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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

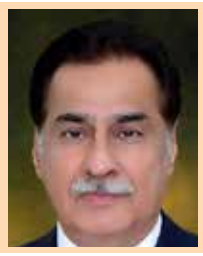
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Govt determined to support talented youth in business

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Parliamentary cooperation needs boost



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Eman Alam features in documentary



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Pakistan, UK pledge to solidify defence relations

The visiting dignitary appreciated professionalism and operational preparedness of the Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their contributions towards regional peace and stability

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A high-level delegation from the United Kingdom, led by General Sir Charles Roland Vincent Walker, Chief of General Staff, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi.

Upon arrival at GHQ, the visiting dignitary was presented a Guard of Honour by a smartly turned-out Pakistan Army contingent. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, the prevailing regional security environment and avenues for enhancing bilateral defence and security cooperation were discussed.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the longstanding, cordial relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening bilateral military-to-military cooperation. The COAS & CDF underscored Pakistan's commitment to further expanding defence ties with the United Kingdom.

The visiting dignitary appreciated professionalism and operational preparedness of the Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their contributions towards regional peace and stability.

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CDF Munir, Iranian FM discuss regional security, evolving geopolitical developments

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A high-level Iranian delegation led by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi called on Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir in Rawalpindi, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Tuesday. According to the military's media wing, matters of mutual interest, regional security dynamics and evolving geopolitical developments were discussed in the meeting. Both sides exchanged views on exploring avenues for addressing common security challenges, it added. CDF Munir underscored the importance of sustained engagement, mutual trust and close coordination between the two brotherly countries for promoting regional peace and stability.

The Iranian foreign minister appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting regional peace and stability and expressed his country's desire to further strengthen bilateral relations. Iranian FM Araghchi visited Islamabad to attend a meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), a regional grouping of countries from Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. Addressing the meeting a day earlier, Araghchi called for stronger regional cooperation through the ECO, emphasising trade, transport and energy as strategic priorities. He praised DPM Dar's leadership within the organisation and Pakistan's warm hospitality. He thanked countries that had condemned US and Israeli aggression against Iran's territorial integrity and expressed solidarity with the Iranian people. Araghchi called for the ECO to become an effective platform for

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RAWALPINDI: A high-level delegation from the United Kingdom, led by General Sir Charles Roland Vincent Walker, Chief of General Staff, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF). – DNA

Punjab LB polls in 2 phases

Faisal Sheikh

ISLAMABAD: Local government polls in Punjab, which are scheduled for February 2027, will be held in two phases, it emerged on Tuesday. In a letter to the Punjab chief secretary, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said it had accepted the proposal conveyed by the province's Local Government and Community Development Department secretary, in his letter dated Nov 16.

According to the letter seen by Dawn, the commission also directed its office to proceed with the conduct of local government elections and ensure timely completion of all prerequisite activities. Under the agreed plan, elections will be held in 18 districts in each phase.

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Imran Khan political prisoner

Bilawal for political 'reset', says system 'deliberately destroyed'

PPP chief emphasises the need to restore public confidence in country's institutions

Nazir Siyal

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Tuesday called for a political reset of the country's system, saying its deterioration was "deliberate" rather than accidental.

"I believe the system has not collapsed; it has been deliberately destroyed," Bilawal said while addressing an event at the Karachi Press Club. The PPP chairman also acknowledged his own shortcomings for the system's condition, saying he accepted that he too was at fault. Bilawal further argued that the proposed solution to the country's problems would not address the underlying issues.

Calling for a reset, he stressed that the process should be political rather than non-political. "This system needs a reset, but the reset will not be non-political; it will be political." He also emphasised the need to restore public confidence in the country's institutions, saying confidence in all institutions, including the media and parliament, would have to be rebuilt.

Bilawal stressed the need to discuss the challenges facing the country amid changing international and regional circumstances. "Pakistan's people have never faced difficulties like those they are experiencing today," the PPP chief said, adding that poverty, unemployment and inflation were rising rapidly. Bilawal also voiced concern over the impact of the prevailing circumstances on the public, particularly people from poorer and disadvantaged backgrounds.

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Briefs

Govt determined to support talented youth

Saifullah Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said the government is determined to provide a conducive environment for talented Pakistani youth to establish and expand their businesses.

He was talking to a delegation of the Endeavour Group, which called on him in Islamabad today. The Prime Minister said modern technology, innovation and entrepreneurial thinking are important drivers of Pakistan's economic growth. He added that the government is promoting investment and public-private collaboration in this sector.

Shehbaz Sharif informed the delegation that an Information Technology Park has recently been inaugurated in Islamabad, where all possible facilities have been provided for startups.

Oil prices fall over 3%

DNA

LONDON: Oil prices fell more than 3% on Monday as crude shipments through the Strait of Hormuz showed signs of recovery, easing supply concerns despite reports of several tankers striking sea mines in the strategic waterway and repeated Iranian attacks on US military installations in Bahrain. Brent crude futures dropped 3.6% to $92.44 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude declined 3.2% to $85.72, Reuters reported. The International Energy Agency said on Friday that the global oil market was expected to return to a surplus in the fourth quarter of this year, signalling a potential easing of supply pressures.

Reports suggest US forces target Iran Qeshm island

Trump is not going to let Iran conflict become a 'forever war', asserts Vance

News Desk

WASHINGTON: An explosion was heard on Iran's Qeshm Island on Tuesday, according to the semi-official Fars News Agency.

The agency reported that the source of the blast was not immediately known. No information on potential casualties, damage, or the location of the explosion within the island was available at the time of reporting.

Authorities have not yet issued an official statement regarding the incident, and investigations into the cause are ongoing. Meanwhile, The United States has condemned Iranian drone strikes on Bahrain, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio reaffirming Washington's commitment to the security of the Gulf kingdom and other regional partners during a telephone conversation with Bahraini

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Iran Guards say targeted US radar system in Bahrain with drones

DNA

IRAN'S Revolutionary Guards said on Tuesday they launched a drone attack targeting a radar system in Bahrain operated by the United States in response to repeated US "violations" of Iranian airspace. "Combat drones belonging to the Revolutionary Guards carried out a precision operation this morning, targeting a radar system operated by US forces at the Sheikh Isa Air Base in Bahrain,"

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Qatar warns Iran's attack threatens peace talks

APP

DOHA: Qatar, a key mediator between Iran and the US, called for restraint on Tuesday after an Iranian attack on a US base in Bahrain, warning that the escalation in the Gulf posed an "extremely serious" threat to the chances of reaching a deal to end the Middle East war. "We call on all parties to exercise restraint during this period and to avoid any escalation that could undermine negotiation efforts," Qatari foreign ministry spokesman Majed Al-Ansari told a press briefing in Doha.

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PTI's Taimur Jhagra, Bangash, Irfan arrested

Police takes PTI leaders into custody outside Peshawar High Court

News Desk

PESHAWAR: Police on Tuesday arrested three Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, Taimur Saleem Jhagra and Kamran Bangash, along with Irfan Saleem, in the Radio Pakistan attack case. The former ministers were taken into custody outside the Peshawar High Court (PHC). According to police, Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Farhan Khan was present at the high court's main entrance with a contingent when the arrests were made.

They said that three leaders had reached the high court to seek interim bail after an anti-terrorism court dismissed their bail applications in the Radio Pakistan attack case. They were present in the high court's bar room before being taken into custody.

The PHC had earlier approved their applications for interim bail. It may be noted that the Punjab Forensic Science Laboratory report, sought by an ATC in the Radio Pakistan attack case, earlier this year confirmed the presence of several PTI leaders, including Saleem, in footage relating to the May 9, 2023 incidents.

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Asian Development Bank approves $500m loan

"Pakistan has taken important steps to strengthen its federal pension system, and this program will help sustain and institutionalise those reforms," ADB Country Director for Pakistan Emma Fan was quoted as saying

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Tuesday approved a $500 million results-based loan to help Pakistan reform its federal civil pension system, the Manila-based lending agency said in a statement.

The reforms will help contain rising pension-related fiscal pressures, strengthen pension system sustainability, and expand fiscal space for development and social spending, according to the statement. It added that Pakistan's federal pension spending has grown nearly fivefold since fiscal year 2016 and now exceeds Rs1 trillion a year.

"Its longstanding unfunded and noncontributory legacy defined benefit scheme is financed entirely through annual budget allocations, creating growing fiscal pressure as pension obligations increase over time," the statement highlighted. "Pakistan has taken important steps to strengthen its federal pension system, and this program will help sustain and institutionalise those reforms," ADB Country Director for Pakistan Emma Fan was quoted as saying.

"ADB's support will help achieve lasting results by strengthening institutions, improving transparency, and supporting a more sustainable pension system," Fan added.

Furthermore, the financing will support the first phase of the government's Pension Reform Implementation Plan, and the transition to the defined contribution pension scheme, in which federal civil employees appointed from July 2024 are required to participate, said the statement.

"ADB's support will help improve pension management to reduce liabilities, boost financial transparency through digital systems, and enhance pension service delivery and financial literacy among beneficiaries," it read.

In 2024, ADB's senior economist Aiko Kikkawa had said the pension system in Pakistan suffered from low contribution rates, making it unsustainable in the long run. An earlier report by the ADB highlighted Pakistan's weak pension and insurance systems. Most government positions entail unfunded pensions, where pensions for current employees are financed through tax revenues, according to the report titled

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Japan, Pak to expand training, skills coop: Envoy

He said Japan attaches great importance to sharing its successful work culture, discipline, quality standards and professional expertise with Pakistan. Such initiatives can broaden cooperation between the two countries while enhancing the institutional capacity and professional competencies of Pakistani organizations



ISLAMABAD: Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Shuichi Akamatsu, has emphasized the need to explore new opportunities for professional training, skills development and the exchange of experiences to further strengthen friendly relations between Pakistan and Japan.

He said Japan attaches great importance to sharing its successful work culture, discipline, quality standards and professional expertise with Pakistan. Such initiatives can broaden cooperation between the two countries while enhancing the institutional capacity and professional competencies of Pakistani organizations. He expressed these views while addressing the closing ceremony of the Japanese Workplace Excellence Programme, jointly organized by the Japan Pakistan Advancement Centre (JPAC), Pakistan Japan Business Forum (PJBF) and Allama Iqbal Open University's (AIOU) Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC). Chairman Pakistan Japan Business Forum, Mr. Murtaza Y. Mandviwalla and Vice Chairman, Mr Syed Feroz Alam Shah, also spoke on the occasion. They highlighted the importance of strengthening Pakistan-Japan relations through professional collaboration, knowledge sharing and the promotion of Japanese workplace practices in Pakistani organizations. The participants were congratulated on the successful completion of the programme. Speakers highlighted the importance of promoting Japanese work practices, punctuality, discipline, teamwork and continuous improvement in Pakistani organizations. On the occasion, a book on Japanese work culture and professional skills was also launched. The training programme aimed to familiarize participants with Japanese work culture and modern management principles while providing insights into ways to improve quality, productivity and professional performance within organizations. Dr Kamran Musa from the Pakistan Institute of Quality Control (PIQC) served as the resource person. He briefed participants on various aspects of Japanese workplace management, quality improvement, effective planning, discipline and systematic work practices. Through practical examples, he highlighted that continuous improvement, collective responsibility, effective strategies and professional attitudes are essential for achieving excellence in organizations. Speaking on the occasion, Director of AIOU's Directorate of Quality Enhancement, Dr Saima Nasir, said that making quality an integral part of institutional culture has become essential for organizational growth and success. She observed that Japanese work culture, with its emphasis on discipline, punctuality, teamwork and continuous improvement, serves as a model worthy of emulation across the world. She further stated that such training programmes not only enhance employees' professional capabilities but also play a significant role in improving quality, transparency and overall institutional performance.—**DNA**

Sindh launches online domicile, PRC service

KARACHI: Chief Secretary Sindh Asif Hyder Shah, Tuesday, inaugurated the E-Domicile and PRC Portal, enabling applicants in Karachi to apply for domicile certificates and permanent residence certificates from home. The applicants can submit their applications through www.sindhdomicileportal.gos.pk. The portal allows applicants to register, verify their identity through facial recognition, upload the required documents and pay the prescribed fee online or through a bank challan. They can also track the progress of their applications and view the decision on the portal. Speaking at the inauguration, the Chief Secretary said citizens would no longer have to stand in queues to obtain domicile and PRC certificates. "Work that used to take weeks will now be completed in hours," he said.

Asif Hyder Shah said obtaining a domicile certificate was often a young person's first interaction with the government. Making the process easier would improve citizens' experience of public services, he added. He said the digital system would help prevent fraudulent applications and fake domicile certificates. The service would also be extended to other districts of Sindh. Commissioner Karachi Syed Hassan Naqvi briefed the participants on the portal. He said applications would be sent to the relevant deputy commissioner's office, which would examine the documents and decide each case after verification. The digital record of domicile and PRC certificates would be maintained in one system, while authorised institutions would be able to verify issued certificates online. During the ceremony, the Chief Secretary presented domicile certificates to young applicants who had applied through the portal. Commissioner Karachi Syed Hassan Naqvi and all deputy commissioners of Karachi attended the event.—**APP**

Iftikhar hails education policy

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik on Tuesday hailed the new long-term education policy, "Education 2.0", describing it as a significant step towards replacing the outdated colonial-era education system with a modern framework aligned with Pakistan's technological and developmental needs.

In a congratulatory letter addressed to Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, he appreciated the formulation of a balanced and comprehensive policy aimed at bringing the country's educational standards at par with developed nations and preparing future generations to meet the challenges of technological transformation.

