LAHORE - KARACHI - ISLAMABAD

A sister publication of CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency

WWW.ISLAMABADPOST.COM.PK

Daily
Islamabad POST

Friday, November 20, 2026

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 40



Tarar for institutional mechanism between Pakistan, Türkiye

Detailed News On Page-08

Mussadaq to lead Pak team to India

Detailed News On Page-08



Solangi for efforts to protect kids

Detailed News On Page-04



Shehbaz vows to place Pakistan on path of growth

The prime minister said the government was exploring greater imports of American agricultural products, including soybeans, while seeking wider market access for Pakistani surgical instruments, sports goods and other manufactured products in the US market

SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said Pakistan's economic achievements were the product of a "productive partnership between the military and the political hierarchy". He was addressing a ceremony organised by the American Business Council of Pakistan.

The premier told the business community: "I can tell you without any fear of contradiction that this and other humble achievements couldn't have been possible without this great team and great teamwork. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif reaffirmed the government's commitment to placing Pakistan firmly on the path of sustained export-led economic growth, calling for stronger public-private partnerships, investment facilitation and structural reforms to transform the country's economy.

Addressing a gathering of the Pakistan-American Business Council (PABC) here, the prime minister said export-led growth was the only sustainable way forward, stressing that the government was determined to consolidate economic stability gains and create an enabling environment for domestic and foreign investors.

"It has to be export-led, nothing else, export-led growth," he said, highlighting opportunities to expand bilateral trade and investment between Pakistan and the United States. The prime minister said the government was exploring greater imports of American agricultural products, including soybeans, while seeking wider market access for Pakistani surgical instruments, sports goods and other manufactured products in the US market.

Continued on Page 06

President, PM hold important meeting

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have decided that all matters will be resolved through dialogue, the Presidency said on Thursday after the two leaders met in Islamabad. The meeting follows recent hard-hitting remarks by President Zardari's son, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, who questioned past decisions and actions taken by the ruling coalition — steered by PML-N and supported by PPP. In a statement, the Presidency said the "current situation" was discussed in Thursday's meeting. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, whom Bilawal made pointed remarks about, was also present at the huddle. The "current political situation was reviewed in detail", while the Middle East conflict also came under discussion. It was decided that the leadership will "sit down together on all matters and resolve them through consultation", the Presidency said. "The previous constitutional amendments were passed through mutual consultation among all allied parties," the statement from President Zardari's office said.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with President Asif Zardari. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi was also present. – DNA

Air space ban on Indian flights extended

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has extended its airspace ban on Indian aircraft until Dec 23, according to a Notice to Airmen (Notam) issued by the Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA). The previous extension of the ban was set to expire on Nov 24. "Pakistan airspace not available for Indian registered aircraft and aircraft operated/owned or leased by Indian airlines/operators, including military flights," the Notam said.

The Notam applies to both the Karachi (OPKR) and Lahore (OPLR) FIRs. India and Pakistan closed their airspaces to each other's airlines in late April 2025, when tensions between them escalated in the wake of a deadly attack in India-occupied Kashmir's Pahalgam. On April 24, Pakistan's top brass announced a series of measures, including the closure of its airspace to all India-owned

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan, ASEAN agree to deepen economic ties

Welcoming the ASEAN Secretary-General, Senator Dar described the visit as a historic milestone, noting that it was the first visit by an ASEAN Secretary-General to Pakistan in more than two decades

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Thursday reaffirmed their commitment to deepening cooperation across political, economic and socio-cultural spheres, with a particular focus on trade, investment, connectivity, digital innovation and regional stability. The commitment was expressed during delegation-level talks and a joint press stakeout between Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad.

Welcoming the ASEAN Secretary-General, Senator Dar described the visit as a landmark event in Pakistan-ASEAN relations, noting that it was the first visit by an ASEAN Secretary-General to Pakistan in more than two decades. He said the visit reflected the growing importance both sides attach to their partnership and would help inject fresh momentum into bilateral engagement. "Pakistan and ASEAN enjoy longstanding and friendly relations based on mutual respect, goodwill and shared aspirations for peace, stability and prosperity," the Deputy Prime Minister said. He recalled that Pakistan became ASEAN's Sectoral Dialogue Partner in 1993 and has since remained committed to strengthening cooperation with the regional grouping.

