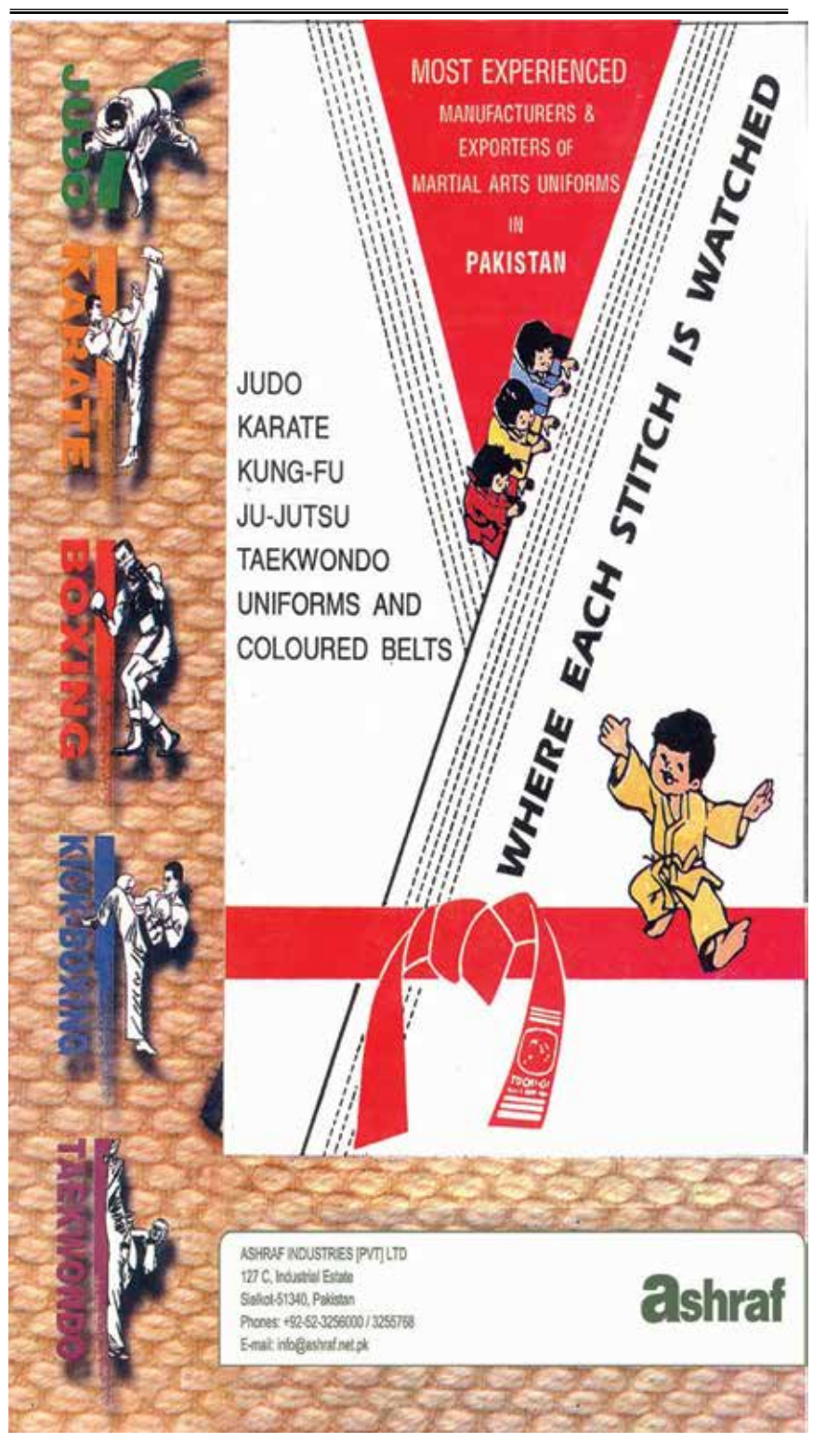
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SSP directs swift investigations

ISLAMABAD :Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Investigations Islamabad Zain Asim has directed investigation officers to complete pending cases of robbery and other serious crimes on merit, ensure timely submission of challans to courts and use modern technology to strengthen investigations.

An ICT Police official told on Sunday that SSP Zain issued these directions while chairing a meeting attended by investigation officers from across the federal capital to review progress on cases under investigation. During the meeting, SSP Zain reviewed robbery and other serious crime cases and directed officers to complete investigations without unnecessary delay. He stressed that challans should be prepared on the basis of solid evidence and submitted to the relevant courts to help ensure the conviction of offenders.

SSP Zain also directed officers to arrest absconding members of criminal gangs and intensify operations against proclaimed offenders. He said effective investigations played a key role in providing timely justice to citizens and preventing crime.–**APP**



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EU minerals diplomacy in Africa stops at the mine gate

THE EU has assembled an impressive toolkit for critical minerals engagement in Africa: 15 partnership agreements, 60 strategic project designations worldwide, a corridor strategy linking the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia to Angola's Atlantic port, and a financing architecture that spans the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and Global Gateway. The political commitment is genuine. The institutional density is real. However, the measure of success for any minerals strategy sits at the refinery gate, and Europe's African pipeline remains thin at precisely the point where value is created and dependence is broken. China refines roughly 79 percent of the world's cobalt and controls around 90 percent of rare earth processing capacity. The DRC mines about 74 percent of global cobalt, but refines less than 5 percent of its own output. Europe's four African strategic projects under the Critical Raw Materials Act – Zandkopsdrift in South Africa, Songwe Hill in Malawi, Maniry in Madagascar, and Kobaloni in Zambia – are meaningful proof that the model can work.

Firstly, the Kobaloni cobalt sulfate refinery shows both the promise and the scale of the problem. Designed to produce 6,000 tonnes per year of battery-grade cobalt sulfate – enough for roughly 1 million electric vehicles – the project carries an estimated development cost of €75 million ($83 million), of which about €55 million is expected to be debt financed.

These are not trivial sums for a junior project, but they are modest against the $6 billion-plus committed to the Lobito Corridor alone. A single refinery at this scale can credibly supply a niche of traceable, non-Chinese cobalt for European battery makers willing to pay a premium. It cannot shift the global refining balance. For comparison, China Molybdenum produced 117,549 tonnes of cobalt in 2025 from its DRC operations, a figure that dwarfs the entire planned European-backed African refining pipeline.

Secondly, the Zandkopsdrift rare earths project in South Africa's Northern Cape is more encouraging, precisely because it was designed as a processing operation from the outset. Only 5 percent of its $700 million capital cost is allocated to mining; the remaining 95 percent goes into a chemical separation plant. The project targets 17,000 tonnes per year of separated rare earth oxides by 2030, alongside 100,000 tonnes of battery-grade salts. The partnership with France's Carester, a rare earth separation specialist, is the critical enabler. Its South African partner will retain its high purity alloy outputs for direct sale while supplying mixed heavy rare earth carbonate to Carester under a 10-year agreement.

Lastly, the Lobito Corridor has become the emblematic test of Europe's delivery model, and its early performance is a diagnostic rather than a verdict. The corridor moved just over 200,000 tonnes of total cargo in 2025, its first full year of operation, against a capacity target of 4.6 million tonnes. The first train out of the DRC carried concentrate to China. A subsequent shipment of high-purity copper anode was bought by Germany's Aurubis for low-carbon refining in Europe. The contrast between those two shipments captures the corridor's value-chain neutrality: A railway can move minerals to a European buyer or a Chinese processor with equal efficiency. Transport infrastructure without bundled processing capacity and offtake contracts functions as a transit route, not a value chain. Business, rather than geopolitics, drives strategy, and that Chinese-owned mines in the DRC are already using the line to ship copper and receive sulfur for processing.