Iftikhar Ali Malik said the policy appropriately positioned artificial intelligence and modern technology as tools to support educators rather than replace them, while also emphasizing the development of indigenous digital and educational resources. He said Education 2.0 also sought to address fragmentation in the education sector by introducing common learning standards across public, private,madrassa and international education systems. He observed that the policy aimed to nurture confident, ethical.—**APP**

KP's natural resources key to progress: Kundi

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday said the province's abundant natural resources, rich cultural heritage and youthful population offered immense opportunities for sustainable development, stressing that effective utilisation of these assets was essential to ensure lasting prosperity and economic growth. Addressing participants of the 28th National Security Workshop of the National Defence University (NDU) at Governor House, the Governor welcomed the delegation and highlighted the province's security challenges, governance reforms and future development plans. He said restoration of peace and stability remained the provincial government's foremost priority, adding that the police force had been fighting terrorism with exceptional courage and there was no option but to win the war against militancy. He said that while the police had received only Rs1 billion against a demand of Rs40 billion during the previous government, Rs40 billion had now been released out of the Rs70 billion allocated for the force. The Governor said special attention was being given to the Safe City project, with work already underway in the southern districts, which would later be extended to the merged districts. He said measures were also being taken to improve police infrastructure, establish police lines in the merged districts, increase compensation for families of martyred police personnel and provide Rs15 million in cash instead of residential plots, besides allocating Rs1 million for the marriage expenses of martyrs' daughters. He said plans were also underway to establish a cadet college for children of police martyrs in collaboration with Sweet Homes, while a Rs2 billion endowment fund was being created to provide them free education. He added that recruitment against 7,000 of the 17,000 vacant police posts was being carried out on a fast-track basis, while procurement of vehicles, including bulletproof vehicles for SHOs, had also been prioritised. Highlighting action against illegal mining, the Governor said authorities had launched a crackdown after it was revealed that minerals worth around Rs4.2 billion were being extracted illegally every month in Kohat. He said investigations had also exposed links between illegal mining groups.—**APP**

Censor Board certifies 1,454 productions, earns Rs18.97m

ISLAMABAD: The Central Board of Film Censors (CBFC) certified 1,454 films, trailers and advertisements between January 2021 and September 2026, generating revenue of approximately Rs18.97 million during the period. According to official documents available with Wealth Pakistan, the board also certified 94 films and documentaries submitted by foreign diplomatic missions, reflecting its role in facilitating certification services for international missions operating in Pakistan. The annual number of certifications increased from 105 in 2021 to 190 in 2022, 242 in 2023, 302 in 2024 and 320 in 2025. During January–September 2026, the board certified another 295 productions. Revenue from certification activities increased from approximately Rs1.17 million in 2021 to Rs4.5 million in 2025. The board generated another Rs3.76 million during the first nine months of 2026, taking cumulative revenue to Rs18.97 million. The certification records included 512 English and imported productions, 147 Pakistani productions, 127 imported Punjabi productions and 94 productions submitted through foreign diplomatic missions. As part of its modernisation initiatives, the CBFC installed a Digital Cinema Projector (DCP) in its projection room in 2024 through the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). An in-house screening facility was also established during the same year to maintain the confidentiality of films, as required under the Motion Pictures Ordinance, 1979. The documents further highlight that amendments to the Motion Pictures Ordinance, 1979, were passed by the Senate and National Assembly on October 26, 2026. Meanwhile, a Joint Coordination Committee of Film Censor Boards has been formed to address differences in film censorship practices across provinces. The initiative seeks to improve coordination and address situations in which a film approved by one board is declared unsuitable for exhibition by another. The CBF, operating under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, has 19 board members against a sanctioned strength of 20. Its sanctioned employee strength stands at 30, while its budget is Rs36 million, including Rs21 million for employee-related expenditure and Rs15 million for other expenses. The board is responsible for certifying films, documentaries and trailers, monitoring compliance with censorship regulations, and processing certification requests from foreign diplomatic missions.—**DNA**

Women play a vital role in national

QUETTA: Inspector General (IG) of Police Balochistan Muhammad Tahir has emphasised the crucial role of women in the country's development and prosperity, stating that women hold an important position in society and continue to contribute significantly across all sectors of life.

The remarks were made during his visit to the Smart Women Police Station, Civil Lines, Quetta, where he inspected various sections of the facility. The visit was attended by DIG Quetta Imran Shaukat, SSP Operations Ziaullah Mandokhail, and other senior police officials.

Addressing officers during the visit, the IG said that protecting women's rights, ensuring their safety, and resolving their issues in a timely manner are among the primary responsibilities of the police. "Women are playing an indispensable role in every field of life and are making valuable contributions to the progress and prosperity of the nation. Their role in the development of the country cannot be denied," Muhammad Tahir said. The provincial police chief commended women police personnel for their services in maintaining law and order, facilitating access to justice, and safeguarding women's rights. He noted that female officers are performing an essential role in creating a safer environment for women and helping ensure that victims can seek assistance and legal protection without hesitation. "Women police officers are rendering vital services in maintaining peace and order, providing justice to women, and ensuring their protection," he said.

Muhammad Tahir stressed that creating a secure and supportive environment where women can carry out their daily affairs without fear is both an individual and collective responsibility.

He said that the protection of women and the prompt resolution of their concerns remain among the top priorities of the Balochistan Police. The IG further highlighted the importance of preserving women's dignity, ensuring their social and economic empowerment, and protecting them from exploitation and abuse. "Ensuring respect, dignity, economic independence, and protection from exploitation for women, while securing their rightful place in society, is our fundamental responsibility," he said. The IG informed officials that female police personnel have been deployed at police stations across the province to facilitate women seeking assistance. Under this arrangement, women can directly approach female staff members to report issues and seek support in a comfortable environment, ensuring that their cases receive priority attention and timely resolution. Muhammad Tahir reaffirmed the commitment of the Balochistan Police to continue taking effective measures for the protection of women and addressing the challenges they face.—**APP**

Balochistan CM highlights role of effective governance

NORTH DERA BUGTI, Nov 16 (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said that efficient functioning of government institutions and close coordination among various departments are playing a crucial role in improving public services and achieving the province's development goals.

The Chief Minister made these remarks during a visit to the under-construction Mir Ghulam Qadir Bugti Model Secondary School in North Dera Bugti, where he reviewed progress on the project and assessed ongoing efforts aimed at strengthening educational facilities in the area. Speaking to local residents and government officials, Bugti said that since assuming office, the provincial government has pursued a clear agenda focused on public service, fulfilment of commitments, promotion of merit, and maintaining quality standards in development projects. "Our priority is to implement initiatives whose benefits can be directly felt by the people and which bring meaningful improvements to their daily lives," he said.

The Chief Minister praised the contributions of government officers and the civil bureaucracy, noting that their commitment and professional performance have played a significant role in advancing development across Balochistan. He added that effective governance and institutional cooperation are enabling the government to deliver services more efficiently and accelerate progress on public welfare initiatives. Bugti also paid tribute to law enforcement agencies for their role in maintaining peace and stability in the province. He said the sacrifices made by security institutions over the past 78 years are unforgettable and deserve national recognition. "The officers and personnel of the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps, Balochistan Police, and other law enforcement agencies have rendered exceptional services.—**APP**

Dr Zarqa plays positive role in release of IK' sisters

RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan Ex-Servicemen Society (PESS) has the positive and constructive role played by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Dr Zarqa in efforts to secure the release of Imran Khan's sisters and improve the overall political situation.

The society said that such efforts were a welcome step towards reducing political tensions and creating a more conducive environment for political dialogue and understanding.

PESS Chief Organizer and Media Coordinator Aziz Ahmed Awan said that the society wanted PTI to abandon confrontational politics and play its role in accordance with democratic values and political principles. He also urged the party to publicly distance itself from elements involved in negative social media campaigns against the Pakistan Armed Forces and security institutions. He said PTI should extend full cooperation to national institutions in the fight against terrorism and in safeguarding national security. He stressed that prioritising national interests over political differences was essential for ensuring stability and promoting political harmony in the country.—**APP**

PA Speaker, CM discuss ongoing uplift projects

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly (PA) Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan called on Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday and discussed ongoing development projects, public welfare initiatives and matters relating to the provincial assembly.

During the meeting, the Speaker briefed the chief minister on assembly affairs and congratulated her on the success of the Apni Chhat Apna Ghar housing programme. He also appreciated the Honhaar Scholarship and laptop schemes for students, along with ongoing beautification projects in Kasur. The chief minister said the government was committed to ensuring uniform development across cities and villages of Punjab, adding that the completion of projects involving construction and rehabilitation of more than 45,000 kilometres of roads was a record achievement. She said healthcare facilities were also being expanded across the province, including the establishment of catheterisation laboratories, cancer centres.—APP

Pakistan Navy continues to promote national sports

DNA

LAHORE: Media briefing for 12th Vice Admiral H.M.S. Choudri Amateur Golf Cup 2026 was held at Pakistan Navy War College, Lahore. Commander Central Punjab, Rear Admiral Sohail Ahmad Azmie briefed the media on details of the tournament, scheduled to be played from 19 to 22 November 2026 at Defence Raya Golf & Country Club, Lahore. While addressing the media, Rear Admiral Sohail Ahmad Azmie highlighted Pakistan Navy's role in promoting and fostering a sporting culture across the country. This golf cup holds significant importance, and golf championships organized by Pakistan Navy in Lahore since 2011 are a testament to this fact. He further appreciated the commendable performances demonstrated by participants in previous editions and anticipated another highly competitive championship this year. The tournament features three major categories: Amateurs, Seniors and Ladies. The Amateurs category includes players with a handicap of 10 or below, who will play 18 holes daily, competing a total of 54 holes over three days. In the Ladies category, golfers with a handicap of 24 or below will compete over 18 holes. Senior Amateurs, with a handicap of 14 or below, will participate in a two-day competition featuring 36 holes.





Islamabad POST
METROLITE
Wednesday, November 18 , 2026

CDA orders reopening of Blue Area service road



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has agreed to reopen the Blue Area Service Road for an initial period of one month in response to the persistent demand of the business community, providing much-needed relief to traders and businesses affected by its closure. The decision was reached during a meeting between CDA Chairman and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Lt. (Retd.) Sohail Ashraf, and a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), led by its President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia. President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Atif Ikram Sheikh was also present. Both FPCCI and ICCI Presidents highlighted the severe difficulties being faced by the businesses in Blue Area due to the closure of the service road, stating that the restriction had significantly disrupted commercial activities and caused serious inconvenience to traders, customers and visitors. ICCI Senior Vice President Mohammad Ashfaq Hussain Chatha assisted the ICCI President during the meeting.

The ICCI President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia urged the CDA Chairman to personally visit the affected area to assess the gravity of the situation and understand the practical challenges confronting the business community. After hearing the delegation's concerns, the CDA Chairman immediately directed the concerned director to reopen the service road for one month. He assured the delegation that a permanent solution would subsequently be worked out in consultation with the affected business community and ICCI leadership. President Traders Welfare Association Yousuf Rajpoot, along with its General Secretary Syed Imran Bukhari and ICCI Executive Committee Member Abrar ul Haq, highlighted the particular difficulties faced by banks, hospitals and electronics dealers, emphasizing the adverse impact of the road closure on their daily operations and customer access. President Islamabad Industrial Area Association Omais Khattak also drew the CDA Chairman's attention to the deteriorating infrastructure in the industrial area and stressed the need for its immediate improvement. The Chairman heard the concerns and assured due consideration.

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

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National Day

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Flags Day



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Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Over 10m BISP Digital Wallets for beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid Tuesday said the establishment of over 10 million digital wallets for women beneficiaries was a major milestone towards digital financial inclusion, enabling them to withdraw their payments anytime and anywhere across the country.

She was speaking during her visit to the BISP office and Dynamic Registration Centre in Pattoki, where she interacted with women beneficiaries, listened to their complaints and directed the concerned staff to address their issues promptly.

Senator Rubina Khalid said that under the new digital payment system, beneficiaries could withdraw their payments seven days a week at their convenience from authorized retailers of any of the six partner banks, including Habib Bank Limited (HBL), Bank Alfalah, Bank of Punjab (BOP), Habib Microfinance Bank, Easypaisa and JazzCash, anywhere in Pakistan.

She said the interoperability of the digital payment system had made it possible for beneficiaries to access their financial assistance without being restricted to a particular bank or location. The Chairperson advised women to preserve the separate SMS notifications received from banks upon transfer of funds into their digital wallets and withdrawal of payments, as these messages served as proof of transactions. She clarified that beneficiaries were not required to withdraw their money immediately after receiving it and could collect their payments at their convenience. She also cautioned beneficiaries against handing over their mobile phones or Benazir SIMs to retailers or any unauthorized person. Announcing an important policy development, Senator Rubina Khalid said unmarried women aged 45 years and above would also be included in the Benazir Kafaalat Programme under the new policy, subject to the prescribed eligibility criteria. –**APP**

IIUI leaps into top 10 in Pak, top 500 in world

ISLAMABAD: International Islamic University Islamabad has been placed in top 500 universities of the world as per the ranking of times higher education (THE). The ranking is in the field of interdisciplinary learning and research, where the



University has elevated its ranking for 200 paces, which is a phenomenal achievement. At the same time, the university has been placed in Pakistan's top 10 universities by QS Sustainability Ranking. There is an elevation of three ranks in this category as well. IIUI President and Acting Rector Professor Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed said that this leap forward is no less than the leap of faith. No one would have thought that we could do it but we did it, he said. He said, "I appreciate the tiresome efforts of Vice President (R&E), Prof. Dr. Ahemd Shuja Syed, who made it happen. I also appreciate the ranking committee members and QAD Director Prof. Dr. Rehmat Elahi. Acting Rector Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed has encouraged crosscut, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research on campus since the day he assumed office of the President. He applied his international exposure and leadership skills to set the direction of the International Islamic University Islamabad on modern lines so that the university moves from knowledge creation to application of this knowledge. University academia and research institutions thanked Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed for identifying and unlocking the potential of the university and expressed their resolve to work better than before in his leadership. –**DNA**

ITP sets Nov 30 deadline for smoke-emitting vehicles

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has made vehicle fitness certificates mandatory for all vehicles in the federal capital and directed transporters to make their vehicles smoke-free by November 30, warning of strict legal action against violators after the deadline.An ITP official told media on Tuesday that the decision was taken during a meeting chaired by Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Islamabad Kainat Azhar Khan with representatives of the Islamabad-Rawalpindi Goods Transport Union and Islamabad Chamber of Commerce. He said the meeting discussed vehicle fitness, prevention of smog and measures to reduce air pollution caused by smoke-emitting vehicles. The CTO Kainat directed transporters to ensure their vehicles met the required fitness and emission standards by November 30, warning that a crackdown would be launched against smoke-emitting vehicles after the deadline. She said vehicles carrying sand, gravel and cement must be properly covered with tarpaulins to prevent dust pollution, adding that violations would also invite legal action. Kainat said smoke-emitting vehicles posed a serious threat to human health and stressed the need for collective efforts to make Islamabad smog-free. She said action against overloaded vehicles was already underway without discrimination, while enforcement against vehicles violating environmental and traffic regulations would be further strengthened.The CTO Kainat emphasized that protecting human lives remained among the top priorities of Islamabad Traffic Police. Representatives of the transport union assured ITP of their full cooperation in implementing the measures to reduce smog and improve road safety in the federal capital.–**APP**

Dr. Inam, newscaster Sheheryar visit NBF

ISLAMABAD: Renowned writer, poet, researcher, critic and humorist Dr. Inam-ul-Haq Javed, along with prominent newscaster, compere and analyst Syed Sheheryar Ahmed, associated with Pakistan Television (PTV) and the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (Radio Pakistan), visited the National Book Foundation (NBF) Head Office in Islamabad.