The talks focused on identifying practical avenues for expanding cooperation in key areas including trade, investment, education, technology, climate resilience and food security. Both sides also emphasized the importance of strengthening cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts to further deepen mutual understanding.

Continued on Page 06

JI team meets DPM Dar

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a follow-up meeting with a Jamaat-e-Islami delegation, led by Mr Liaqat Baloch, in Islamabad. The meeting continued consultations on petroleum prices and discussed the possibility of expanding the scope of existing fuel subsidy scheme. Appreciating the delegation's constructive engagement, the DPM/FM reaffirmed that easing the financial burden on ordinary citizens and safeguarding public welfare remain the government's foremost priorities. He noted that the government's structural reforms in petroleum policy, alongside global

Continued on Page 06

MQM-P urges action over Bilawal's 'bloodshed' remarks

Dr Siddiqui says party has been asked to reconsider November 29 rally in Karachi amid law and order concerns

DNA

KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) Chairman Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has said the party has been asked to reconsider its November 29 rally in Karachi following concerns over the law and order situation. "Law enforcement agencies contacted us and reviewed the law and order situation," Siddiqui said while holding a press conference in Karachi on Thursday. He added that a new date for the rally would be announced after consultations.

The party had announced plans to hold a rally on Karachi's Sharea Faisal on November 29 as part of its campaign for new administrative units. Sindh Taraqi Pasand (STP) Chairman Dr Qadir Magsi had also announced a similar move in the port city on the same day against the creation of new provinces in Sindh.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari later voiced concerns that any "forced" attempt to carve up Sindh would lead to bloodshed. Addressing an event in Karachi on November 17, the PPP chief said that he supported the creation of provinces in accordance with public wishes,

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

UK expels Myanmar defence attaché

LONDON: Britain's foreign minister Ed Miliband Thursday said the government was expelling Myanmar's defense attache and summoning the charge d'affaires after the International Court of Justice found the regime committed genocide against the Rohingya. "We are taking immediate action today in the light of this judgment ... we are ordering the expulsion of the Myanmar defense attache from the UK and calling urgently for a UN security council session to discuss the judgment," Miliband said in a statement. – **APP**

Putin invites EU states to Moscow

SHENZEN, China: Russia has invited European officials to Moscow to discuss whether they should participate in US-led talks on ending the Ukraine war, President Vladimir Putin said Thursday. "The American side is urging us to agree to the involvement of the Europeans ... Through diplomatic channels, we suggested to the Europeans to come to Moscow. And after that we will decide in what format the talks can continue," Putin said at a press conference in China. – **APP**

Haker attacks scare Italian PM

ROME: A wave of hacking and hoax attacks that has targeted Italy in recent weeks aimed to destabilize the country, but posed no concrete threat to national security, Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi said on Thursday. A series of hoaxes and cyberattacks have recently hit schools, supermarkets, blood banks, air traffic systems and broadcasters across Europe, disrupting daily life. – **APP**

Security forces kill 22 India-backed terrorists in KP operations

Killed terrorists remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities, says military's media wing

NEWS DESK

PESHAWAR: Security forces killed 22 India-backed Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists during multiple engagements across parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday. According to the military's media wing, the terrorists were killed during operations conducted between November 16 and 17. The ISPR said that security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in South Waziristan district.

"During the conduct of the operation, troops effectively engaged khawarij location and after intense exchange of fire, fifteen khawarij belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna al-Khawarij were sent to hell," it said. In two separate encounters in Bannu district, security forces effectively engaged militant hideouts and neutralised six terrorists, the ISPR said, adding that another terrorist was eliminated in an encounter in Tank district.

Weapons and ammunition have also been recovered from killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area. Sanitisation operations were being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area. The military vowed that a relentless counterterrorism campaign would continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism from the country. Pakistan has witnessed a surge in terror activities, particularly in its Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan provinces, since 2021, when the Afghan Taliban came into power.

According to a report by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), the two provinces remained the country's main hotspots for violence during the second quarter of 2026, with KP emerging as the worst-affected region. The report stated that KP and Balochistan together accounted for nearly 96% of all violence-related fatalities recorded during the quarter. Of the total deaths, more than 61% (475) were reported in KP, while Balochistan accounted for 34% (265).