Europe is helping to build the road. The refinery at the end of it remains largely unbuilt. However, financing fragmentation compounds the scale problem. The European Investment Bank has approved a €300 million loan to South Africa's Industrial Development Corporation for on-lending to critical raw materials projects, supporting a total investment volume of about €900 million. The bank has also set an annual spending target of €2 billion for the critical minerals sector worldwide. These instruments lower the cost of capital at the margin, but they are intermediated facilities rather than direct project equity. Meanwhile, the European Investment Bank's €2 million technical assistance packages for Andrada Mining's lithium project in Namibia and EcoGraf's graphite processing plant in Tanzania target a "bankability gap" that cripples junior miners. While the €2 million can fund geological testing and environmental risk analysis, it cannot close a final investment decision. The binding constraint sits where equity and offtake guarantees are needed to bring processing plants into construction.



The Deep State's Chess Game: Nvidia, China and the Politics of Espionage

Qamar Bashir



The timing of the allegations surrounding Huang deserves particular scrutiny. Their emergence amid intensifying disagreements over semiconductor exports and preparations for high-level American-Chinese diplomacy invites questions about political motives. Whether the disclosures resulted from legitimate security concerns, internal institutional rivalries or a calculated effort to influence negotiations remains unresolved...

THE geopolitical chess game between great powers is seldom confined to what the world can see. Behind diplomatic handshakes, official statements and carefully choreographed summits lie intricate networks of intelligence gathering, strategic calculations and political manoeuvring, often conceived long before their consequences become visible. The controversy surrounding Nvidia chief Jensen Huang, allegations involving Alice Huang and suspected Chinese intelligence connections raises a disturbing question: could a personal relationship have been transformed into a geopolitical weapon to influence Washington's confrontation with Beijing?

The existence of powerful intelligence establishments and permanent national security bureaucracies is undeniable. Their influence extends across administrations, political parties, corporations and international boundaries. What is commonly described as the deep state represents the enduring institutional machinery capable of anticipating developments, shaping policy and protecting strategic interests regardless of changes in elected leadership. Its roots penetrate deeply into government, while its influence stretches across the technological, financial and diplomatic architecture of international power.

The timing of the allegations surrounding Huang deserves particular scrutiny. Their emergence amid intensifying disagreements over semiconductor exports and preparations for high-level American-Chinese diplomacy invites questions about political motives. Whether the disclosures resulted from legitimate security concerns, internal institutional rivalries or a calculated effort to influence negotiations remains unresolved. Nevertheless, the possibility of strategic manipulation cannot simply be dismissed when the stakes involve technological supremacy and the balance of global power. Huang occupies an extraordinary position in the American economy. Nvidia has emerged as a central pillar of the artificial intelligence revolution, supplying advanced processors that power data centres, scientific research, industrial automation and emerging technologies. Its commercial success generates enormous revenues, supports American technological leadership and strengthens Washington's influence over the global semiconductor industry.

China represents both a major commercial opportunity and a strategic competitor. Restrictions on advanced semiconductor exports have therefore created a fundamental contradiction between America's economic interests and its national security objectives. Selling chips strengthens American companies, generates revenue and preserves technological influence. Restricting those sales seeks to prevent competitors from acquiring capabilities considered essential to future military and economic power.

Huang has consistently advocated maintaining commercial engagement with international markets, including China. His position reflects the argument that American technological dominance is strengthened when global customers remain dependent upon American innovation. National security hardliners, however, fear that sophisticated processors could accelerate China's military modernisation and undermine America's strategic advantage. It is within this struggle that the controversy acquires geopolitical significance. Allegations concerning Huang's private relationships and possible connections to Chinese intelligence have introduced personal conduct into an already contentious debate over national security. Yet an allegation is not evidence, suspicion is not conviction, and political controversy cannot substitute for judicial determination.

The comparison with former President Bill Clinton is particularly instructive. Clinton's relationship with Monica Lewinsky became a major national scandal, resulting in impeachment by the House of Representatives. Nevertheless, he was acquitted by the Senate and completed his presidential term. His conduct was subjected to public scrutiny, political accountability and constitutional proceedings without automatically terminating his presidency. If a sitting American president could complete his term following such a scandal, the proportionality of severe professional consequences imposed upon a corporate executive over allegations of private misconduct deserves examination.

The relevant distinction must be whether credible evidence establishes criminal behaviour, compromised national security or violations of corporate obligations, rather than whether the individual's private life attracts public disapproval. The allegations involving Alice Huang require precisely this distinction. Claims of espionage, intelligence manipulation or unlawful diversion of restricted semiconductor technology cannot be treated as established merely because they circulate through intelligence disclosures or media reporting. Any credible accusation demands independent investigation, admissible evidence and appropriate legal scrutiny.

The same principle applies to allegations that advanced Nvidia processors were diverted through intermediaries to China. Semiconductor export controls are legitimate subjects of investigation, and deliberate violations can carry serious consequences. However, the existence of suspicious commercial transactions does not automatically establish the personal involvement of Nvidia's leadership or prove a foreign intelligence conspiracy.

Equally important is the question of timing. Why would potentially damaging information become public at a moment when American-Chinese technological negotiations carry enormous diplomatic and commercial consequences? Was the disclosure motivated by genuine security concerns, bureaucratic frustration, commercial rivalry or an effort to weaken advocates of a more accommodating semiconductor policy? These questions become especially consequential when viewed against the wider struggle for diplomatic leverage. In great-power negotiations, perceptions of strength, credibility and moral authority can influence the atmosphere in which concessions are demanded.

The greater danger is that a personal controversy could become another instrument in an increasingly confrontational relationship between two economic superpowers. When intelligence allegations are deployed without transparent evidence, they risk undermining public confidence in legal institutions while intensifying international suspicion.

The appropriate response must therefore be governed by justice rather than geopolitical expediency. If Huang has been removed from his leadership position primarily because of unproven allegations, his professional standing deserves reconsideration through an independent corporate process. Any credible evidence of espionage, unlawful technology transfers or other criminal conduct should be examined through transparent judicial proceedings.

Neither commercial success nor personal prominence should confer immunity from investigation. Equally, neither political pressure nor intelligence suspicion should justify punishment without sufficient evidence. The presumption of innocence and the requirement of due process must apply regardless of the nationality, influence or economic importance of the individual concerned.

Washington must also recognise the danger of transforming every commercial disagreement with China into an intelligence confrontation. Semiconductor competition is already reshaping global economic relationships. Injecting allegations of personal misconduct and espionage into sensitive diplomacy without demonstrable proof risks replacing negotiation with humiliation and cooperation with retaliation. If the geopolitical chessboard becomes a theatre where reputations are destroyed, corporations destabilised and international relationships poisoned through allegations rather than proven wrongdoing, the greatest casualty will be justice itself. America would serve its economic interests, constitutional principles and diplomatic credibility far better by allowing evidence to determine guilt, restoring professional fairness wherever warranted, and refusing to turn an unresolved personal controversy into another weapon against China.

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

Pakistan's New Provinces: The Referendum and Constitutional Question

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



Political realities complicate matters further. The Pakistan Peoples Party has consistently opposed the division of Sindh, holding that its boundaries cannot be touched without the Sindh Assembly's consent, a stance rooted in both constitutional principle and anxieties about identity and autonomy. The PML-N has been more guarded, some of its leaders welcoming administrative...

EVERY few years the idea of carving new provinces out of the old resurfaces in Pakistan's politics, usually with great enthusiasm and little detail. This time it returns at a moment when the state is confronted with multiple challenges and stark regional disparities. What was once political rhetoric has acquired constitutional and institutional weight. A country with a swollen population and ever greater demands upon its public administration may fairly ask whether its provincial map still serves it. But how the question is answered will matter as much as the answer itself. Reform pursued carelessly may feeble the federation rather than fortify it. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has repeatedly floated a referendum as a means of gauging public opinion. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has endorsed the possibility of as many as 12 provinces, insisting that administrative convenience, not ethnicity or language, should be the guiding principle. The proposals reportedly under discussion envisage four units in Punjab, three each in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, and two in Sindh. Behind them lies a reasonable suspicion that a country of Pakistan's size has outgrown its present arrangements.