They met with Managing Director Dr. Kamran Jahangir and exchanged views on the Foundation's academic, literary and publishing activities, as well as initiatives to promote reading habits.

On the occasion, former Managing Director of the National Book Foundation, Dr. Inam-ul-Haq Javed, presented the research-based literary work "Quaid-e-Azam in the Eyes of Poets" by Dr. Asif Riaz Qadeer to NBF Managing Director Dr. Kamran Jahangir. The book features poetic tributes to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah from poets writing in Urdu, various regional languages of Pakistan and several international languages. It brings together the work of 322 poets in 16 languages, making it a significant literary and research contribution.

Syed Sheheryar Ahmed also presented a copy of his book "76 Baras Ki Jawan Maan" to Dr. Kamran Jahangir. During the meeting, Dr. Inam-ul-Haq Javed reflected on his former association with the National Book Foundation and highlighted the importance of book publishing, literary activities and promoting a culture of reading in the light of the Foundation's academic and publishing services.–**APP**

Drug track & trace system reviewed

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services Syed Mustafa Kamal chaired a meeting to review progress on the implementation of the drug track and trace system aimed at strengthening medicine monitoring and preventing the circulation of counterfeit and substandard drugs.

During the meeting, officials of the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) briefed the minister on the implementation of the system, digital monitoring, transparency in the pharmaceutical supply chain and challenges faced in its execution. The briefing also covered measures to improve the monitoring of medicines and ensure transparency at different stages of the supply chain. The health minister directed the concerned authorities to take necessary measures to strengthen medicine surveillance, ensure transparency and make the track-and-trace system more effective and fully operational.–**APP**

FCCP sets aside order for C-13 to C-16 affectees' compensation

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan has ruled that delays in payment of compensation following land acquisition do not justify reassessment at prevailing market rates, setting aside the Islamabad High Court's directions in this regard.

A two-member bench comprising Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan and Justice Ali Baqar Najafi announced the verdict while deciding 23 appeals filed by the Capital Development Authority (CDA).

According to the judgment, the CDA acquired 14,944 kanals and nine marlas for Islamabad's sectors C-13 to C-16, with the initial award issued on December 2, 2008. A separate award for compensation of structures was issued on August 17, 2023. The affectees had approached the Islamabad High Court, alleging incomplete compensation and unlawful demolition of certain structures. In its November 18, 2025 judgment, the IHC had directed, among other measures._**APP**



Islamabad POST
Wednesday, November 18 , 2026

Pak, Turkiye vow to boost bilateral defence ties

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security dynamics and avenues for enhancing bilateral defence cooperation were discussed

DNA

RAWALPINDI : Pakistan's Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and Turkish Air Force Commander General Rafet Dalk ran on Tuesday discussed regional security dynamics and avenues for further strengthening bilateral defence cooperation.

General Rafet Dalk ran called on Field Marshal Asim Munir at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi, the military's media wing, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), said in a statement.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security dynamics and avenues for enhancing bilateral defence cooperation were discussed, the military's media wing said.

During the meeting, Field Marshal Munir highlighted the deep-rooted historical, cultural and strategic ties between the two countries and appreciated the strong defence partnership between the Armed Forces of Pakistan and Türkiye. The Turkish Air Force Commander reciprocated strengthening of bilateral defence ties and appreciated professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces. He also acknowledged Pakistan's contributions to regional peace and stability. Pakistan and Türkiye have maintained close defence and military ties, with cooperation extending to defence industry collaboration, military training and capacity building, and exchanges between their armed forces. At the seventh session of the Pakistan-Türkiye High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council, held in Islamabad on February 13, 2025, both sides agreed to establish a Joint Standing Committee on Security, Defence and Intelligence. They also committed to expanding defence cooperation, promoting joint research and development, and defence industry joint ventures. On August 7, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye signed the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement during a trilateral summit in the holy city. Under the agreement, the three countries pledged to strengthen collective security, deepen defence cooperation and promote peace and stability in the region and beyond.

The Makkah Defence Agreement declares that an armed attack on one will be treated as an attack on all three.



Briefs

HEC announces Chinese scholarship programmes

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan has announced the Chinese Government Scholarship Programme (Type-A) for the academic year 2027-28, inviting applications from talented Pakistani students to pursue higher education in leading Chinese universities.

The scholarship programme, offered by the China Scholarship Council (CSC), Government of China, aims to promote educational cooperation between China and Pakistan and to strengthen academic and cultural ties between the two friendly countries. The opportunities are available for Bachelor's, Master's and PhD degree programmes in a wide range of disciplines at prestigious Chinese universities.

Under the programme, selected students will get an opportunity to study in China and benefit from high-quality education, modern research facilities and an international academic environment.

The initiative is expected to help develop skilled human resource in Pakistan and further deepen Pakistan-China educational collaboration. According to HEC, interested candidates must apply online through the HEC Scholarship Portal at https://scholarship.hec.gov.pk. Applicants have been advised to read the official advertisement carefully and completely before applying, as it is the sole responsibility of the applicant to check all information regarding eligibility, required documents and the application procedure. _**APP**

Kamal reviews measures to control diabetes

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services Syed Mustafa Kamal chaired a review meeting to assess measures for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and effective control of diabetes in the country. During the meeting, relevant officials briefed the minister on the current diabetes situation in Pakistan, ongoing initiatives, challenges and future strategy to strengthen efforts against the disease. The briefing covered various aspects of diabetes prevention, early diagnosis, access to treatment and improved healthcare services. The health minister emphasized the need for effective and practical measures to prevent diabetes and strengthen public awareness about the disease. He stressed that greater efforts were required to educate people about preventive measures, early detection and the importance of timely treatment to reduce the growing burden of diabetes in the country._**APP**

GRE training portal opened

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan has opened the GRE Training Portal for the Call for Applications under the US-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor PhD Scholarship Programme.

According to an official sources, HEC invited outstanding Pakistani and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) nationals to apply for in-person GRE (General) Training under the programme, terming it the first step in their journey towards a PhD in the United States. The training will be conducted in five major cities across the country, including Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta, to provide easy access to aspirants from all regions.

The US-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor is a flagship initiative aimed at providing Pakistani scholars an opportunity to pursue PhD studies at top-ranked universities in the United States, thereby strengthening academic linkages and building high-quality human resource for the country. Interested candidates can apply online through the HEC Scholarship Portal at https://scholarship.hec.gov.pk/#/gre. Further details are available at http://www.hec.gov.pk/site/US-PAK-KC.

The last date for submission of applications is Sunday, December 13, 2026. HEC has advised the applicants to apply well before the deadline and to read the eligibility criteria carefully.–**APP**

Capt. (R) Ata appointed DG admin

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has appointed Capt. (R) Ata Ur Rehman (PAS/BPS-18) as Director General (DG)Administration on an operational basis (OPS), with immediate effect. According to an office order issued by CDA's Human Resource Development Directorate on November 17, 2026, Capt. (R) Ata Ur Rehman, who was previously awaiting posting, has been assigned the responsibilities of Director General (Admin) until further orders in the interest of the Authority's work.The notification further directs the officer concerned to submit his charge assumption report to the Human Resource Development Directorate, CDA, accordingly.–**APP**

Usman appointed PM's Industries Adviser

ISLAMABAD: Usman Shaukat has been appointed as Chief Coordinator to the Prime Minister's Advisor on Industries and Production, Haroon Akhtar Khan, on a pro bono basis. According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Industries and Production on Tuesday, the Prime Minister has approved Usman Shaukat's appointment as Chief Coordinator to the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production. The notification said, "All relevant stakeholders shall extend full cooperation to the Chief Coordinator in discharging official business."–**APP**

Free hepatitis C camp at Naval Complex from Nov 23

ISLAMABAD: Free hepatitis C screening, testing and treatment facilities will be provided at the Naval Complex Islamabad from November 23 to 30 under the Prime Minister's National Programme for the Elimination of Hepatitis C. According to the Ministry of National Health Services, the special screening camp aim to encourage citizens to get tested for hepatitis C, a potentially serious liver infection that can remain undetected for years without noticeable symptoms. The programme has urged all individuals aged above 12 years to undergo hepatitis C screening for early diagnosis and timely treatment. Free screening, diagnostic and treatment facilities are also available at all major public and private hospitals across Islamabad, enabling citizens to access healthcare services without financial burden.

People can contact the programme's toll-free helpline 1166 for further information and guidance.–**APP**

Ayaz discusses parliamentary coop

The delegation also commended the administrative and human resource reforms introduced in the National Assembly Secretariat under the Speaker's leadership, recognising their significance in promoting merit, transparency and institutional efficiency

ISLAMABAD : Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday received a delegation of Bangladeshi Civil Service officers, currently visiting Pakistan, at Parliament House, Islamabad. Bangladesh High Commissioner to Pakistan, Md. Iqbal Hussain Khan, was also present on the occasion. Welcoming the delegation, Ayaz Sadiq underscored the importance of strengthening the longstanding friendly relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh through enhanced bilateral cooperation, institutional engagement and people-to-people contacts. During the interaction, NA Speaker briefed the delegation on Pakistan's parliamentary system, legislative procedures and the composition of the National Assembly. He also highlighted the role and functioning of Standing Committees, the SDGs Secretariat and Parliamentary Caucuses. Ayaz Sadiq also apprised the delegation of the administrative and human resource reforms introduced in the National Assembly Secretariat under his leadership, particularly those aimed at improving the service structure, ensuring transparency and merit in recruitment and appointments, and streamlining the promotion process for Secretariat employees. He highlighted the measures undertaken to improve employees' career progression, address service-related matters and strengthen institutional efficiency through reforms in various administrative procedures. Ayaz Sadiq emphasised that these initiatives were aimed at fostering a more transparent, efficient and employee-friendly working environment within the Secretariat. Recalling the historical and fraternal ties between the two countries, NA Speaker noted that the people of Pakistan and Bangladesh shared deep bonds of affection and goodwill. Referring to his recent visit to Bangladesh to attend the funeral prayers of former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, on the directions of the Prime Minister, he said that the warmth, affection and hospitality extended by the people of Bangladesh had left a lasting impression on him. Ayaz Sadiq also reiterated Pakistan's position on regional developments, saying that India had challenged Pakistan's security and sovereignty following the Pahalgam false-flag incident, to which Pakistan had responded decisively to India's unprovoked aggression in May 2025. He further termed India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty a blatant violation of international law and treaty obligations. Emphasising the vital role of civil servants in national administration and development, the Speaker said that exchanges between the civil service delegations of Pakistan and Bangladesh would provide valuable opportunities to learn from each other's experiences. He observed that sustained interaction and the sharing of institutional expertise could further strengthen cooperation between the two countries. Bangladesh High Commissioner Mr Md. Iqbal Hussain Khan thanked the Speaker for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to the delegation and reaffirmed Bangladesh's commitment to further strengthening friendly relations and expanding bilateral cooperation with Pakistan. The visiting delegation expressed keen interest in Pakistan's parliamentary system and appreciated the Speaker's goodwill and warm sentiments towards the people of Bangladesh. They also appreciated the reforms introduced under Ayaz Sadiq's leadership, particularly the measures to improve the service structure, promote merit and ensure greater transparency in recruitment and promotion processes.

The delegation also commended the administrative and human resource reforms introduced in the National Assembly Secretariat under the Speaker's leadership, recognising their significance in promoting merit, transparency and institutional efficiency.–**DNA**

Pak's aquaculture output grows 22.8% in 13 years

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's aquaculture production increased by 22.8% between 2011 and 2024, reflecting gradual expansion in fish farming and highlighting opportunities to increase domestic fish supplies and develop the fisheries industry.

According to the Pakistan Business Council's research report titled Pakistan's Aquaculture Sector: Opportunities, Challenges & Policy Recommendations for Improving Export Competitiveness, available with Wealth Pakistan, aquaculture output rose from 141,935 metric tonnes in 2011 to 174,338 tonnes in 2024, an increase of 32,403 tonnes.

The report attributes the growth to increasing demand for fish, better utilisation of freshwater resources and gradual improvements in fish farming practices and infrastructure. However, it notes that significant potential remains for further expansion through investment, modern technology and supportive policies. Pakistan's fisheries sector has an estimated value of $1.3 billion, contributing 0.3% to national GDP and 1.29% to agricultural GDP. With a 1,050-kilometre coastline along the Arabian Sea, as well as rivers, lakes, canals, reservoirs, floodplains and fish farms, the country has considerable opportunities to increase fish production, particularly through aquaculture.–**APP**

Plot allotment case

IHC gives CDA 15 days to comply with court order

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC)'s Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar on Tuesday expressed strong displeasure over the Capital Development Authority (CDA) for failing to implement a court order in a plot allotment case, directing the authority to submit a compliance report within 15 days. During the hearing of contempt of court proceedings against CDA officials, the chief justice also indicated that the CDA chairman could be summoned in person if the court's directions were not implemented. CDA Member Estate Zaman Wattoo appeared before the court along with his counsel, Kashif Malik. An affidavit submitted by the Member Estate in a separate contempt matter concerning alleged misrepresentation before the court was also brought on record. The chief justice, however, said the contempt matter against the Member Estate would be taken up later, adding that the court would first examine the main case. During the hearing, counsel for the petitioner, Hasnain Haider Thaheem, informed the court that the matter was already pending before it, while the CDA had summoned the parties for a personal hearing.