Continued on Page 06

Qatar lauds Pakistan role in regional peace, stability

H.E. Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Minister of Interior of the State of Qatar called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir



CDF Munir visits Turbat

DNA

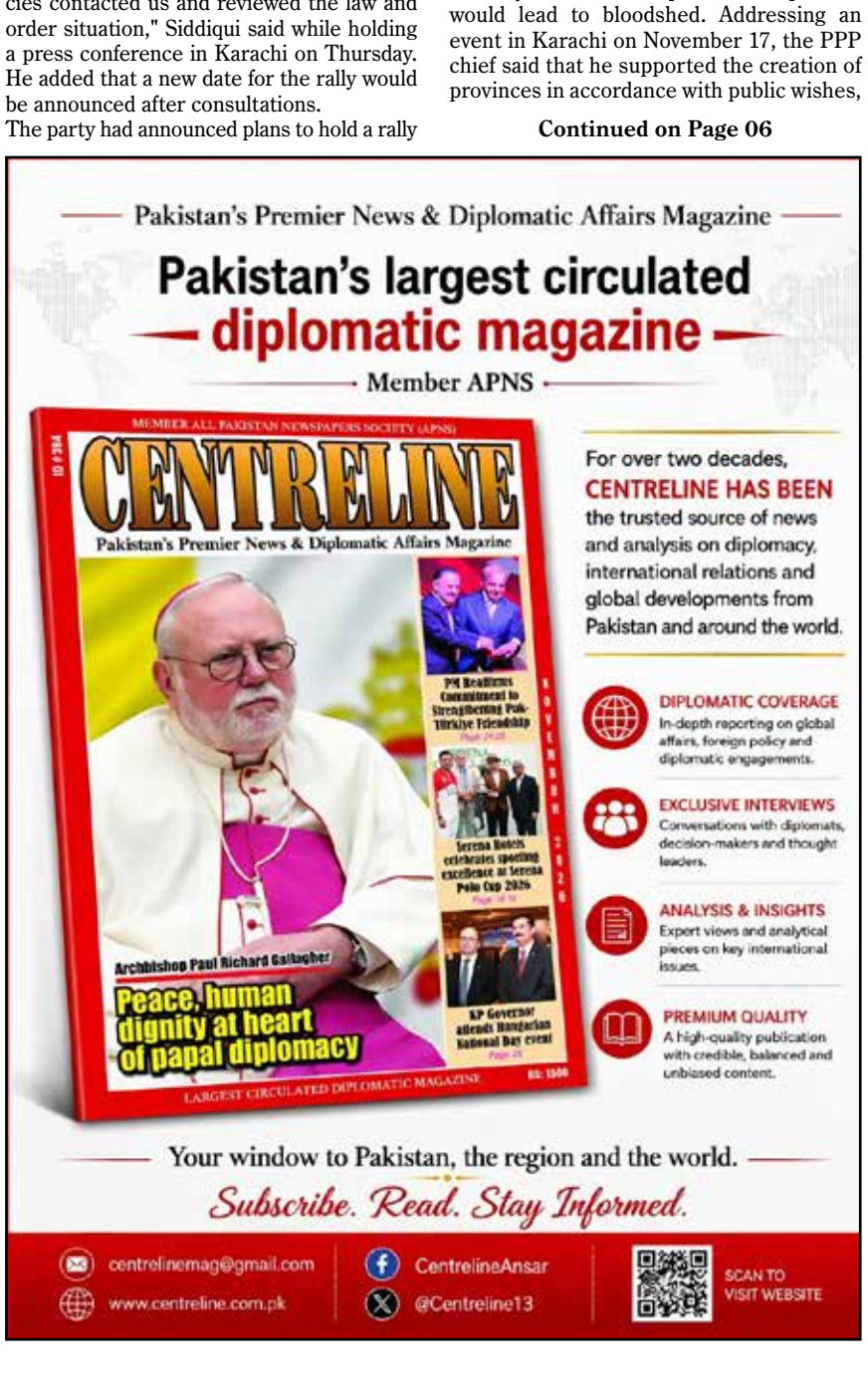
RAWALPINDI: H.E. Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Minister of Interior of the State of Qatar called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF),at Rawalpindi. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, evolving regional and global security situation and avenues for enhancing

Continued on Page 06

QUETTA: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Asim Munir has commended the Pakistan Army's operational preparedness and professionalism amid challenging operational conditions, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday.