Yet a referendum is no constitutional shortcut, and the country's own history counsels caution. In July 1947, the people of the North-West Frontier Province voted on whether to join India or Pakistan. Roughly 99 per cent of the votes cast favoured Pakistan, though turnout was only about 51 per cent, the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgar, led by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, having boycotted the exercise in favour of other arrangements. Earlier that month, Sylhet had voted on whether to join East Bengal or remain in Assam. A majority chose East Bengal, and most of the district went to Pakistan under the Radcliffe Award.

Later referendums were of a very different character. In 1960, Field Marshal Ayub Khan sought a vote of confidence from some 80,000 Basic Democrats and duly received overwhelming support. General Zia-ul-Haq's referendum of December 1984 tied approval of his Islamization program to his continuation in office for five more years. The official result claimed about 98.5 per cent in favour, but the opposition boycotted the poll and questioned the turnout. General Pervez Musharraf's referendum of April 2002 yielded a claimed majority approaching 98 per cent, amid allegations of widespread irregularities from opposition parties and independent observers alike. The legacy is an unhappy one. Rather than maturing into an accepted instrument of democratic consultation, the referendum became a device by which military rulers obtained a veneer of legitimacy, and it was discredited by boycotts, disputed participation and charges of manipulation. Any proposal to revive it must therefore be judged not only by its constitutional permissibility but by the credibility, neutrality and transparency of the process.

The constitutional record is no less instructive. The 1973 Constitution, as originally framed, contained no referendum mechanism. In May 1977, the Seventh Amendment briefly inserted Article 96-A, allowing the prime minister to seek a vote of confidence from the people. It was never invoked and vanished in the upheaval of July 1977. The more durable provision arrived through the Revival of the Constitution of 1973 Order, 1985, which added clauses (6) and (7) to Article 48. The Eighteenth Amendment later reshaped it: the prime minister may now refer a matter of national importance to a joint sitting of parliament and, if it is approved, put it to the people in a yes-or-no referendum regulated by law.

That provision, however, should not be confused with a procedure for creating new provinces. Article 1 names the constituent territories of the federation, while Article 239 prescribes how the Constitution may be amended. Any change affecting provincial boundaries needs a two-thirds majority of the total membership of both the National Assembly and the Senate. More crucially, Article 239(4) forbids presenting to the president any amendment that alters the limits of a province unless the provincial assembly concerned has approved it by a two-thirds majority of its total membership. This safeguard lies at the heart of the federal compact. It denies the center the power to redraw the territory of a constituent unit on its own. A referendum may reveal public sentiment and lend political momentum, but it cannot stand in for the consent Article 239 demands. Even an overwhelming popular verdict cannot compel a provincial assembly to surrender its territory.

Political realities complicate matters further. The Pakistan Peoples Party has consistently opposed the division of Sindh, holding that its boundaries cannot be touched without the Sindh Assembly's consent, a stance rooted in both constitutional principle and anxieties about identity and autonomy. The PML-N has been more guarded, some of its leaders welcoming administrative reform while stressing parliamentary procedure and consensus. The PTI has generally favoured new provinces in principle, though its position on the precise constitutional route is of some consequence. Meaningful progress is hard to imagine without cooperation among these parties. A referendum may be authorised under Article 48, but without the requisite parliamentary majorities and the approval of the affected provincial assembly, Sindh's above all, it would remain politically weighty yet legally insufficient.

The administrative case for rethinking the provincial structure is not without substance. Punjab's vast population, Balochistan's immense geography and the disparities within several regions all raise fair questions about representation and access to public services. Smaller units could bring government closer to the citizen and encourage more balanced development. But new legislatures, secretariats and institutions come at a considerable price, and without careful financial planning, more provinces could mean more bureaucracy rather than better government.

Nor should the alternative be neglected. Article 140-A provides a constitutional basis for devolving political, administrative and financial authority to elected local governments. Properly empowered, they could redress many of the grievances attributed to distant provincial capitals without disturbing a single boundary. New provinces may yet prove necessary, but they must emerge from national consensus, not political expediency. That requires transparent studies of population, resources, administrative capacity and economic viability, together with firm assurances that the rights of existing provinces will be respected.

The key question is whether Pakistan's leadership can pursue new provinces constitutionally. A referendum can measure opinion; it cannot replace parliamentary responsibility or provincial consent. A federation draws its strength not from the number of its units but from the trust that binds them. Reform, if it comes, must come through dialogue, consensus and constitutional restraint.

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Khawaja Asif hints at major...

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"If he agrees to this, or if they reach an agreement, then it will provide a window of opportunity for them to return to mainstream politics once this political phase is over," Asif said. He likened the "opportunity" to the one the PML-N had received during the "extension of former army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa". Asif's remarks come amid a renewed debate over the creation of new provinces, with several government figures publicly supporting a referendum or political consensus on the issue. Earlier, Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader and Federal Health Minister Mustafa Kamal said a referendum would be held on the creation of new provinces, describing December as a crucial month for the proposed move. Addressing an event in Karachi, Kamal said Pakistan was standing at a decisive historical juncture and alleged that opponents of new provinces wanted to pit linguistic communities against one another.

Mustafa Kamal says referendum will be held

FROM PAGE 01

Party (PPP) did not represent the entirety of Sindh and that Sindhi nationalists were enemies of the Sindhi people. Islamabad's administrative status may be changed Meanwhile, government sources say preparations are complete to grant Islamabad a special administrative status, with a new governance model proposed for the federal capital. Under the proposal, Islamabad could be made a special-status territory or a model administrative unit, with a mayor serving as its administrative head. The elected body of the proposed unit could comprise 25 to 30 members. The sources said the plan also envisaged expanding Islamabad's geographical boundaries. Proposals under consideration include incorporating parts of Haripur district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, some areas of Rawalpindi and parts of NA-51 in Murree into the federal capital.

Iran says attacked military...

FROM PAGE 01

February, has choked shipping in the region and beyond. The US blockade of Iranian ports has further complicated matters. While Iran and the United States are still trying to negotiate an end to the conflict, Moreira da Silva said he had the same message for both countries. "They should continue their negotiations about the comprehensive deal – but that deal should not avoid an immediate, exceptional, limited, and time-bound solution for the fertilisers," he said. "Basically what we need is five vessels a day with fertilisers," he added. Meanwhile, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) says it has intercepted and destroyed a US MQ-1 Predator drone over Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz, according to a statement carried by Iran's state broadcaster IRIB.

Islamabad hosts...

FROM PAGE 01

Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Musa Kulaklikaya, and Kyrgyz Republic's Deputy FM Kairat Erkinovich Tursunkulov are among those in Islamabad for the meeting. Azeri Deputy FM Elnur Mammadov, Kazakh Deputy FM Arman Issagaliyev, and Turkmenistan's FM Rashid Meredov also arrived in the federal capital today. Upon his arrival, Meredov, who is also the deputy chairman of Turkmenistan's cabinet of ministers, was received by Pakistan's Ambassador to Turkmenistan and other officials, the Foreign Office (FO) said.

Diplomatic football league season 10 kicks off in Capital

The Deputy Chairman Senate appreciated the initiative, emphasizing the role of sports diplomacy in promoting international friendship, cultural exchange, and stronger relations among nations



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 10th season of the Diplomatic Football League (DFL) was officially inaugurated at a grand ceremony at Mövenpick Hotel, Islamabad, marking a decade of sports diplomacy bringing together the capital's diplomatic community.

Deputy Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Mr. Syedaal Khan Nasar, and President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Mr. Muhammad Zikria Akbar Zia, graced the occasion as Chief Guests.