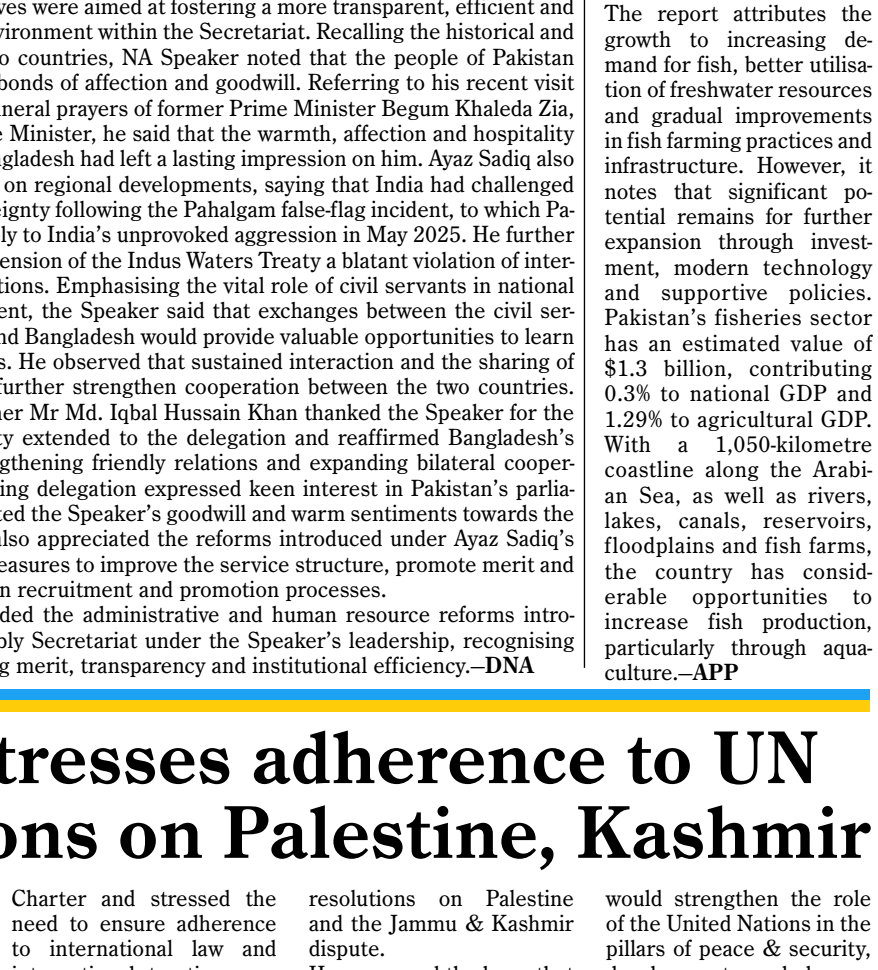
Questioning the CDA's action, the chief justice asked why the authority was holding a hearing when the court had already issued an order. He observed that the authority's conduct amounted to disregard for the court's directions. The CDA counsel submitted that the relevant order had been issued by the authority's Deputy Commissioner. In response, the chief justice remarked that he was no longer interested in hearing explanations and wanted implementation of the judicial order. He directed the CDA to verify its orders and documents itself and comply with the court's directions without seeking further assistance.–**DNA**

DPM stresses adherence to UN resolutions on Palestine, Kashmir

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar has stressed the need to ensure adherence to international law and international treaties, particularly the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on Palestine and the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. He was talking to Lana Nusseibeh, Candidate for the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations, who called on him in Islamabad Ms Lana Nusseibeh, candidate for the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations, called on the Deputy Prime Minister / Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar. The DPM/FM underlined Pakistan's longstanding support for the central role of the United Nations in global affairs and its unwavering commitment to multilateralism. He reaffirmed that Pakistan would continue to uphold the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and stressed the need to ensure adherence to international law and international treaties, particularly the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on Palestine and the Jammu & Kashmir dispute.

He expressed the hope that the next Secretary-General of the United Nations would strengthen the role of the United Nations in the pillars of peace & security, development, and human rights in an effective and balanced manner.





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When instinct prevails over values

Mustafa Al-Khadimi

THE world is undergoing a silent but profoundly dangerous transformation — one that reaches beyond the balance of power and politics to the deepest wellsprings of human behavior. After centuries in which civilizations sought to subordinate instinct to the authority of reason, morality and law, we are witnessing a troubling reversal: the retreat of moral frames of reference and the advance of naked instinct, with its drive toward domination, vengeance, exclusion and fear of the other, even when it conceals itself behind attractive slogans in political discourse and the media. Human societies have always known conflict. Yet civilization rested on a fundamental premise: that progress is measured by humanity's capacity to discipline its desires and subject its power to standards that transcend its immediate interests. Even in the most turbulent eras, the dichotomies of right and wrong, justice and injustice, freedom and tyranny formed a normative ceiling that the powerful were compelled to respect, or at least to hide behind.

Today, instinct has moved from a hidden impulse within the human psyche to an avowed logic that guides decisions and policies, individual and collective alike. The paradox is that this moral retreat coincides with the zenith of the scientific and digital revolution, as if the more the instruments of human power swell, the narrower the human horizon becomes. Instinct has moved from a hidden impulse within the human psyche to an avowed logic that guides decisions and policies In the realm of technology and artificial intelligence, the question of "capacity" takes precedence over the measure of "responsibility." We ask "Can we do it?" before we ask "Should we?" In certain distorted expressions of individual liberty, freedom is severed from meaning and obligation until a passing desire becomes an absolute right beyond discussion. Even religion, which came to raise humanity above its selfishness, is at times invoked, once emptied of its moral and spiritual essence, to lend fanaticism and domination a mantle of sanctity. Herein lies the root of the crisis. Instinct is not evil in itself, nor are freedom or technology dangerous in themselves. The danger lies in desire's transformation from a human impulse in need of guidance into an authority that demands that values themselves submit to it.

The wars raging in our region perhaps reveal the harshest face of this transformation. A confrontation may begin in defense of a legitimate right or in resistance to injustice but, once it loses its moral restraints, it slides into a space for the gratification of anger and revenge. Inflicting pain on the other becomes an aim that outranks the achievement of justice or the ending of the conflict and the suffering of civilians is reduced to cold figures within political and military calculations. The most advanced tools of the age are enlisted in the service of humanity's most primitive impulses

This description does not equate aggressor and victim, nor does it deny peoples the right to defend their existence. It means that the justice of a cause does not absolve its champions of moral responsibility for the means they employ and that human dignity is a constant value that must not change with a person's identity or affiliation. More dangerous still, these instincts are no longer individual. They have become collective instincts, feeding on fear, wounded memory and political and media propaganda, while finding in modern technology vast platforms for incitement and the spread of hatred. The most advanced tools of the age are thus enlisted in the service of humanity's most primitive impulses.

The repercussions of this course do not stop at the front lines; they reach deep into the social fabric. When instinct prevails over morality, dialogue grows fragile before passion and tolerance weak before narrow tribalism, while daily exposure to scenes of killing and destruction erodes sensitivity to human pain, especially among the young. As fear and violence persist, society becomes more willing to justify cruelty and power gradually shifts from an instrument for protecting right into the standard by which right is defined.

Yet the heart of our present predicament is that the conflicts of our world are no longer genuine conflicts of values, so much as conflicts of interest presented as competing "points of view." Amid this relativism, people can no longer appeal to any fixed moral or human reference. Everyone is driven, almost by force, toward militarization and alignment, where right and wrong are determined by one's position in the trench rather than by the substance of the position itself. What makes this alignment more dangerous still is that what drives it at its core is neither reason nor even calculated interest but instinct, which has become capable of using both "good" and "evil" to justify its appetite for domination. The real challenge facing our world today, therefore, lies not in developing ever more instruments of power but in subordinating power once again to reason and morality, freedom to responsibility and politics to human dignity. Civilization is measured not only by what humanity is able to do but by what it refrains from doing despite being able to. Should humanity lose this capacity for moral restraint, it will lose not only its struggle with the other but also its struggle with itself.



America's Manufactured Doomsdays

Qamar Bashir



The banking sector controls trillions of dollars in assets and earns substantial revenues from lending, payment processing and financial services. Nevertheless, technological modernization expenses can ultimately reach customers through account charges, transaction fees, interest margins and other costs. Visa and Mastercard, whose payment networks generate exceptionally high operating margins, illustrate the profitability of financial intermediation. Consumers pay for accessing their own money, transferring funds and participating in an increasingly cashless economy. Microsoft's recent service disruptions have similarly exposed...

AMERICA is entering an extraordinary era in which perceived threats, institutional breakdowns and technological vulnerabilities are becoming instruments for transferring enormous public wealth into corporate hands. Every hypothetical catastrophe produces another multibillion-dollar expenditure, while corporations entrusted with preventing these emergencies become richer. The proposed $1.5 trillion defense budget, aviation modernization demands exceeding $30 billion, and hundreds of billions spent annually on financial technology illustrate an economic system increasingly organized around expensive crises rather than public welfare.

The Pentagon's FORTRESS America initiative provides a revealing example. Military planners envision a catastrophic global war that could destroy electricity networks, interrupt communications and isolate military installations from civilian infrastructure. Consequently, American bases are reportedly being instructed to prepare for 90 days of independent operation. Although the Pentagon has not published an overall cost estimate, outside assessments suggest expenditures ranging from tens of billions to potentially hundreds of billions of dollars. An extraordinary financial commitment is therefore emerging against a hypothetical catastrophe whose occurrence remains uncertain.

The proposed preparations involve portable nuclear reactors, independent electrical microgrids, battery storage, fuel reserves, ammunition stockpiles, communications networks and alternative manufacturing arrangements. Already, the Army has announced nuclear microreactor awards worth up to $2.2 billion for five military installations. Extending comparable resilience arrangements across hundreds of bases could create enormous opportunities for defense contractors, energy corporations and technology suppliers. The enemy remains hypothetical, but the contracts, expenditures and corporate beneficiaries are becoming increasingly tangible.

The broader military budget reveals the magnitude of this transformation. The administration's proposed $1.5 trillion defense allocation for fiscal year 2027 represents an extraordinary concentration of national resources in military preparedness. Its proposed financing includes approximately $1.15 trillion in base funding and another $350 billion through reconciliation. Simultaneously, the administration has proposed a 10 percent reduction in nondefense discretionary expenditure. America is therefore contemplating unprecedented military spending while demanding sacrifices from institutions responsible for improving ordinary citizens' lives. Civil aviation presents another illustration. Following nationwide flight disruptions attributed to technological problems, the Federal Aviation Administration renewed demands for massive modernization expenditure. The proposed Modern Skies Act would provide approximately $30 billion, supplementing $12.5 billion previously approved. Transportation officials have placed the broader modernization requirement near $50 billion. What began as technological failure has consequently become the justification for another enormous public spending program, potentially benefiting aviation contractors, telecommunications suppliers, engineering companies and technology manufacturers.

The proposed aviation allocation includes approximately $10 billion for digital architecture, telecommunications and air traffic management, another $10 billion for airport infrastructure, and $10 billion for major terminal development. These investments may address genuine deficiencies, but the question remains why deterioration was allowed to reach a point where taxpayers must suddenly finance such extraordinary reconstruction. Institutional neglect becomes an emergency, the emergency becomes a financial demand, and the resulting contracts become lucrative corporate opportunities.

American banking demonstrates an equally troubling pattern. Recent disruptions affecting JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo and other institutions prevented customers from accessing accounts or completing transactions. Although no coordinated cyberattack was established, the incidents intensified demands for technological resilience. Industry estimates cited for banking technology expenditure approach $495 billion annually across the broader financial sector. This is not a single American modernization bill, but it demonstrates the enormous financial ecosystem surrounding digital banking infrastructure.

The banking sector controls trillions of dollars in assets and earns substantial revenues from lending, payment processing and financial services. Nevertheless, technological modernization expenses can ultimately reach customers through account charges, transaction fees, interest margins and other costs. Visa and Mastercard, whose payment networks generate exceptionally high operating margins, illustrate the profitability of financial intermediation. Consumers pay for accessing their own money, transferring funds and participating in an increasingly cashless economy. Microsoft's recent service disruptions have similarly exposed vulnerabilities in digital infrastructure supporting businesses, government departments and communication networks. Companies already spend billions annually on cloud services, cybersecurity, software licensing and subscriptions. Each additional failure strengthens the commercial argument for purchasing more sophisticated protection from the same technological ecosystem. The corporations responsible for providing digital reliability can consequently benefit financially from the anxieties created when reliability collapses.

The combined financial implications are staggering. A $1.5 trillion proposed defense budget, approximately $42.5 billion in approved and proposed aviation modernization funding, potentially hundreds of billions in military-base resilience expenditure, and an estimated $495 billion in annual banking technology spending collectively demonstrate the immense scale of the security and modernization economy. These figures represent different expenditure categories and timeframes, not one consolidated government bill, but they reveal how trillions circulate around threats, vulnerabilities and institutional dependence.