The ceremony was attended by H.E. Mr. Paulo Miguel Guedes Domingues, Ambassador of Portugal; H.E. Mr. Carlos Aragón Gil de la Serna, Ambassador of Spain; H.E. Mr. Damián Cordero Torres, Ambassador of Cuba; Mr. Nicolas Verdun, General Manager of Mövenpick Hotel; and Mr. Adeel Riaz, CEO of Royal Business Solution, alongside other diplomats and distinguished guests.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Mubasher Sanjrani, Founder and Organizer of DFL, said the league has become one of the most anticipated events among the diplomatic community. He noted that this landmark season features approximately 25 diplomatic teams, representing over 35 nationalities and around 360 players.

The Deputy Chairman Senate appreciated the initiative, emphasizing the role of sports diplomacy in promoting international friendship, cultural exchange, and stronger relations among nations.

The league is supported by sponsors including Royal Business Solution (RBS), Mövenpick Hotel, Ahan Travels and Tours, MUBA, Comet Sports, B2C, and CSA. The three-month tournament will feature matches exclusively on weekends, bringing the diplomatic community together through football, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

OIC Secy General meets Deputy PM

FROM PAGE 01

Welcoming the Secretary General on his first visit to Islamabad since assuming office, the DPM/FM reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening the OIC as a unified and effective voice of the Muslim Ummah. He assured the Secretary General of Pakistan's continued support and cooperation in advancing the Organization's objectives. The Secretary General appreciated Pakistan's diplomatic efforts during the Iran–US conflict to promote peace and stability in the region. He also commended Pakistan's active role in the OIC, including its contributions through COMSTECH to promoting scientific and technological cooperation among member states. Both sides agreed to maintain close cooperation within the OIC and reiterated their steadfast support for the peoples of Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir and the realization of their right to self-determination.

Wasim weighs in on Australia's sandpaper controversy

FORMER Pakistan pacer says scratches caused by sandpaper differ from conventional ball maintenance. Former Pakistan captain and fast-bowling great Wasim Akram on Saturday weighed in on the renewed discussion over Australia's infamous ball-tampering scandal during the 2018 Cape Town Test against South Africa. Usman Khawaja, who called time on his glittering international career earlier this year after representing Australia in 88 Tests, renewed the scandal last Saturday by claiming that the entire Australia team was aware of the ball-tampering plot.

"It was all of us. Not the batters, not the bowlers, not the staff. All of us," Khawaja had told the Sydney Morning Herald ahead of the release of his autobiography, Sabr, next week, where a chapter is dedicated to the issue. The former opener's claims have since sparked debate in Australian cricket, ultimately leading their current Test captain, Pat Cummins, to address the issue publicly during an hour-long press conference on Friday, where he described the allegations as "100 per cent wrong" and "complete and utter nonsense".

"When he says we all knew, if by that he means that we knew sandpaper was going out on the field, he's 100 per cent wrong. I've said that consistently for the last eight years. I did not know that was happening," Cummins said earlier this week. Meanwhile, Pakistan bowling great Akram, who described Cummins as a very close friend, a great cricketer and one of the top leaders in world cricket currently, suggested that the Australian team may not be aware of the ball-tampering plot at the time. "For the last couple of weeks, I've been hearing [about] this controversy. Usman Khawaja wrote a book called Sabr, where he said what happened eight years ago," Akram said in a video message.

"You know, South Africa, I believe, with the sandpaper thing, the issue. And I saw Pat Cummins, who's a very close friend of mine, great cricketer, one of the top leaders in world cricket, the way he leads the team from the front. And he said he didn't know.

"So probably the team didn't know at the time what was happening, in my opinion. It's my opinion. It can be right or wrong."

Akram, however, highlighted the difference between conventional ball maintenance and the use of sandpaper, explaining that the two methods produce noticeably different marks on a cricket ball.

"But as a bowler, when the cricket ball comes in my hand, either it's the fifth over, either it's in 10th over, or either it's in 50th over the old ball, where you look after the ball, you shine the one side, if it's a dry day, dry square, you one bounce throw, you get scratch a bit," Akram explained. "But the sandpaper scratch is totally different from the one-bounce scratch. And as a cricket lover, if you want to check, grab a semi-new cricket ball, grab a sandpaper, and rub it in, you know, the scratches are totally different," he added. – **APP**

Pakistan beat Bangladesh 1-0 to reach SAFF C'ship final for first time

Pakistan will face arch-rival India in final clash on November 17

PAKISTAN reached the SAFF Championship final for the first time on Saturday, beating hosts Bangladesh 1-0 in the second semi-final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. The victory meant Pakistan reached the final of the tournament for the first time since its advent in 1993, and will face arch-rivals India in the summit clash, scheduled to be played at the same venue on Tuesday. The enthralling knockout fixture between the Green Shirts and the hosts got off to a quiet start as neither could open the scoring in the first half. Although both Pakistan and Bangladesh made several attempts to net the opener, the scoreboard remained intact at 0-0 until 85 minutes of action. Pakistan eventually pulled ahead in the 86th minute through Samad, who breached Bangladesh's defence with a calculated strike following a precise assist by Hayan Khattak, who was brought in as a substitute for Ali Uzair in the 74th minute. With just four minutes remaining of the regulation time, the home side made desperate attempts for the equaliser, including multiple substitutions in the third minute of injury time, but Pakistan's defence denied them a comeback and ultimately ensured a historic victory for their team. – **APP**

Pakistani exhibitors seek new opportunities at CIIE

SHANGHAI: Pakistani entrepreneurs at the China International Import Expo (CIIE) were looking to expand business in the Chinese market and connect with consumers and business partners. Several Pakistani exhibitors told China Economic Net (CEN) they expected good sales and new business partnerships, while highlighting the importance of product visibility and booth placement.

"We have been in China for the last 14 years, and this is our sixth time participating in the expo. We are expecting good results this year," said Abdul Basit Khan, CEO of FB Enterprise. Khan said the company's years in China and repeated participation in the CIIE had helped it better understand the local market. Faisal Rasheed, CEO of Mega International, said the company had introduced new products with Chinese consumer preferences in mind.

"We are bringing new innovations according to the Chinese market. Over the years, we have gained experience and a better understanding of Chinese tastes and preferences," he told CEN. Muhammad Imran of Arabian Sea Blue Enterprises also said he was optimistic about the exhibition and expected good results. He said booth visibility and positioning could help exhibitors reach more visitors. Other Pakistani exhibitors shared similar expectations, expressing hope for strong sales and fruitful business connections. – **APP**

Yiwu signs MOU on friendly relations and exchanges with Pakistan

BEIJING: Yiwu, a major trade hub in Zhejiang province, signed a memorandum of understanding on friendly relations and exchanges with Rawalpindi, at the opening ceremony of the 7th Zhejiang International Friendship Cities Exchange Exhibition, as the city extended its friendly exchange network to four new partners.

The other three cities that have established friendly exchange relations with Yiwu are Bandar Lampung in Indonesia, Addu City in the Maldives and Guanajuato in Mexico, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday. The agreements bring Yiwu's total friendly exchange relations to 68 cities and institutions in 42 countries.



Since its launch in 2019, the Zhejiang International Friendship Cities Exchange Exhibition has been held six times, drawing 128 friendship cities and institutions from 69 countries and regions. Over the years, it has grown from a showcase of urban culture to a practical cooperation platform bringing together inter-city exchange, trade promotion and cultural mutual learning.

At the Rawalpindi City Pavilion, Pakistani jewelry is on display. The exhibition area moves beyond simple product display to a multidimensional format combining exhibits with cultural interpretation. Each booth serves as a city calling card, with exhibits no longer isolated commodities but windows through which visitors can access the unique local customs and ways of life of different regions. – **APP**

China's MAZU All-in-One Box Makes Global Debut at COP31 Forum

The MAZU solution, developed by CMA for global disaster prevention and mitigation, provides practical and sustainable early warning support for countries in the Global South, Chen said

ISLAMABAD: China's MAZU all-in-one box, an intelligent meteorological early warning solution, was officially launched globally at the COP31 High-Level Forum on South-South Cooperation on Climate Change in Antalya, Türkiye, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday.