Meanwhile, proposed reductions in domestic expenditure threaten programs directly affecting American households. The administration's fiscal proposals include approximately $2.3 billion in reductions to education funding, a $5.6 billion reduction for NASA, and substantial cuts affecting scientific research, community development and social assistance. Proposals involving food assistance and energy support further illustrate the competing priorities. Money appears readily available for preparing against hypothetical destruction, while funding essential human development becomes a subject of austerity. The economic opportunity cost is equally disturbing. Research associated with Brown University's Costs of War project indicates that $1 million invested in education can generate approximately 13 jobs, compared with nine in healthcare and five in defense. Redirecting merely $100 billion from military expenditure toward education could therefore support substantially more employment. Yet the political establishment continues prioritizing military contracts and corporate procurement over the productive potential of ordinary Americans.

This pattern extends throughout corporate America. Nvidia, Microsoft, Apple, Alphabet, Meta, Tesla, SpaceX, major insurers and mortgage institutions occupy commanding positions in technology, finance and essential services. Their combined valuations run into trillions of dollars, while their executives and shareholders accumulate extraordinary wealth. Meanwhile, ordinary families confront rising insurance premiums, mortgage payments, medical expenses and educational costs. The economic system increasingly concentrates rewards at the top while distributing financial burdens across society. The political consequences are becoming visible. Figures such as Zohran Mamdani and Abdul El-Sayed represent growing demands for affordable housing, universal access to healthcare, economic fairness and stronger public services. Their political appeal challenges the assumption that corporate profitability automatically translates into public prosperity. Americans increasingly want national wealth directed toward their daily needs rather than consumed by endless military preparations and expensive institutional failures.

China offers a contrasting approach through stronger state direction of infrastructure, industrial development and strategic investment. Its experience raises an important question about whether national resources should principally support private accumulation or coordinated public development. America possesses sufficient wealth and technological capacity to provide exceptional education, healthcare, housing and infrastructure. The obstacle is increasingly one of political priorities and economic distribution. The writing is on the wall. A system that manufactures anxieties, monetizes institutional failures and repeatedly transfers public resources toward powerful corporations cannot command unquestioning public confidence indefinitely. America's greatest doomsday may never arrive through Russian missiles, Chinese cyberattacks or Iranian drones. It may emerge from within, when trillions are spent preparing for imaginary catastrophes while the real economic suffering of ordinary Americans remains neglected. The FORTRESS cost range is an outside estimate, not a Pentagon appropriation; the $30 billion aviation figure is proposed additional funding, and the $495 billion banking figure is a broader industry estimate rather than a verified U.S.-only upgrade requirement. The relevant reporting and the Department of Transportation's funding breakdown support those distinctions.

Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)
Former Press Minister,
Embassy of Pakistan to France
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Strength With Restraint: Pakistan's Armed Forces in a Volatile Region

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



A NATION'S military strength is measured not only by its manpower, weapons and capacity to defend territorial sovereignty, but also by the professionalism with which it fulfils its responsibilities. In an increasingly uncertain international environment, Pakistan's armed forces occupy an important position, shaped by decades of operational experience, a demanding regional security environment and a longstanding contribution to United Nations peacekeeping. Their evolving role under Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir also reflects the growing importance of military diplomacy in regional affairs.

Pakistan possesses one of the world's substantial conventional military establishments. The Global Firepower ranking for 2026 places it fourteenth among 145 countries, although such assessments offer broad comparisons rather than definitive measures of military effectiveness. Its principal strengths include considerable manpower, a sizeable land force, a capable air force and a nuclear deterrent designed to maintain strategic balance in South Asia. The Pakistan Navy, meanwhile, is strengthening its capabilities to safeguard maritime interests and important commercial routes in the Arabian Sea. The development of the JF-17 Thunder through cooperation with China illustrates Pakistan's determination to expand indigenous defence production. The induction of modern aircraft and improvements in missile technology, surveillance and naval capabilities demonstrate an effort to adapt to the changing character of warfare, where precision, intelligence and coordination across operational domains have become increasingly important.

However, military capability must be assessed against economic realities. Limited financial resources, dependence on foreign suppliers and technological gaps constrain the pace of modernisation. Pakistan cannot compete with the major military powers in defence expenditure, making indigenous research, technological self-reliance and efficient resource allocation essential. Its strategic strength will ultimately depend upon combining credible military preparedness with a sustainable economic foundation.

The professional character of the armed forces has been shaped by decades of conventional conflict and counter-terrorism operations. The wars with India in 1947–48, 1965 and 1971, together with the Kargil conflict of 1999, remain defining episodes in the country's military history. Their outcomes were varied, but their lessons continue to influence strategic thinking. Subsequently, operations against militancy in the tribal districts, Swat and other parts of the country demanded considerable sacrifice, operational adaptation and institutional resilience. The May 2025 confrontation with India demonstrated the complexities of modern warfare between nuclear-armed neighbours. The involvement of aircraft, missiles and drones illustrated how rapidly a regional crisis can escalate across multiple domains. The subsequent ceasefire, following diplomatic intervention and military-level communication, reinforced the importance of effective command structures, intelligence coordination and restraint in managing a confrontation with potentially far-reaching consequences. The episode also highlighted the continuing relevance of Kashmir and other unresolved disputes in South Asian security.

An equally significant dimension of Pakistan's military contribution is its record in United Nations peacekeeping. Since its first deployment in the Congo in 1960, Pakistan has contributed more than 170,000 personnel to international missions across four continents. Its contingents have served in challenging environments, undertaking responsibilities that include civilian protection, humanitarian assistance, medical services and the restoration of public confidence. The sacrifice of Pakistani personnel who lost their lives while serving under the United Nations flag remains an important part of this history.

This experience has earned Pakistani contingents a professional reputation in international missions. Peacekeeping requires discipline, cultural sensitivity and the ability to operate in complex political environments. It also provides valuable institutional experience, strengthening the capacity of military personnel to work alongside international organisations and civilian authorities. Under Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan's military leadership has become increasingly visible in regional diplomatic engagement. His role following the May 2025 confrontation with India brought renewed attention to the relationship between military deterrence and political negotiation. His position that there is little room for war in a nuclearised environment reflects the strategic dangers confronting both countries. Nevertheless, durable stability in South Asia will require meaningful dialogue, particularly on Kashmir, rather than an indefinite dependence on military calculations.

Pakistan's engagement with Iran and other regional powers has further expanded this diplomatic dimension. Munir's visits to Tehran and coordination with Saudi and Turkish representatives in October 2026 have been associated with efforts to reduce tensions between Iran and the United States. The discussions have focused on preventing further escalation, encouraging negotiations and protecting the stability of a region vital to international energy supplies and commerce. Although the outcome remains uncertain, Pakistan's relationships with different regional actors provide an opportunity to facilitate communication where direct engagement is difficult.

The wider Muslim world also requires greater coordination. Differences among Muslim-majority countries have frequently weakened their collective diplomatic influence. Pakistan's relationships with Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Iran, Egypt and other regional states offer opportunities to promote mutual understanding and address common security concerns. Defence cooperation can provide an institutional foundation for such engagement, provided it remains guided by mutual respect and the sovereignty of participating states. The continuing tragedy in Palestine presents another test of international responsibility. Pakistan's diplomatic position should remain centred on international law, protection of civilians, humanitarian assistance and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Military and diplomatic influence acquire greater credibility when accompanied by a consistent commitment to these principles.

Pakistan's armed forces face a demanding combination of responsibilities: protecting national sovereignty, countering internal security threats, modernising defence capabilities and contributing to international stability. These tasks require professional continuity, technological advancement and a clear understanding of the relationship between military preparedness and political objectives.

Ultimately, the standing of a military institution rests upon its discipline, competence and service to the state. Pakistan's experience in conventional defence, counter-terrorism and international peacekeeping demonstrates the breadth of its responsibilities. The challenge ahead is to preserve these professional strengths while ensuring that military capability, economic development and diplomatic engagement reinforce one another. In a region where strategic miscalculations carry extraordinary costs, sound judgement may prove as consequential as military strength.

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Briefs

Pakistan, UK pledge to solidify...

FROM PAGE 01

The visit reflects shared resolve of Pakistan and the United Kingdom to deepen defence cooperation and strengthen bilateral military ties.

Asian Development Bank...

FROM PAGE 01

'Strengthening Pakistan's Pension and Insurance Systems'. In August, the government executed agreements with 16 pension fund managers to formally operationalise the Defined Contribution Pension Fund Scheme (DCPFS), launched a year ago for public sector employees as part of major pension reforms aimed at containing the snowballing pension burden on the budget.

CDF Munir, Iranian FM discuss...

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collective action, stronger cooperation and a shared regional strategy. The Iranian foreign minister welcomed the establishment of a technical negotiating committee to reform the ECO Trade Agreement, urging member states to participate in negotiations aimed at developing a new and effective trade agreement. Turning to regional security, Araghchi reaffirmed Iran's commitment to the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law. He said that Tehran had remained committed to diplomatic engagement and the peaceful resolution of disputes over the past two years. However, he accused the US of pursuing aggression, threats, targeted killings, economic pressure and a blockade against Iran, describing these actions as "blatant violations" of international law and the UN Charter.

Reports suggest US forces...

FROM PAGE 01

Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani. Rubio condemned the attacks during Monday's call, the US State Department said, following Iranian drone strikes targeting American military installations in Bahrain. "The Secretary condemned Iran's attacks on Bahrain and reaffirmed the commitment of the United States to the security of Bahrain and all our Gulf partners," the department said in a statement. Bahrain said its air defences intercepted and destroyed several Iranian aerial attacks on Sunday, marking the first such interceptions by the kingdom's air defence systems since September. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said it had attacked a US military base in Bahrain with six drones in retaliation for what it described as "hostile US actions", according to Iran's Fars news agency.

Qatar warns Iran's attack threatens...

FROM PAGE 01

Al-Ansari said Qatar would meet Iranian officials on Tuesday to exchange views on current proposals as part of its ongoing mediation. The meeting follows recent contacts aimed at bridging differences and narrowing the gap between the proposals on the table, he said. Separately, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held talks in Muscat with his Omani counterpart Badr Albusaidi on diplomatic options to contain tensions and revive dialogue and negotiations, the Oman News Agency reported. The two ministers discussed ways to expand areas of understanding between the parties involved and prevent the crisis from widening. They also stressed the importance of protecting maritime corridors to keep international shipping and trade flowing, Oman's foreign ministry said.

Emma Alam features in American documentary

Emma first gained global recognition in 2020 by winning the 29th World Memory Championships against 300+ international competitors. Today, she is a three-time World Champion across multiple mental sports disciplines, holding 21 medals, eight trophies, and two Guinness World Records, including memorizing 410 random words in 15 minutes and 218 names /faces in the same timeframe

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's World Memory Champion, two-time Guinness World Record holder and Author of Mastering Memory, Emma Alam, has achieved another international milestone, as she has been featured in an American documentary Superhuman 2 'The Rebirth'.

The documentary by award-winning filmmaker Caroline Cory gathers an elite international cast of extraordinary individuals to showcase the frontiers of human mental performance, said a press release. From blind individuals perceiving without sight to Emma Alam's world-record memory and speed-reading capabilities, Superhuman 2 The Rebirth investigates how individuals like Emma Alam push the boundaries of human perception and memory.

By examining her extraordinary mental feats alongside experts like top biologists and neuroscientists, the film raises a profound question: are these abilities rare anomalies, or proof that the true potential of the human mind is far greater than what modern science currently understands? The documentary features expert insights from leading researchers, including stem cell biologist Dr. Bruce H. Lipton (The Biology of Belief), five-time New York Times bestselling author Gregg Braden, investigative journalist Lynne McTaggart (The Field), and Michael Bernard Beckwith, founder of the Agape International Spiritual Center.



Alongside these experts is an extraordinary cast of minds, including World Memory & Speed Reading Champion and two-time Guinness World Record holder Emma Alam, six-time USA Memory Champion Nelson Dellis, and Guinness World Record holder Scott Flansburg (The Human Calculator). "Having been cast in this documentary is an opportunity to show the world that world-class cognitive excellence is emerging right here from Pakistan. And what I have achieved demonstrates that extraordinary mental performance can be learned through discipline and the right techniques," said Emma Alam.

Emma's cognitive capabilities were built through years of intensive training under the mentorship of Sania Alam, Founder of Futuristic Learning, which is an internationally recognized institution specializing in memory development, speed reading, mind mapping, and advanced learning techniques.

Emma first gained global recognition in 2020 by winning the 29th World Memory Championships against 300+ international competitors. Today, she is a three-time World Champion across multiple mental sports disciplines, holding 21 medals, eight trophies, and two Guinness World Records, including memorizing 410 random words in 15 minutes and 218 names /faces in the same timeframe. Her contributions to Pakistan's global standing earned her the Youth Excellence Award from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the Gold Youth Avicenna Award from the UK's Brain Trust, and an honorary Golden Visa from the UAE.

Iran Guards say targeted US radar...

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the Guards' Sepah news website said, adding that the attack was in response to the "repeated violations of Iranian airspace by US military drones".US Vice President JD Vance has pledged that Washington will not allow its war with Iran to turn into a prolonged military engagement, insisting President Donald Trump remains committed to ending the conflict without a long-term American military presence in the region. In an interview with Fox News host Laura Ingraham on Monday, Vance said the US had already achieved significant military objectives but would not commit itself to years of fighting. "The Iranian nuclear program is a threat to the United States of America," he said. "But we are not gonna allow this to become a 10- or 15-year commitment or, frankly, even a two-year commitment." "We're not gonna stay there forever; we promised we wouldn't, and I have full confidence the president will get us out of this thing with great results," Vance added.

PTI's Taimur Jhagra...

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The laboratory examined 16 videos provided on a USB device at the request of Peshawar police. Its analysis found similarities between the leaders' profile photographs and individuals appearing in the footage. The report also identified evidence of clip splicing in two videos linked to dysfunctional Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi and Irfan Saleem. The forensic examination was conducted between December 19 and 23, 2025, and was restricted to visual evidence. Violent protesters, including workers and supporters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), launched an attack on the historic structure after party's chairman Imran Khan was arrested on May 9 by Punjab Rangers to comply with the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) arrest warrant in the Al-Qadir Trust case. Khan's arrest infuriated party activists who took to the streets in several cities across the country, damaging public and private property, including military installations.