As of October 2026, the MAZU solution had been deployed in eight countries: Pakistan, Ethiopia, the Solomon Islands, Jordan, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Djibouti and Nepal. More than 50 other countries had also accessed the system through cloud-based trials, making it a public service product for disaster prevention and mitigation with an expanding international reach. The launch adds a new meteorological public service product to China's efforts to promote South-South cooperation on climate change and support developing countries in strengthening their capacity for disaster prevention and mitigation.

Dr. Chen Zhenlin, Administrator of the China Meteorological Administration (CMA), said that frequent extreme weather events and meteorological disasters amid global climate change pose severe challenges to sustainable human development.

The MAZU solution, developed by CMA for global disaster prevention and mitigation, provides practical and sustainable early warning support for countries in the Global South, Chen said. CMA stands ready to work with partners from all sectors to deepen international cooperation in meteorological disaster prevention and mitigation, strengthen early warning capabilities and promote the wider application and sharing of the MAZU solution, he pinpointed.

Chen also called for joint efforts in technological innovation, making full use of the MAZU R&D platform and promoting landmark applications powered by artificial intelligence and Earth system data.

"We will jointly cultivate international talent for the benefit of livelihoods, leveraging the MAZU Scholarship and the Belt and Road Meteorological Visiting Scholar program to foster people-to-people bonds through meteorological capacity building, turning MAZU solution into a vivid practice of building a community with a shared future for mankind," Chen highlighted.



MAZU stands for Multi-hazard, Alert, Zero-gap and Universal. Named after Mazu, the Chinese guardian goddess of the sea, it is an AI-driven meteorological early warning platform designed to help countries monitor and respond to multiple weather-related hazards.

The MAZU all-in-one box is a lightweight, integrated hardware-and-software solution designed to run the MAZU platform locally. It combines storage, intelligent computing, networking and display functions, and is compatible with Ethernet, 5G and satellite communications. Its capabilities include nowcasting, overview dashboards, operational monitoring and on-site AI assistance, enabling developing countries to integrate local observational data and strengthen their early warning operations.

The system can operate independently on site or connect to cloud resources and integrate with existing operational systems.

It also supports modular expansion and continuous upgrades, allowing local meteorological agencies to adapt the system to their operational needs. Given the wide variations in climatic conditions around the world, CMA has been working closely with national meteorological and hydrological agencies to adapt MAZU to local conditions. – **APP**

Bilawal says he is on Fazl side

FROM PAGE 01

whose PPP is an ally of the ruling coalition – "condemned the government's actions and political vengeance" targeting the JUI-F. "The government should tolerate the opposition's criticism," Bilawal was quoted as saying in the statement. He highlighted that the opposition had an "extremely important role in democracy and a parliamentary system". Speaking to Fazl, Bilawal said the "government should refrain from such actions that weaken democracy and the Parliament". The PPP chairman has recently been calling for political unity in the country, urging the prime minister to take measures to build trust with the government's allies and the opposition.

Three sentenced to death...

FROM PAGE 01

issued its ruling, sentencing to death the three criminals who carried out the terrorist attack" at the church. The court found them guilty of "terrorist attacks" resulting in death, as well as weapons offenses, "conspiracy to commit terrorist acts" and "promoting the ideas of a terrorist organization." The defendants attended the closed hearing by video link from detention. Tight security guarded the courthouse nevertheless. The attack shocked Jordan, a Muslim-majority kingdom where Christians make up around three percent of the population. Jordan's Council of Church leaders announced Sunday the "cancelation of all Christmas celebrations" as the community mourns the attack. They encouraged churches to make their Christmas trees "a symbol of hope, unity and peace" and to "light candles in memory of the souls of the martyrs."

Another messy day for those...

FROM PAGE 01

"Everything they touched turned bad. Big money spent unwisely, making an old and broken system worse than when they began," Trump asserted. FAA chief Bryan Bedford had said Saturday that air travel for millions of Americans stranded at airports would return to normal by the close of business on Sunday. But Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said Sunday morning it will actually take longer to get planes, crews and travelers to where they need to be. "So, in the airspace, we're going to see things come back to normal today, but probably fully normal tomorrow," Duffy said on ABC News. "We had airplanes and crews out of position because of Friday, so it takes a little bit of time to do that." MOSCOW: Ukrainian airstrikes hit the central Russian city of Nizhnekamsk on Sunday, local authorities said, with media reporting a fire in one of the country's biggest petrochemical plants.

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Yiwu signs MOU on friendly ties & exchanges with Rawalpindi

BEIJING: Yiwu, a major trade hub in Zhejiang province, signed a memorandum of understanding on friendly relations and exchanges with Rawalpindi, Pakistan, at the opening ceremony of the 7th Zhejiang International Friendship Cities Exchange Exhibition yesterday, as the city extended its friendly exchange network to four new partners.

The other three cities that have established friendly exchange relations with Yiwu are Bandar Lampung in Indonesia, Addu City in the Maldives and Guanajuato in Mexico. The agreements bring Yiwu's total friendly exchange relations to 68 cities and institutions in 42 countries, CEN reported. Since its launch in 2019, the Zhejiang International Friendship Cities Exchange Exhibition has been held six times, drawing 128 friendship cities and institutions from 69 countries and regions. Over the years, it has grown from a showcase of urban culture to a practical cooperation platform bringing together inter-city exchange, trade promotion and cultural mutual learning. At the Rawalpindi City Pavilion, Pakistani jewelry is on display. The exhibition area moves beyond simple product display to a multidimensional format combining exhibits with cultural interpretation. Each booth serves as a city calling card, with exhibits no longer isolated commodities but windows through which visitors can access the unique local customs and ways of life of different regions.–**APP**

Syria, Lebanon discuss expanding security coop

DAMASCUS: Syria and Lebanon agreed to strengthen security coordination and deepen cooperation between their interior ministries during talks in Damascus on Sunday, Syrian Interior Minister Anas Khattab said. Khattab met his Lebanese counterpart, Ahmad al-Hajjar, and an accompanying delegation to discuss bilateral ties and security issues of mutual interest, according to state news agency SANA. He described the talks as warm and constructive, saying both sides were committed to expanding cooperation across sectors and promoting security and stability in the region._**APP**

'Inside Gaza' wins best documentary

MONTREAL: "Inside Gaza," a documentary that follows journalists from global news agency AFP after the October 7, 2023 attack, received the Best Documentary Film award at Montreal's Cinemania Film Festival on Saturday. Directed by Helene Lam Trong, the 72-minute film follows the daily lives of four AFP journalists who bear witness to the difficulties of reporting in a war-torn territory largely closed off to international media.