Bilawal for political 'reset'...

FROM PAGE 01

"I am frightened about what will happen to the people under these circumstances," he said. 'Forced division of Sindh will spill blood on streets' Responding to a question, the PPP chairman warned that if Sindh is divided by force, questions will be asked about the blood spilt on Karachi's streets. "If the province is divided by force, society will be divided; it will lead to enmity, ordinary people will take up arms, and the bloodshed will not be limited to a single death," Bilawal added. He said the PPP supports creating provinces in line with the people's wishes, the Constitution, and the law. "Where we are opposing, it is over force and coercion. We do not want division through force," the PPP leader said.

Punjab LB polls in 2 phases

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The first phase will cover Chakwal and Talagang, Pakpattan, Sialkot, Okara, Rajanpur, Narowal, Chiniot, Khanewal, Nankana Sahib, Kasur, Rawalpindi and Murree, Dera Ghazi Khan and Taunsa, Lahore, Bahawalpur, Lodhran, Sargodha, Hafizabad and Bhakkar. The second phase will cover Sahiwal, Gujranwala and Wazirabad, Bahawalnagar, Attock, Khushab, Mandi Bahauddin, Vehari, Jhelum, Sheikhupura, Muzaffargarh and Kot Addu, Toba Tek Singh, Faisalabad, Multan, Mianwali, Layyah, Jhang, Gujrat and Rahim Yar Khan. The ECP also forwarded copies of the letter to the provincial election commissioner and the secretary of the Punjab Local Government and Community Development Department.

Germany rout the Netherlands 5-0 in Nations League

DNA

FLORIAN Wirtz scored twice and Germany booked its place in the Nations League quarterfinals by routing the Netherlands 5-0 in Berlin on Monday.

More importantly, it was confirmation of the German team's renaissance under new coach Jürgen Klopp, whose appointment ushered in new optimism around his young team with progress evident over his six games in charge.

Nico Schlotterbeck was the oldest goal-scorer at 26, Wirtz is still just 23, the 24-year-old Derry Scherhant broke the deadlock, and Brajan Gruda, 22, set up two goals and scored one on what was just his second appearance for Germany. He also scored on his debut in Friday's 3-1 win in Serbia.

Klopp clearly enjoyed each of the goals but he praised the players' work rate as key.

"Everyone who was here today is going home with a smile, and won't be questioning the German national team for the next three or four months. That's a good thing," Klopp said, referring to the previous negativity around the side.

"When you think of the German team, yo, this could develop into something, and that's good." It was the Germany men's last game with Adidas gear before Nike takes over.

Substitute Giorgos Masouras' 69th-minute strike was enough for Greece to beat Serbia 1-0 at home in the other group game, but it was not enough for progress as Germany and the Netherlands both look forward to Friday's quarterfinal draw. All three three teams finished with 11 points. Local favorite Scherhant twice hit the post before opening the scoring with a brilliant strike before the break, cutting inside to elude Dutch captain Denzel Dumfries and then shooting inside the top right corner. Bart Verbruggen got his fingers to the ball but couldn't prevent its progress.

Scherhant, who used to score such goals in the same stadium for Hertha Berlin, pointed to the ground to indicate he was home again. "You couldn't have imagined it going any better," said Scherhant, who now plays for Freiburg.

Wirtz's goal, on the hour mark, was arguably better, winning the ball back from Dumfries after an attack broke down, feigning with his right foot to set up his left and then unleashing the ball in off the left post from outside the penalty area.

Schlotterbeck sealed the result five minutes later with a low header to Gruda's free kick, and Wirtz volleyed in his second in the 71st after Gruda was left free on the right. It prompted some Dutch fans to head for the exits. Gruda got Germany's fifth in the 77th, prompting furious Dutch goalkeeper Verbruggen to call a team meeting to remonstrate with his teammates. By then it was too late. Switzerland was already assured of promotion to League A as the Group B1 winner before enjoying a 4-0 win over Scotland in St. Gallen. Lewis Ferguson's own goal ended the visitors' fine start in the 22nd minute. The Scotland midfielder was attempting to cut out Zachary Athekame's cross but only prodded it into his own net. Winsley Boteli and Alvyn Sanches scored their first goals for Switzerland after the break, and Zeki Amdouni completed the rout late.

DP World ILT20 wildcard picks add star quality to Season 5

DNA

DUBAI: The six DP World International League T20 franchises have named their wildcard picks for Season 5, adding even more firepower to squads that already feature some of the biggest names in T20 cricket. Abu Dhabi Knight Riders have brought back Andre Russell, Desert Vipers have signed Tom Curran, Dubai Capitals have added Sam Billings, Gulf Giants have picked Akeal Hosein, MI Emirates have named Kieron Pollard and Sharjah Warriorz have signed Tim Seifert. The wildcard picks give each franchise a boost before the season gets underway, with Desert Vipers taking on MI Emirates in the opening match in Dubai on Saturday, Nov. 21. West Indies all-rounder Russell has played only for the Knight Riders in the DP World ILT20 (38 appearances). He made history in Season 4, when his 500th T20 wicket, against Desert Vipers, made him the first player to reach 5,000 runs, 500 wickets and 500 sixes in the format.

England all-rounder Curran is a familiar face at the Vipers, now the defending champions. He played for the franchise in the inaugural season of the league, when they reached the final. Curran also featured for the Gulf Giants in Season 2 of the competition. Across both seasons, he has 14 wickets and 307 runs in 16 appearances. England wicketkeeper-batter Billings captained Dubai Capitals to their maiden DP World ILT20 title in Season 3. He played in the final in each of the league's first three seasons, first with Desert Vipers in Season 1 and then as Dubai Capitals captain in Seasons 2 and 3, and will captain the franchise again this season.

Saudi Arabia's Fatima Al-Ammari to face Lebanon's Anna

DNA

RIYADH: Saudi Arabian MMA fighter Fatima Al-Ammari returns to the cage to face off against Lebanon's Anna Wakim on Friday, Dec. 11, as part of the PFL MENA 12, as reported by Asharq Al-Awsat. The event will be hosted by Dhahran Expo in Alkhobar, bringing together two champions with a background in Thai boxing. The Professional Fighters League announced that the fight would be held as part of the women's amateur fights at a weight division of 139 pounds (63 kg); Al-Ammari enters the fight looking for a second victory after securing her first on debut in the PFL. The Saudi fighter has a record of four Saudi championship titles in Muay Thai and also in boxing, an experience she seeks to bring into the cage in Alkhobar. In contrast, Wakim will be having her first experience in mixed martial arts, relying on her background as a Lebanese champion in Muay Thai and Wushu Sanda to begin a new phase in her career. The shared combat background of the two fighters gives the confrontation a unique character.

Saudi Arabia promotes cooperation as key to growth of the Paralympic Movement

RIYADH: Cooperation is the key to the development of Paralympic sports, the head of the Saudi Olympic and Paralympic Committee said after attending the 2026 International Paralympic Committee Membership Gathering in Berlin. The three-day event, which took place just weeks after Team Saudi's record-setting showing at the Asian Para Games in Japan last month, brought together national Paralympic committees, international federations, regional organizations and Paralympic leaders from around the world under the theme "Coming Together: A Call to Action. The Saudi delegation was led by the CEO and secretary-general of the Olympic and Paralympic Committee, Abdulaziz Baeshen, and included the Paralympic affairs advisor, Fahad Al-Qabaa, and Paralympic equestrian athlete Ahmed Al-Sharbatly.

Panels and workshops during the event, which concluded on Nov. 9, focused on the International Paralympic Committee's strategic plan for 2027-2030 and cooperation between member organizations. Delegates also discussed governance, funding and support mechanisms, the latest developments in sport classification, and preparations for 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles. Other topics included ways to expand opportunities for participation among persons with disabilities, and the development of technical and administrative capabilities.

Baeshen said international partnerships were central to Paralympic development: "The continued growth of the Paralympic Movement relies on strong partnerships and knowledge exchange. "Building on Saudi Arabia's progress in developing Paralympic sport, we remain committed to sharing our experiences and learning from others to further develop Paralympic sport in the Kingdom and contribute to the continued advancement of the movement worldwide, while creating greater opportunities for athletes." This progress in the development of Paralympic sport can be seen in the growing successes of Saudi athletes since the Kingdom integrated the administration of Olympic and Paralympic sports under a single organization in 2021 to ensure equal attention and support. Most recently, Team Saudi fielded 41 athletes in eight sports at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Para Games in October, who came home with 17 medals, including eight golds, nearly twice as many as the nine won in Hangzhou in 2022. – **DNA**

Dubai Basketball celebrates Family Day

DNA

ABU DHABI: Flying the UAE flag, Khamzat Chimaev needed fewer than two minutes to defeat Chris Weidman at the inaugural RAF Abu Dhabi as Real American Freestyle announced itself to the Middle East with a sensational sell-out debut at the Etihad Arena.

The night's 13-bout card featured some of the world's best wrestlers alongside leading names from the world of Mixed Martial Arts, including Chimaev, Arman Tsarukyan, Merab Dvalishvili and Julianna Pena. There was also a last-minute addition in the form of Saba Lazishvili, a 21-year-old amateur who made his debut after replacing Umar Nurmagomedov late Friday night.

In the main event, with both Chimaev and Weidman having previously held the Ultimate Fighting Championship middleweight title, the level of wrestling was always expected to be elite. Chimaev wasted no time overpowering his All-American opponent despite his slighter stature. Winning via technical fall, the popular UAE resident claimed the light heavyweight crossover championship belt and declared: "Anyone who wants me – fight, grapple, wrestle – I'm here and I'm always ready."

Tsarukyan, the UFC No.1 lightweight contender, also needed little time to secure his victory in the co-main event, dragging the experienced Brazilian jiu-jitsu specialist Neiman Gracie around the mat and rolling him repeatedly onto his back to win by technical fall 10-0 inside the first round. "Nobody cares if he's big or not, I always do my job: fight no matter," said Tsarukyan, wrapped in the catchweight crossover belt. "And thank you Abu Dhabi: This is one of the best places to compete facilities, people, crowd."

After Chimaev and Tsarukyan, it was arguably Lazishvili's remarkable win over Urijah Faber that produced the largest cheers of the night. The 21-year-old, making his first bow at professional level, was the underdog against an American opponent who is not only a UFC Hall of Famer but also a World Extreme Cagefighting champion. Yet despite being undersized and taken down early in the first round, the Georgian stormed back late in the bout to win 12-7 by decision.

Lazishvili, referred to as "wrestling's newest star" by RAF's on-screen presenter Chael Sonnen, was asked what his strategy was coming into the match. "I didn't have any strategy," he responded candidly. "I had an opportunity and took it. I will fight everyone, wrestle everyone, I don't need any tactics. I will be champion of UFC in the future." He later told reporters: "It was unexpected for me to even come here to watch, let alone compete, so it is a dream come true to be here now having won."

A pipe band performance was followed by the national anthems of both the UAE and US at the start of the evening, before American Kennedy Blades made light work of compatriot Bella Mir in the first of five title fights to retain her women's middleweight championship. The Olympic silver medalist won by technical fall with 30 seconds left of the first round. "It's great to be wrestling in iconic Abu Dhabi," she said.

Providing fans an early glimpse of the characters and personalities for which RAF is becoming known, Zahid Valencia – nicknamed Z-Money – entered the ring spraying banknotes. And he showed his worth, edging a decision after three tense rounds with Bahraini Khidir Saipudinov. "It's a dream come true," said Valencia after securing a fifth consecutive win. "I love doing this, taking on the best and winning. I want to continue wrestling the best in the world." Georgian Merab Dvalishvili showed great resilience against Marlon Moraes, recovering from an early points deficit to drop and pin his veteran opponent inside 90 seconds. Dvalishvili enjoyed huge support inside the sold-out arena and marked his victory by leaping to his feet, grabbing his national flag, and thanking the packed-out crowd. "The arena was full and they all enjoy it and you know we have lots of people watching on TV too," Dvalishvili said. "I'm sure RAF is going to just grow and grow. Everyone is doing a great job and I'm very grateful to be part of it."

Squeezed between Diana Avsaragova's defeat of Julianna Pena and Kyle Snyder's successful defense of his light-heavyweight championship against Shamil Erdogan, Murtaza Talha beat Olympic bronze medalist Mohammed El Saidy. At the midway point of the card, 2012 Olympic gold medalist Jordan Burroughs rolled back the years to beat Azamat Nurykau via decision. "It's good to be back in the W column," said the 38-year-old. Elsewhere, Abdulrashid Sadulaev beat Dauren Kurugliev, Zabit Magomedsharipov got the better of Giga Chikadze, and Kyle Dake defended his cruiserweight championship belt for a sixth consecutive time, defeating Alp Arslan Begenjov via technical fall. The American, who has been to three countries across two continents in the past 21 days, said he was enjoying the hospitality of the UAE capital so much that "next time I'll bring my whole family. You guys are amazing. I love everything you do and I'll definitely be back." Chad Bronstein, RAF CEO and co-founder, said he was not surprised by the undeniable success of the maiden event in the Middle East. "The group we work with here, they treated us like a partnership," said Bronstein. "They didn't leave us hanging – every ticket sale, every marketing execution, everything we did, we did together. What we saw tonight is (that) Abu Dhabi is the best. This is the sports capital right here. We knew we were going to sell out because we're all competitive and we work really well together, so we're excited to continue. I can't speak any more highly of the experience we've had here.

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Over 45 uplift projects completed in Gwadar

To improve public amenities, fishermen's shelters and parking sheds were also constructed. Furthermore, futsal courts were developed to provide young people with better sports and recreational facilities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A total of 49 development projects worth Rs836 million have been completed in Gwadar district under Phase I and Phase II of the Balochistan Sustainable Development Initiative (BSDI), marking a significant step towards improving public facilities, strengthening infrastructure and promoting sustainable development in the region.

Under BSDI Phase I, 15 development projects were completed at a cost of Rs398 million, while projects worth Rs438 million were completed under Phase II, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday. Collectively, Rs836 million was spent on 49 development projects across various sectors, in line with public needs and local priorities.