The film is compiled from material produced by the team on the ground, as well as from interviews conducted after they left. Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel killed more than 1,200 people, the vast majority of them civilians. Armed men also took more than 200 people hostage. Israel launched an enormous military response, pulverizing swathes of Gaza in attacks that have left 73,000 people dead, according to the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry, whose figures are considered reliable by the United Nations. Adel Zaanoun, AFP's Gaza bureau chief and one of the film's four protagonists, accepted the award in Montreal. He dedicated the win to all the journalists "killed in this crazy and dirty war in Gaza" and to those "who still work on the ground without food, without water, without Internet, without anything."He called on people worldwide to "continue to support journalists not only in Gaza," but "everywhere for media freedom." The film has won multiple international awards and is eligible for Oscar contention.–APP

Pak proposes virtual green varsity for climate innovators

Emphasising the need to move beyond climate conference resolutions towards practical outcomes, the minister said Pakistan wanted to build an international platform where students, researchers and academic institutions could collaborate on climate-related challenges and develop solutions relevant to their societies

ANTALYA: Pakistan has proposed establishing a virtual green university through international academic partnerships and launching a dedicated fund to support youth-led climate innovations, as it seeks to translate climate knowledge and research into practical solutions. Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr Musadik Malik presented the proposals while addressing a session titled "From Learning Campuses to Climate Solutions: Advancing Climate Resilience Through Education, Innovation and Partnerships", organised in collaboration with the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, Türkiye. Emphasising the need to move beyond climate conference resolutions towards practical outcomes, the minister said Pakistan wanted to build an international platform where students, researchers and academic institutions could collaborate on climate-related challenges and develop solutions relevant to their societies. Under the proposed virtual green university framework, he invited international academic institutions to collaborate with Pakistan through joint research programmes, faculty and student exchanges, seminars and virtual research centres. He said the initiative could bring together scholars, experienced researchers and graduate students, particularly from developing countries, to generate knowledge and develop locally relevant solutions to climate challenges. Dr Malik also offered Pakistan's research facilities, glacier-related data and support for primary research to international scientists interested in studying mountain ecosystems and the changing cryosphere. He said mountain regions were among the first to experience the impacts of changes in the cryosphere, warning that developments in these areas could have consequences for downstream plains in the coming years. The minister invited international researchers to work with Pakistani institutions on glacier studies, saying the country was prepared to facilitate collaborative research and make relevant data and academic resources available. A second proposal presented by the minister was the Greenfield fund, intended to provide financial support to innovative ideas and climate-related ventures developed by young people. He said a fund had been announced and a board established, with a proposed five-member team, including private-sector and investment expertise, to assess promising ideas and help finance their development. The minister described access to risk capital as a major requirement for encouraging young innovators, arguing that promising ideas often failed to reach commercialisation because of inadequate financial support. He said Pakistan needed to invest in young scientists, entrepreneurs and graduates rather than relying exclusively on conventional institutional approaches. "Place your bets on your children, not on conferences and resolutions," he said, urging institutions to provide young people with the resources and opportunities needed to turn innovative ideas into viable solutions. Dr Malik said innovation should not be confined to science and technology, adding that ideas could emerge from literature, history, arts, music, drama and business models. Their convergence, he said, could generate solutions with economic and social value. Referring to the experiences of China and Finland, he argued that environmental challenges and the growing sophistication of public demand could create opportunities for innovation. He cited China's development of solar technology and Finland's environmental technology sector as examples of how countries could respond to challenges through technological development. The minister also highlighted the importance of linking different stages of innovation, from idea generation and incubation to acceleration and commercialisation, saying collaboration among academic institutions, businesses and governments was essential for the process. He said Pakistan was seeking partnerships that could help young people access contemporary scientific knowledge, research opportunities and investment rather than depending on outdated approaches.–**DNA**



Islamabad: Pakistan's Ambassador to Turkmenistan, Dr. Faryal Leghari, called on the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Global powers converge on Manila as ASEAN summit kicks off

MANILA: A key regional summit opens on Sunday in Manila, with Southeast Asian heads of state facing questions on trade, security and an ongoing energy crisis while playing host to a who's who of global leaders. US President Donald Trump is scheduled to arrive on Tuesday near the summit's conclusion, a visit expected to include a sideline meeting with fellow Quad countries India, Japan and Australia – the first of his second term. The meeting of the Quad – a grouping broadly aimed at counterbalancing China's regional influence – would come days before a historic sit-down with Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin in Shenzhen. Brazil's recently re-elected Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, meanwhile, is set to attend a plenary session of the 11-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Sunday, while Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese will sign a new defense pact with host country the Philippines. Nearly 20,000 police officers have been deployed around Metro Manila for the summit, with progressive groups predicting a turnout of thousands on Tuesday for an anti-Trump march on the summit site. Much of the uproar targets the US Pax Silica program – a supply-chain initiative designed to counter China's dominance in semiconductors and rare earths – whose flagship Philippine project, a 1,620-hectare AI manufacturing hub north of Manila, threatens to displace Indigenous families. US Ambassador to the Philippines Lee Lipton said last week that a widely rumored November target date for a deal signing timed to Trump's visit was never in the works. A day of early meetings kicked off on Saturday with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney announcing a Philippine trade deal, and ASEAN leaders huddling on key issues including haze from Indonesia and potential fuel-sharing schemes as members struggle with Iran war-driven shortages. But two issues that have vexed ASEAN leaders for years – a languishing South China Sea "Code of Conduct" and their relationship with war-torn Myanmar – look to be Singapore's problem when the bloc's rotating chair passes to the city-state in 2027. Myanmar has been excluded from high-level ASEAN meetings since a 2021 military coup that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and triggered an ongoing civil war.–**APP**

SpaceX's Starship captured by launch pad arms

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida: SpaceX's Starship made a triumphant return to Earth on Saturday, caught in midair by giant mechanical arms where its journey began 22 hours earlier. It was the grand finale that Elon Musk and his team hoped for – the first-ever capture of a Starship flying back from space. But with the first-stage booster exploding shortly after Friday's liftoff from Texas, the company fell short of its desired double catch. Wreckage remained in the Gulf of Mexico, cordoned off by buoys, as the stainless steel, bullet-shaped spacecraft lowered itself upright at the launch pad. The dramatic, sci-fi-like capture helped blot out the booster's messy miss. "Can you believe it?" shouted SpaceX commentator Dan Huot.

SpaceX officials said Saturday's catch demonstrates the full reusability of Starship, intended for moon and Mars travel. Although Friday's booster recovery failed, the company had already made three previous booster catches, validating the technique. NASA welcomed Saturday's news. The space agency is paying billions of dollars for Starship to land Artemis astronauts on the moon later this decade and help build a permanent lunar base. Musk's ambitions are even grander: He wants to launch a fleet of Starships to build a city on Mars. The world's largest and most powerful rocket – a 124-meter behemoth – blasted off late Friday afternoon from SpaceX's Starship base near the US-Mexican border. Separating neatly from its booster before things went awry, the upper-stage spacecraft soared into orbit and released 26 advanced Starlink satellites. Starship continued circling the world 165 miles (265 kilometers) up, with live views of itself and Earth streaming down via Starlink. The spacecraft completed 14 laps around Earth, outshining the previous mission's one to two laps. It was SpaceX's 15th flight of a full-scale Starship since 2023 and its only second trip to orbit. SpaceX reported that everything on the spacecraft, including its vital heat shield, appeared to work well. As for the booster, SpaceX's Kate Tice said its engines stopped firing too soon on the way back down. The booster's guidance system sensed it wasn't in the right position and automatically initiated the watery detour and self-destruction. Engineers are still investigating the cause. SpaceX expects to begin launching Starships from Florida's Kennedy Space Center within the next few months. That is the starting point for NASA's next Artemis mission, which will skip the moon and remain in orbit around Earth for lunar lander practice. Artemis III's four astronauts will attempt to dock their capsule with not only Starship but Blue Origin's Blue Moon. The two companies will take turns delivering crews to the lunar surface. NASA is targeting as soon as 2028 for Artemis IV, humanity's first moon landing since the Apollo era more than half a century ago. –**DNA**

Sohail to lead ICCI's int'l trade promotion initiatives



DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Muhammad Zikria Akbar Zia has appointed Executive Member Muhammad Sohail Chaudhary as Chairman of the Standing Committee on International Trade Promotion for the term 2026-28. The appointment reflects ICCI's commitment to strengthening Pakistan's international trade relations, exploring new business opportunities and promoting the country's commercial interests in global markets. President Muhammad Zikria Akbar Zia expressed confidence in the leadership abilities of Muhammad Sohail Chaudhary and hoped that he would play an effective role in advancing the Chamber's initiatives for international trade promotion and economic development. The President authorized the newly appointed Chairman to nominate up to 10 members to the committee to develop a dynamic team and effectively pursue its objectives. The proposed members will subsequently be formally notified by ICCI. The committee is expected to contribute towards strengthening international business linkages, exploring new trade markets, promoting business-to-business cooperation and facilitating greater engagement between Pakistani businesses and international trade partners.

Tens of thousands march in Portuguese cities against surging home prices

LISBON: Tens of thousands of people marched through more than 30 cities and towns across Portugal on Saturday in the largest protest yet against soaring housing costs that many say have put buying or renting a home beyond their reach.

The housing crisis has fueled weeks of demonstrations. Some activists have camped in central squares in Lisbon and Porto, the country's two largest cities. Riot police with dogs have dispersed some protests, drawing accusations of heavy-handed tactics. The demonstrations took inspiration from protests that began in neighboring Spain last month over similar housing concerns. They come amid widespread social unrest across Europe this autumn.

Marching under the slogan "We won't let them steal our right to housing," participants ranged from teenagers to retirees. Drums, music and chants accompanied the Lisbon march as protesters carried large banners and flags.

Susana Pacheco, a 35-year-old data analyst who works part-time as an astrologer to help pay her mortgage, said she worried about whether her younger sister could afford to move out of their parents' home.

"I'm really worried about young people," Pacheco said. "I don't know how they're going to be able to pay" for their own home.

"Things have become intolerable," said Ana Encarnaç o, 42, citing rising living costs and the widening gap between rich and poor.

Activists want ceilings placed on rent increases, greater legal protection for tenants against eviction, and more affordable housing.

House prices in Portugal have risen much faster than incomes, statistics show.

Between 2015 and 2025, Portugal posted the biggest jump in the European Union in the home price-to-income ratio, with an increase of 61 percent, followed by the Netherlands with 34 percent, the EU statistical office Eurostat said last week..–**APP**

Rwanda genocide: Former care home head held

BRUSSELS: The former head of a care home for the disabled in Rwanda has beend detained in Belgium on suspicion of involvement in the African nation's 1994 genocide, prosecutors said Saturday.

The public prosecutor's office said the man, described only as "R," was arrested in Belgium late September on suspicion of having committed "serious violations of international humanitarian law," in particular acts of genocide and crimes against humanity between April 1 and May 25, 1994.

It added a judge had placed him in preventive detention on September 28.

"On April 24, 1994, Interahamwe militias are said to have stormed the town center in Gatagara. They are said to have, on R.'s instructions, taken away all the Tutsi men who were hiding in the town center," the prosecutors stated. "These Tutsis were then reportedly taken to a location outside the town center, where they were subsequently killed. A few days later, on May 9, 1994, the Interahamwe militias are said to have returned to the town center once again. "On that day, once again on R.'s instructions, they are also alleged to have killed several other Tutsis, mainly women and children." The man is additionally accused of being in contact with Interahamwe militias before the genocide for which he is alleged to have organized and attended preparatory meetings. He is further alleged to have required staff and patients at the care home in Gatagara to carry an identification card stating their ethnic origin.

Prosecutors said investigators had interviewed witnesses in Rwanda in June.

The Rwandan genocide began in April 1994, and over around 100 days some 800,000 people, mostly minority Tutsis, were murdered following the downing of an aircraft carrying then President Juvenal Habyarimana, an ethnic Hutu.–**APP**

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Briefs

Musadik calls for global efforts to address climate change

News Desk

ISTANBUL: Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr. Musadik Malik has called for collective global efforts to address the challenges posed by climate change.
He was addressing an event on the sidelines of COP-31 in Antalya, Türkiye.
The Minister stressed the need to provide young people with opportunities and platforms to conduct research, develop innovative ideas and find practical solutions to emerging climate challenges. He also underscored the need to promote clean and climate-friendly energy alternatives to reduce pollution, lower emissions and strengthen environmental protection.

CICA chief greets Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a meeting with Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Sultan Hajiyev, on the sidelines of the 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers in Islamabad today.
During the meeting, the Deputy Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's support for CICA and its efforts to promote peace, security and stability in Asia through dialogue and confidence-building measures.
He also welcomed the successful convening of the 7th CICA Summit in Baku under Azerbaijan's Chairmanship. The Secretary General appreciated Pakistan's efforts and constructive role in promoting dialogue and de-escalation.

Dar hosts dinner for delegates

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar hosted a high-level welcome dinner in Islamabad tonight for visiting foreign ministers and heads of delegations of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states.
The gala gathering sets the stage for the landmark 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM), scheduled for November 15–16, 2026. Addressing the dignitaries, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar warmly welcomed the delegates and expressed optimism for productive deliberations over the two-day summit.

Drone ownership ban enforced in Beijing

Beijing, home to China's central government, top leaders and the headquarters of the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP), has faced strict security measures

News Desk

BEIJING: Beijing's ban on possessing drones came into force on Sunday, a measure authorities said will help ensure the security of China's capital city.
The ban applies to both urbanized and rural areas in the municipality of around 16,400 square kilometers (6,300 square miles) – an area roughly half the size of Belgium.
The ban, which Beijing announced in September, outlaws owning and storing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to "safeguard the security of the capital."
Transporting drones or their components into the city was also forbidden. Owners had been forced to get rid of their devices ahead of Sunday's implementation, either by reselling them at approved buy-back points or online. They could also have transported them outside the enforcement area.
Beijing, home to China's central government, top leaders and the headquarters of the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP), has faced strict security measures.
The ban comes after airspace safety fears were raised in June when a small plane crashed into the city's tallest skyscraper, killing the pilot and injuring 13 others. Beijing had already banned drone sales in May 2026, with owners required to register their devices with authorities but permitted to keep them.
Now, anyone in possession of a drone could face a fine and the confiscation of their equipment. Exemptions for drone flights may be granted for specific reasons such as counterterrorism, law enforcement, emergency relief, agriculture or scientific research. Drones have become extremely popular in China in recent years, particularly for filming landscapes.

Tarar resolves to end terrorism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has said that brave sons of the motherland, who laid down their lives for the defence of the country, are the pride of the entire nation. He made these remarks on his official account on X following his participation in the funeral prayers of Major Omar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havaldar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed in Rawalpindi today. The Minister met with the bereaved families of the martyrs to offer his deepest condolences.

Reducing Ukraine aid sets scene for more war: Macron



PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron said Saturday that countries seeking to limit aid to Ukraine want to impose an "unjust peace" and warned that it was a recipe for another war. The French leader's statement posted on social media comes as the United States mediates talks between Ukraine and Russia in a bid to end the war that started with Moscow's 2022 full-scale invasion.
"Those who want to ration aid to Ukraine wish underneath it all to force an unjust peace on it" and, by extension, all of Europe, Macron said. "That is the spirit of defeat. That is a recipe for another war. That cannot be France's position." Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said in comments released Saturday that Washington has suggested Kyiv cede land to Moscow in exchange for Ukraine joining NATO.
US envoys Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff met both Russian President Vladimir Putin and Zelensky separately on Thursday, after two days of talks in Abu Dhabi which ended with no breakthrough. Negotiations did, however, lead to agreements that European countries will join future talks on ending the war. On Friday, in Dublin, Europe chose five countries – France, Germany, Italy, the UK and Poland – to send representatives to the talks. "Europe must take full part" in the work to bring about a "fair and lasting peace" in Ukraine, Macron said.
"What happens in Ukraine concerns us directly.... Helping Ukraine defend itself is protecting France and the French."
The French president said that Ukraine's allies must clearly set out, including to Russia, its postwar vision and "we must also detail what we expect of the United States for Europe's long-term security." Macron added that he believed "Vladimir Putin does not want to negotiate" and was trying to break Ukraine by stepping up drone and missile strikes against civilians and energy infrastructure as winter closes in. "That means we must keep up our financial backing and helping Ukraine protect its population, its power plants and its grids," he said. – **APP**