Of the completed projects, 25 were related to the education sector, 12 to construction and infrastructure development, three to healthcare and five to solar energy. One project was also completed to promote sports facilities.

Significant interventions were made in the education sector, including the renovation and rehabilitation of more than 80 government schools.

The projects also included the construction of new classrooms and examination halls, along with science laboratories, boundary walls and washrooms in schools and colleges.

These initiatives are expected to provide students with a safer, improved and more conducive learning environment, particularly for students in Balochistan.

To improve public amenities, fishermen's shelters and parking sheds were also constructed. Furthermore, futsal courts were developed to provide young people with better sports and recreational facilities.

The completion of BSDI Phase I and Phase II projects has contributed to improving basic infrastructure and essential public services in different areas of Gwadar district.

The overarching objective of these development initiatives is to improve the quality of life of the local population while promoting inclusive socio-economic growth.

The successful completion of these projects represents an important milestone towards sustainable development and a more prosperous future for Gwadar district.



Briefs

PSX turns bearish, loses over 665 points

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bearish trend on Tuesday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index losing 665.21 points, a negative change of 0.37 percent, to close at 177,517.74 points against 178,182.95 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 839.224 million shares, compared to 1,339.586 million shares traded in the previous session. The traded value of the ready market stood at Rs20.158 billion, down from Rs32.584 billion a day earlier. Meanwhile, total market capitalisation decreased to Rs19.290 trillion from Rs19.359 trillion recorded in the previous session.

Out of 498 companies that traded in the ready market, 190 posted gains, 276 suffered losses, while 32 remained unchanged, reflecting a negative trend in the market. WorldCall Telecom led the volume chart with 95.616 million shares, followed by LSE Financial Services with 91.360 million shares and Tasdeeq Information with 57.241 million shares. Among the top gainers in the ready market, Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited surged by Rs229.39 to close at Rs26,216.33, while Khyber Textile Mills Limited advanced by Rs86.12 to settle at Rs1,879.76. On the losing side, PIA Holding Company LimitedB declined by Rs44.00 to close at Rs14,156.50, while Pakistan Engineering Company Limited fell by Rs41.48 to Rs1,043.51. In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 121.302 million shares with a traded value of Rs4.372 billion, compared with 242.354 million shares worth Rs8.249 billion in the previous session.

Of the 306 companies traded in the DFC market, 67 advanced, 229 declined, and 10 remained unchanged.–**APP**

MoU inked to make 5G smartphones more affordable

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani telecom operator, Ufone & Telenor Pakistan has signed a strategic partnership with AlfaMall, Pakistan's leading Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) marketplace by Bank Alfalah, to make 5G smartphones more accessible and affordable through convenient installment financing plans.

Badar Bin Saqib, Vice President Segments & Products, PTML, and Ms. Robina Naz Regional Head Corporate North – AlfaMall signed the agreement at a ceremony in Islamabad. The partnership will enable eligible customers to purchase 5G-enabled smartphones using credit cards issued by Bank Alfalah and other participating banks to reduce the need for full upfront payment. Affordability of 5G-compatible smartphones remains a key barrier to wider adoption of 5G technology in Pakistan. Through this collaboration, Ufone & Telenor Pakistan and AlfaMall aim to plug this gap by offering customers flexible financing options. The initiative is expected to encourage customers to upgrade to 5G-enabled devices, and support wider adoption of 5G connectivity and digital services. The collaboration brings together telecom connectivity, smartphone financing and digital financial services to support the development of a stronger 5G ecosystem in Pakistan. It also represents an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between Pakistan's telecommunications and financial sectors, effectively contributing to the country's growing digital economy. Commenting on the partnership, Syed Atif Raza, Chief Commercial Officer, PTML, said, "We believe in the democratization of technology and are committed to making next-generation connectivity more accessible and affordable for everyone. Through this partnership, we are addressing one of the key barriers to 5G adoption: smartphone affordability. Flexible installment plans will make 5G-enabled devices more accessible to customers across different income segments, enabling more people to benefit from our expanding 5G network and participate in Pakistan's growing digital economy.–**APP**

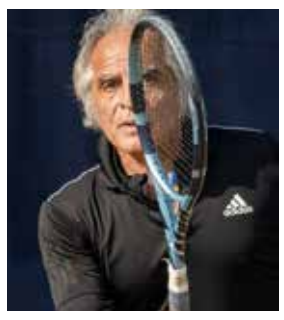
JWU, China's NWAFU sign coop agreement for agri research

ISLAMABAD: The Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU) and Northwest A&F University (NWAFU) of China have signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) to strengthen research, development and academic cooperation, with a focus on dryland agriculture, climate resilience and smart farming. The agreement was signed by FJWU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Bushra Mirza and Prof. Dr. Lixin Zhang, Director of the Shaanxi Belt and Road Joint Laboratory on Dryland Biological Resources and Green Smart Agriculture and Chief Scientist of the Sino-Pak Biohealth Agriculture Overseas Sci-tech Demonstration Park, on behalf of NWAFU. The signing took place during PINTECH 2026 on November 14, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. The five-year cooperation framework aims to promote collaboration in dryland farming, soil and water conservation, crop stress biology, plant biotechnology, food science, environmental protection and ecological restoration. The two universities also plan to explore joint research in agricultural economics, rural development, artificial intelligence, remote sensing and smart agriculture, alongside initiatives to strengthen agricultural education and women's participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The partnership is expected to involve the establishment of a science and technology demonstration park, joint laboratories and a research centre. It will also facilitate jointly supervised graduate research, field trials, faculty development and support for women-led agricultural technology, food and climate technology start-ups. NWAFU is among China's leading institutions in agriculture, forestry and environmental sciences. The semi-arid climate of northwest China shares similarities with conditions across Pakistan's rainfed Pothohar Plateau, offering opportunities for joint research into agricultural productivity, water conservation and climate adaptation. FJWU said the partnership would help strengthen research with practical benefits for farmers and local communities while creating opportunities for young Pakistani women to pursue careers in agricultural, food and environmental sciences. The agreement marks another step in Pakistan-China academic cooperation, particularly in agricultural innovation, scientific research and technology transfer.–**DNA**

Rashid storms into doubles semifinals at ITF Masters

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's seasoned tennis star and former Davis Cup player Rashid Ahmad Malik, partnering Germany's Axel Hampe, advanced to the Men's 55+ Doubles semifinals of the ITF Masters MT700 Tennis Tournament being held at the Royal Cliff Hotel, Pattaya, Thailand.



The pair delivered an impressive performance in the quarterfinals, defeating fourth seeds Muhamed Mahmutovic (MNE) and Balan Ramadass (IND) 6-3, 6-2 in a commanding display lasting just one hour and 20 minutes. Rashid drew upon his vast experience, displaying exceptional court awareness, precise shot-making and tactical brilliance to outplay the seeded opponents. Well supported by his German partner, the duo maintained control throughout the encounter to secure a convincing straight-sets victory and book their place in the semifinals.–**APP**

Pakistan targets $1b gemstone exports in 5 years

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan aims to increase its gemstone exports to $1 billion within the next five years through value addition, international certification, modern mining techniques and promotion of Brand Pakistan. This was stated by Lieutenant General Muhammad Zafar Iqbal (Retd), Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Energy, while inaugurating a four-day international workshop titled "Unlocking the Value of Indigenous Gemstones" in Islamabad on Tuesday. The workshop, being held from November 17 to 20, is jointly organized by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), National Productivity Organization (NPO) Pakistan and Pakistan Gems and Jewellery Development Company (PGJDC). He inaugurated a one-day gemstone display featuring Pakistan's indigenous precious and semi-precious stones, highlighting their diversity, quality and potential for value addition through modern cutting, polishing and processing. Addressing the inaugural session, the SAPM said Pakistan possesses enormous gemstone reserves, primarily in Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, with considerable untapped potential in Balochistan. The country's gemstone resources are estimated at approximately $450 billion, whereas annual formal exports currently stand at only $5.8 million. He observed that despite the presence of more than 5,000 companies processing over 30 varieties of gemstones, including emerald, peridot, ruby, topaz and aquamarine, the sector remains underdeveloped due to traditional mining practices, limited value addition and inadequate standardization and certification. He said the government was implementing reforms under the National Policy to Realize Pakistan's Gemstone Potential 2026–2030, aimed at transforming the sector into a competitive export-oriented industry. The proposed measures include an internationally recognized certification system, a dedicated authority for sector development and investment, establishment of a National Warranty Office, geological mapping, modern mining technologies, specialized training and Centers of Excellence. He emphasized that strengthening local processing and promoting Brand Pakistan would help increase the international competitiveness of Pakistani gemstones and create new opportunities for investment and exports. Speaking on the occasion, Nobutsugu Miyama, Program Officer and APO Coordinator, APO Japan, said the organization was pleased to support Pakistan through knowledge sharing, capacity building and regional cooperation. He expressed confidence that international best practices and technical expertise would help strengthen Pakistan's gemstone value chain and expand access to global markets. CEO NPO Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry said the National Productivity Organization, as Pakistan's national focal point for productivity and liaison with APO, was committed to building an economically productive and globally competitive Pakistan through productivity, quality, innovation, resource efficiency and capacity development. He said improved processing techniques, efficient resource utilization, quality assurance and internationally recognized standards could transform the gemstone sector into a high-value-added and export-oriented industry. The workshop is focusing on global gemstone market trends, standardization, formal trade compliance, modern cutting and processing techniques, value addition, public-private partnerships, business development and formal business-to-business integration among APO member economies. The opening session was attended by Ambassador of Thailand to Pakistan Rongvudhi Virabutr, Sumed Prasongpongchai, Director General of the Gem and Jewelry Institute of Thailand (GIT), Bhuwadol Wanthanachaisaeng, Dr. Surin Intayot, CEO PGJDC Toufeeque Ahmad Arain, and international and local participants.–**DNA**

France braces for fresh public sector strike over pay

This is unacceptable for the unions, which put the loss of purchasing power for public servants at 16 percent since 2017, leading to increasing numbers of public employees ending up on or close to the minimum wage against a backdrop of inflation

PARIS: Demonstrators gathered across France on Tuesday after unions called a nationwide strike by public sector workers in a bid to secure pay rises, despite government efforts to ease tensions as demonstrations roil the country.

France's 5.8 million public sector employees have been called to mobilize after talks with Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu on Friday failed to satisfy unions, which have been pushing for across-the-board pay rises since last week's boost to the minimum wage for private-sector workers.

Tuesday marks the third call for a united day of action and strikes in the public sector since September, including one earlier this month that saw hundreds of thousands of workers march and police firing tear gas as clashes broke out in some cities. More unions joined the call after the meeting organized by Lecornu, which union representatives left saying proposed measures failed to address the urgency of the pay situation. In Paris, unions gathered in the east of the city where a rally was scheduled to begin at 2:00 p.m. (1300 GMT), with dozens of other demonstrations planned across the country. Between 40,000 and 80,000 people are expected to demonstrate in the capital, and between 220,000 and 300,000 nationwide, a police source told AFP. Gatherings began in the morning in several cities, including Lyon in the southeast, where thousands rallied.

At the Paris rally, university professor Nicolas Prevot stood amid a cluster of demonstrators blowing away on large conch shells streaked with white and pale pink. "It's about defending human rights first and foremost, but also protecting public services, which are being torn apart," he said. Prevot also hoped to see the far right kept out of power in next year's presidential election. "Above all, we mustn't let the far right take power," he said. The European Union's second-largest economy has been rocked by more than a month of high school blockades and cost-of-living protests, with presidential elections looming next year and the far right hoping to seize power. Youth union organizations and Yellow Vest activists also plan to join the latest demonstrations, which come after weekend protests over grievances ranging from inflation to a proposed police law. Some of the largely peaceful rallies have seen fringe violence, as well as accusations of police brutality.

Huge cost of living protests across France a month ago degenerated into the worst rioting seen in the country for years, with thousands arrested, hundreds of shops looted and public buildings attacked and torched.

Security forces were at the ready in Paris near the rally starting point, an AFP journalist saw.

Authorities have imposed restrictions on undeclared gatherings near several schools and universities in Paris and temporarily banned the sale of firecrackers, citing concerns about possible violence during protests.

The protests come as France races to adopt a 2027 budget under pressure to reduce its deficit.

Public-sector staff aim to pressure the government to unfreeze the pay scale point used to calculate their basic salary. In its draft budget, the government has ruled out any general pay rise for the fourth consecutive year.

This is unacceptable for the unions, which put the loss of purchasing power for public servants at 16 percent since 2017, leading to increasing numbers of public employees ending up on or close to the minimum wage against a backdrop of inflation.–**DNA**

Palestinian woman killed, 10 wounded in settler gunfire

Palestinian official television said on Tuesday that a Palestinian woman was killed and 10 others wounded by what it described as gunfire from Israeli settlers in the village of Duyuk Al-Tahta, west of Jericho in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Yahya Mufreh, director of the emergency department at Jericho Government Hospital, told reporters the elderly woman had died after being shot in the head.

The Israeli military also said it was investigating an initial report of an attempted attack in the Jericho area. It said soldiers had been dispatched to the scene and were setting up roadblocks in the area, adding that details of the reported incident were under review.The latest reported violence comes amid heightened tensions in the area following the arrival of a group of Israeli settlers who moved into Palestinian homes in the Jericho area in early November, preventing some Palestinian residents from accessing their properties and raising fears of further settler attacks.–**APP**

Jordan evacuates 12 children from Gaza

LONDON: Jordan's armed forces evacuated 12 Palestinian children and 11 family members from Gaza on Monday so that they could be given medical care in the country's hospitals.

The youngsters were the 38th group to be evacuated under the Jordanian Medical Corridor initiative, the Jordan News Agency reported.

Jordan initiated the program last year with the aim to evacuate about 2,000 Palestinian children in need of medical care. The initiative was launched in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization.