EU urges Israel to allow aid into flood-hit Gaza

BRUSSELS: The bloc also expressed alarm over Thursday's Israeli airstrike on Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis which killed six people, including a surgeon, and injured at least 27 others. In a statement issued on behalf of the EU, foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas called on Israel to ensure the sustained delivery of humanitarian assistance and essential supplies, including shelter materials and medical equipment, as displaced Palestinians struggle with severe flooding and freezing winter conditions. "After a year since the ceasefire was announced, military strikes continue and shortages of essential items, including suitable shelter, medicine and medical equipment, caused by the existing access restrictions persist, resulting in the absence of acceptable and dignified living conditions," it read.
The EU also stressed that civilians, medical personnel and healthcare facilities must be protected under international humanitarian law, describing the latest strike on Nasser Hospital as "deeply alarming." The attack hit the hospital's surgical department, causing extensive damage and disrupting medical services at one of Gaza's few remaining functioning hospitals. Israel's military said it had targeted a Hamas commander and other militants allegedly operating inside the facility but did not provide evidence to support its claims. The strike also drew condemnation from the UN and 17 Arab and Muslim-majority countries, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Jordan, Qatar and Egypt, which called for the protection of medical facilities and unrestricted humanitarian access. The EU called on Israel to facilitate the work of UN agencies and humanitarian organizations, while stressing that assistance must not be "diverted by armed groups." It reaffirmed its support for a two-state solution and said Hamas should have no role in Gaza's future government. – **APP**

Authorities ban public gatherings in KP's Bajaur

News Desk

BAJAUR: The district administration on Sunday imposed a ban on all kinds of public gatherings, "hate speech" against the state and the display of arms and weapons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bajaur for 30 days, invoking Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) owing to the prevailing law and order situation.
The notification formalising the restriction, seen by Dawn, said Bajaur Deputy Commissioner Adnan Farid Afridi approved the restrictions in view of the prevailing law and order situation, citing the need for additional measures to safeguard public life and property and maintain peace in the district. The notification further stated that law enforcement agencies were required to remain more vigilant to avert any "unpleasant mishaps" while also enhancing security at the district's entry and exit points and discouraging and disallowing "unauthorised gatherings" in public places.
"Sufficient grounds exist to believe that immediate preventive measures are required to be taken," the notification added. The notification stated that the order would come into force on Sunday (November 15) and remain in effect until December 15, unless modified or withdrawn. It warned that anyone found violating the order would be punished under Section 188 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

Peshawar ATC moves to declare Sohail Afridi proclaimed offender

PESHAWAR: An anti-terrorism court here has started proceedings to declare dysfunctional Chief Minister Sohail Afridi as a proclaimed offender in the Radio Pakistan attack case as the relevant police official claimed that Mr Afridi couldn't be traced. In the order sheet, Judge Wali Mohammad Khan noted that the detective foot constable (DFC) of the East Cantonment police station returned the warrants issued against the accused, including Sohail Afridi and Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf activist Mohammad Amir Khan, with overleaf reports stating that both of them couldn't be found or traced. "Proclamation notices under Section 87 of CrPC should be issued against accused Sohail Afridi and Amir Khan, with notice to the DFC for recording a corroborative statement," he said.
He fixed Nov 24 for submission of the DFC's report and further proceedings. Police official says dysfunctional CM remains untraced The judge had ordered the issuance of arrest warrants for the accused on Oct 28 after a supplementary charge-sheet was submitted, naming Afridi, Amir, former provincial ministers Taimoor Saleem Khan and Kamran Bangash and PTI Peshawar president Irfan Saleem as the accused in the May 2023 ransacking and torching of the Radio Pakistan building in Peshawar. Subsequently, the court issued warrants against Afridi and Amir on Nov 5. The warrants issued for Mr Afridi's arrest listed his residential address in Bara, Khyber district. However, they didn't describe Mr Afridi as the dysfunctional chief minister. The other three newly nominated accused appeared before the court and were granted interim pre-arrest bail. The dysfunctional chief minister has not been seen since the imposition of the governor's rule and emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Oct 11. – **DNA**

Pakistan guidebooks author dies at 83

GENEVA: Isobel Shaw, an Irish-born travel writer whose guidebooks introduced thousands of visitors to Pakistan, died on Wednesday (Nov 11) at her home in St-Cergue, Switzerland. She was 83. Ms Shaw first came to Pakistan in 1978, when her husband, Robert Shaw, was posted to Islamabad as the Ford Foundation's representative. During her three years in Islamabad she learnt Urdu and, with Hilary Adamson, wrote A Traveller's Guide to Pakistan, published in Islamabad in 1981 and one of the first modern guidebooks to the country.



Her Pakistan Handbook (1989) was shortlisted for the Thomas Cook Travel and Guide Book Awards, and her illustrated guide to Pakistan ran to five editions. With her son, Ben Shaw, she wrote the Pakistan Trekking Guide (1993) and a trekking guide to the Karakoram and Hindu Kush, published in Lahore in 2013. Other writers on the region recommended her as the best guidebook writer on Pakistan.
During the 1990s she worked as a tourism consultant to the government of Pakistan and gave the keynote address at the Pakistan Tourism Convention in Karachi in 1993. After the 2005 earthquake she gave talks to raise funds for orthopaedic care for survivors. The same year, the Pakistan Society in London honoured her for advancing public knowledge and understanding of Pakistan in Britain. Her last book, Trekking Guide to the Karakoram and Hindu Kush of Northern Pakistan, was published by Vanguard Books in Lahore in 2013. – **APP**

NATO to skip a leaders' summit in Albania next year

BRUSSELS: NATO is scaling back its high-level meetings and will not hold a leaders' summit in Albania next year as previously planned amid tension within the alliance over defense spending, Iran and the war in Ukraine.
Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama said Thursday that "there is not yet a common position on when the summit will happen, for sure not in 2027." He said that "in 2028, if it will be a summit, it will be in Tirana," Albania's capital.
NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte played down the issue. "We are flexible with NATO summits," he told The Associated Press in an interview. "We have summits when we need them," he said, and will hold the next one "when a necessity is there." It's not just about gatherings between US President Donald Trump and his counterparts.
NATO defense ministers usually meet in October, but no talks took place last month, and none are planned for October 2027. Foreign ministers only have one scheduled meeting next year, instead of two, under what NATO describes as a "reorganization package."
US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Secretary of State Marco Rubio have each skipped a NATO meeting or left before talks ended since they came to office. Hegseth has used defense ministerial gatherings to berate or cajole European allies and Canada.
The planned summit in Albania highlights the alliance's challenges. Albania was appointed next year's host in 2025, but its name was removed from a July summit declaration.
Some allies believe that Albania is not spending enough on defense and they were reluctant to reward the country with NATO's big event. The government in Tirana is projected to spend 2.15 percent of its gross domestic product on defense this year. NATO's target is for the 32 allies to spend 3.5 percent of GDP on core defense by 2035, and 1.5 percent on defense-related infrastructure. Albania is not the worst offender among the 32 member countries. Spain, Belgium and Slovenia are faring much worse.
But hosting a summit itself has tremendous financial and political costs. The Netherlands required a year of preparation ahead of the 2025 meeting in The Hague, and a roughly $100 million investment.
Officials said NATO would have needed to decide on Albania by October for it to have enough time to organize a summit next year. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who hosted this year's gala in his sprawling palace complex in Ankara, refurbished a military airport for leaders to arrive at, and mobilized tens of thousands of security personnel – virtually shutting down parts of the capital. Non-essential public workers were given a week off.
"There's always a lot of security involved," Rutte told AP. "It is a costly event to organize a meeting with 32 allies and then partner countries and the Indo-Pacific partners we have, like Japan and Korea, Australia, New Zealand."
Asked whether it was all worth it, Rutte said: "It is."
The challenge of keeping leaders focused
The summit in Turkiye was also a political spectacle. It threatened to go off the rails even before Trump and his counterparts sat down to work. Trump revived old talk about taking control of Greenland, a self-governing part of NATO ally Denmark, striking at the heart of the reason that the organization was formed in 1949. – **APP**



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