Medical teams associated with the Jordanian military also operate two field hospitals in the Palestinian territory, one in southern Gaza and the other in Gaza City.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said on Monday that the death toll from the Israeli attacks on Gaza since the start of the conflict on Oct. 7, 2023 had risen to 74,702, with 176,105 injured.–**APP**

South Korea tightens exam security after AI cheating scandal

SEOUL: South Korea will deploy thousands of extra personnel to prevent cheating on its college entrance exam sites this week and may introduce tougher penalties, Prime Minister Han Seong-sook said Tuesday.

The announcement comes after an individual confessed on Sunday to cheating on the national tax accountant exam using artificial intelligence tools, an admission that brought panic ahead of the college test.

Known as the Suneung, the intense once-a-year exam – widely seen as a ticket to well-paid jobs and even better marriage prospects – will bring much of South Korea to a standstill on Thursday to minimize distractions.

As a measure to detect phones that have not been handed over, an emergency alert will be sent before the exam begins, Han said at a press conference.

Students will also be ordered to place their glasses on their desks so supervisors can verify they are not smart devices. "We also strongly urge students to avoid wearing clothing with buttons wherever possible," Han said. Students "will be asked to roll up both sleeves, and collars, buttons and other areas will also be checked to determine whether electronic devices, including miniature cameras, are concealed," she added.

Those caught cheating could be banned from taking the Suneung for 10 years, up from the current one-year restriction, Han said. The government will also file criminal complaints over serious cases of cheating, including those involving smart devices. In addition to the 75,000 supervisors deployed to 1,312 test centers nationwide, an additional 8,400 personnel will be deployed this year. "You may feel nervous and intimidated by the unfamiliar atmosphere inside and outside examination centers and the stricter inspection procedures._**APP**

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Briefs

United States intelligence points to possible Iranian plot

News Desk

DUBAI: New US intelligence suggests Iran is exploring plans to target senior officials in US President Donald Trump's administration with a so-called dirty bomb or chemical attack in Washington, CNN reported, citing seven US officials.

The plans appear intended to give Tehran options rather than signal an imminent attack. But the intelligence identifies specific locations and potential targets, prompting US authorities to strengthen contingency plans, CNN reported.

US officials see the intelligence as evidence of Iran's willingness to escalate amid continued US military strikes and an economic blockade that senior administration officials have described as devastating.

There is no evidence that Tehran has decided to proceed with an attack, and officials remain divided over whether Iran has the personnel to carry one out.

"Whether they actually have the personnel in place to execute is a matter of debate," one source told CNN. White House spokesperson Lauren Bis said the administration was monitoring potential threats but stressed that "there are no credible threats to the homeland" at this time.

US to honor Sadat with Gold Medal

DNA

WASHINGTON: Forty-five years after the assassination of former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, Washington is preparing to honor him at a special ceremony in the US Capitol.

Sadat's family will receive the Congressional Gold Medal, one of the highest civilian honors in the US, on Wednesday in recognition of his legacy and role in advancing peace in the Middle East. "History is increasingly vindicating my father's legacy in the eyes of younger generations who did not live through his presidency," his daughter Rokaya Sadat told Asharq Al-Awsat.

The ceremony follows legislation signed by US President Donald Trump on December 13, 2018, awarding Sadat the medal in recognition of "his heroic achievements and courageous contributions to peace in the Middle East." Congress has formally invited the family to attend the presentation at the Capitol, underscoring the enduring significance of Sadat's political legacy in the US. The Congressional Gold Medal recognizes outstanding achievements.

Francophonie Summit 2026

Global glacier cooperation from the Arctic to the Himalayas

The evening opened with remarks from Stéphane Rey, Ambassador of Switzerland; Jean-Noël Poirier, Ambassador of France; and Tarik Ali Khan, High Commissioner of Canada





Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Marking Francophonie Summit 2026, the Embassies of Switzerland and France and the High Commission of Canada in Pakistan jointly hosted a livestream and discussion on the Arctic research expedition CASCADES, highlighting the connections between glacier research in Greenland and the Hindu Kush-Karakoram-Himalaya (HKH) region.

The event took place at the Swiss Residence in Islamabad and brought together diplomats, scientists, policymakers, and researchers to explore how climate change is reshaping ice-dependent ecosystems and communities across the globe.

Dr. Mohammad Sharif, Member of the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly and Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Population Welfare, represented the Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan, Amjad Hussain Azar.

The evening opened with remarks from Stéphane Rey, Ambassador of Switzerland; Jean-Noël Poirier, Ambassador of France; and Tarik Ali Khan, High Commissioner of Canada. Speaking on the importance of Arctic research for countries beyond the polar region, Ambassador Jean-Noël Poirier drew on his experience in Greenland and underlined the visible effects of climate change already impacting local communities.

He noted that changing ocean temperatures are affecting fish stocks, whale migration patterns, and shrimp populations, while increased glacier melt is creating new navigation challenges due to drifting icebergs. "The information we get from Greenland is very important for all countries to know what to expect from climate change in the future," he said.

High Commissioner Tarik Ali Khan emphasized the importance of international scientific cooperation and the relevance of Arctic research to Pakistan's mountain regions. He noted that the Arctic is warming nearly four times faster than the global average and stressed that climate change poses both environmental and security challenges. "What we learn at one end of the world's cryosphere helps us understand the other," he said, highlighting the parallels between glacier changes in Greenland and those affecting communities in the Karakoram, Hindu Kush, and Himalaya.

Stéphane Rey, Ambassador of Switzerland said "Melting ice in Greenland, the Alps, and the HKH region reflects a shared global challenge. As mountainous countries with retreating glaciers, Switzerland and Pakistan can learn from each other's experiences." Jean-Éric Tremblay, Scientific Director of the Institut nordique du Québec and chief scientist for the expedition's first leg, followed with a video message.

Guests then connected live with scientists aboard the Canadian research icebreaker CCGS Amundsen, including Dr. Bastien Rouault, CASCADES Coordinator at the Swiss Polar Institute; Dr. Sofia Müller of EPFL Valais; and Prof. Dany Dumont of Université du Québec Rimouski, chief scientist for the second phase of the expedition. Mr. Dinar Wali, geospatial computational researcher and founder of RegenX.eco, presented the links between polar and mountain ice research and explained how lessons from the Arctic can contribute to understanding glacier change in Pakistan.

The CASCADES Expedition is a collaborative 2026 Arctic research mission aboard the Canadian icebreaker CCGS Amundsen, studying how melting Greenland glaciers and sea-ice formation affect ocean ecosystems and the global climate.

The mission is jointly led by the Swiss Polar Institute (SPI), the Institut nordique du Québec (INQ), and the French Polar Institute (IPEV), in collaboration with Greenlandic institutions and Amundsen Science.

Alongside seven research projects covering five scientific clusters, the expedition's outreach programme includes CLASSCADES, a series of free learning modules in French and German designed to help children aged 8-12 explore Arctic science, life aboard the CCGS Amundsen, and the importance of the Arctic for the future of the planet.

NATO allies to discuss US forces in Europe

BRUSSELS: NATO allies will discuss Washington's ongoing review of US troop levels in Europe with Pentagon policy chief Elbridge Colby in Brussels on Tuesday, German Defense minister Boris Pistorius said.

Even though the expectation is for US troops levels in Europe to decline, it is crucial to prevent dangerous capability gaps through talks with the US, Pistorius said before a meeting with other EU defense ministers in Brussels. – **APP**

Russia to hold emergency meeting

MOSCOW: Russia will hold an emergency government meeting, state media reported Tuesday, after a Ukrainian attack on the Crimean bridge linking Russia to the annexed peninsula appeared to inflict significant damage.

"A meeting of a government commission for dealing with the consequences of the attack on the Crimean bridge, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin, will be held shortly," state news agencies reported the government saying in a statement. – **APP**

Iran navy says another tanker hit

DNA

TEHRAN: An oil tanker was heavily damaged and caught fire after hitting a mine in a "restricted zone" in the eastern part of the Strait of Hormuz, the Iranian Army said in a statement carried by state media on Tuesday. The latest news came after Iran said Monday that four oil tankers had caught fire after striking a naval mines over the previous 24 hours in what the military described as a restricted area east of the Strait of Hormuz, Iranian state TV reported. The vessels have not been named or further details given surrounding the vessels' flags, cargo or status of crew.

Turkmen FM meets Ishaq Dar

Saifullah Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov have signed the Protocol of the 6th Session of the Pakistan-Turkmenistan Joint Intergovernmental Commission and the Programme of Cooperation between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs for 2026-2030.

The signing ceremony was held following the conclusion of the 6th Session of the Pakistan-Turkmenistan Joint Intergovernmental Commission in Islamabad today.

Pakistan condemns Israeli attacks in Syria

News Desk

WASHINGTON: Pakistan on Tuesday strongly condemned Israel's continued attacks and incursions into Syrian territory, calling for an immediate end to the violations, withdrawal from occupied areas and full compliance with the 1974 Disengagement Agreement and relevant UN Security Council resolutions. "The occupied Golan is Syrian territory under international law," Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Syed Haider Shah, told the Security Council.

Speaking at a briefing on the political and humanitarian situation in Syria, Ambassador Shah said Israeli violations undermined Syria's security and obstructed its recovery. He reaffirmed Pakistan's support for Syria's political transition, reconstruction and efforts to restore stability.

"Syria's transition continues despite considerable challenges and a complex regional environment," he said, adding that the progress achieved by the Syrian government deserved recognition and sustained support. Pakistan welcomed the Syrian government's efforts to advance the political transition, rebuild national institutions and strengthen engagement with regional and international partners.

Ambassador Shah said consolidating the progress would require "patient political engagement, economic opportunities and a secure environment." He also appreciated the Syrian leadership's emphasis on diplomacy and engagement in navigating the difficult regional environment.

On the economic front, Pakistan welcomed measures taken by the United States, European Union and United Kingdom to lift or ease economic sanctions on Syria and facilitate its reintegration into the international economy. "These measures have opened important opportunities for economic investment and reconstruction," the ambassador said, stressing that sustained international engagement was essential to translate sanctions relief into tangible economic recovery. Pakistan also welcomed investment and reconstruction initiatives undertaken by Syria and its regional and international partners. Their timely implementation, he said, could help restore essential services and ensure that Syrians experienced meaningful improvements in their daily lives. Ambassador Shah called for sustained humanitarian assistance, saying the scale of Syria's needs required predictable support and effective cooperation with the Syrian government.

Flour becomes costlier

Cereal Association of Pakistan (CAP) Chairman Muzammil Chappal told Dawn that he had been urging the government since May about a possible shortage of four million tonnes this season and at least allowing the private sector to import 2m tonnes, but the government had not paid any heed

Nazir Siyal

KARACHI: Amid a persistent shortfall, the arrival of imported wheat has so far failed to bring any relief to consumers, as wheat and wheat flour prices continue to rise.

Retailers jacked up the rates of flour No. 2.5 and fine flour to Rs180 and Rs200 per kg, up by Rs10 per kg, citing an increase in the rates by the millers. So far, more than 100,000 tonnes of wheat have arrived in the country since the last week of October.

Initially, the rate of wheat had plunged to Rs130 from Rs140 per kg after the arrival of the first ship carrying 51,000 tonnes on Oct 28. The open market, however, saw grain prices reverting to Rs140 per kg last week, forcing millers to raise prices of different flour varieties.

Cereal Association of Pakistan (CAP) Chairman Muzammil Chappal told Dawn that he had been urging the government since May about a possible shortage of four million tonnes this season and at least allowing the private sector to import 2m tonnes, but the government had not paid any heed.

Stakeholders estimate 3-4 million tonnes shortage of wheat. The country is facing a crisis despite a 4.3pc rise in wheat production to 29.61m tonnes in FY26 from 28.40m tonnes in the preceding year, according to the Economic Survey FY26.

According to Mr Chappal, annual demand for wheat ranges between 31m and 32m tonnes. He said, irrespective of the official wheat harvest of over 29m tonnes in FY26, the government needs to realise that demand for grain is rising as the population grows by over 3pc every year. Rauf Ibrahim, a wholesaler and trader, said the country needs at least 3m tonnes of wheat, as the new crop from Sindh and Punjab will enter markets between March and May next year.

He said the federal and provincial governments have not launched any effective campaign against hoarders and stock pilferers since the wheat crop hit the markets in FY26. He urged the government to check commodity stocks, especially wheat, in markets and godowns, as speculators and investors have been active in commodity investing.

Mr Ibrahim said millers raised the price of flour No. 2.5, Maida and Fine Flour to Rs8,100, Rs9,000 and Rs9,150, respectively, from Rs7,800, Rs8 ,400 and Rs8,550 per 50kg bag.

Iran, Oman discuss shipping amid Hormuz blockade

The ministers also emphasized the importance of safeguarding the security of maritime passages to ensure the uninterrupted flow of international navigation and trade. Iran has been conducting regular attacks on ships in Hormuz, the primary exit route for Gulf energy exports, since the war began with US-Israel strikes on February 28

News Desk

MUSCAT: The Omani and Iranian foreign ministers discussed safeguarding maritime corridors and ensuring the smooth flow of international navigation, the Omani foreign ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

The meeting comes amid Tehran's ongoing blockade of the crucial Strait of Hormuz, a consequence of the Middle East war. Iran's top diplomat, Abbas Araghchi, and his Omani counterpart, Badr Albusaidi, held talks in Muscat on diplomatic options to contain tensions and revitalize tracks of dialogue and negotiation, as reported by the Oman News Agency. These efforts aim to expand areas of mutual understanding among the concerned parties and prevent the widening of the crisis and its repercussions.

The ministers also emphasized the importance of safeguarding the security of maritime passages to ensure the uninterrupted flow of international navigation and trade.

Iran has been conducting regular attacks on ships in Hormuz, the primary exit route for Gulf energy exports, since the war began with US-Israel strikes on February 28. Amid the blockade, Iran insists vessels use routes it has authorized to transit Hormuz. The situation has significantly increased oil prices, subsequently raising fuel and other costs globally. The discussions highlighted reactivating diplomatic avenues and negotiation tracks to prevent further escalation.



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