The army chief made the remarks during his visit to Turbat city, where he was given a comprehensive briefing on the prevailing security environment, operational preparedness and successful ongoing operations against externally sponsored terrorism, the military's media wing said in a statement. The Corps Commander Balochistan received the army chief upon his arrival, after which he laid a floral wreath at the Shuhada Monument and offered fateha. During his interaction with the troops, Field Marshal Munir lauded their unwavering resolve to defend the motherland.

Continued on Page 06



Islamabad POST
Friday November 20 , 2026

Commissioner directs Ring Road affectees issues resolution

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division and Director General Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) Salman Ghani chaired a meeting on Thursday to review matters related to the Rawalpindi Ring Road Project, with a particular focus on the relocation and resettlement of affected residents. The Commissioner directed the concerned officers to promptly address issues faced by affected people and facilitate them in accordance with prescribed procedures. He stressed the need for a coordinated and transparent approach to resolve public grievances and ensure a smooth relocation process. He directed the revenue department and other relevant departments to work closely with RDA to identify and settle outstanding matters without unnecessary delays. Ghani said the convenience and legitimate concerns of residents must remain a priority during the execution of the project. He also instructed the departments concerned to maintain effective communication with affected residents, provide them with necessary guidance on relocation and resettlement, and ensure proper follow-up of their complaints. He emphasised that timely decisions and interdepartmental coordination were essential for the smooth implementation of the project while safeguarding the interests of the affected population. The meeting was attended by Additional Director General RDA Masood Ahmad Bukhari, Assistant Commissioners of Saddar, Cantt and Gujar Khan, revenue officers and other concerned officials.–**APP**

New provinces issue should be settled thru consensus

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly (PA) Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan on Wednesday called for a broad political debate on the creation of new provinces, equitable distribution of resources and governance reforms, saying that seeking public opinion on the issue was not prohibited by the Constitution.

Addressing a press conference at the Punjab Assembly here, he said the creation of new provinces was ultimately a matter for the assemblies to decide, while a referendum could provide an opportunity to ascertain the people's opinion. He said if the people opposed the creation of a new province, it could not be established, while public support would require political leadership to move forward in accordance with constitutional procedures.

The speaker said the debate should not be treated as a forbidden subject and all political parties should openly discuss the issue to develop a consensus. Referring to the Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) position, he said the Punjab Assembly had unanimously passed a resolution regarding the division of Punjab, whereas the PPP had staged a walkout when the division of Sindh was discussed. He questioned why a political party supported the division of one province but opposed the other, urging the PPP leadership to clarify its position. He said the matter was part of the assembly's official record and he was not making any statement without documentary evidence.–APP

Pakistan, Qatar sign MoU on security cooperation



Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, who is currently visiting Pakistan, signed the documents. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also witnessed the signing ceremony, the statement said

Saifullah Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witnesses the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Security Cooperation between the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) of Qatar and Federal Constabulary of Pakistan. Pakistan and Qatar on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on security cooperation, along with an action plan to prevent drug smuggling. The MoU was signed between Qatar's Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) and the Federal Constabulary, according to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, who is currently visiting Pakistan, signed the documents. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also witnessed the signing ceremony, the statement said. The PMO handout said that the premier "warmly" welcomed the visiting dignitary on "on his first visit to Pakistan and reaffirmed the longstanding brotherly relations between Pakistan and Qatar". "He expressed the hope that the visit would further strengthen cooperation between the ministries of interior and relevant institutions of the two brotherly countries," it said. PM Shehbaz also conveyed his greetings to the Qatari emir and thanked the country's leadership for its "unwavering support to Pakistan". "He particularly appreciated Qatar's continued supply of liquefied natural gas, which contributes to meeting Pakistan's energy requirements," the statement said. PM Shehbaz highlighted that nearly 300,000 Pakistanis work in Qatar, where they play an important role in the country's development and prosperity. He said that there were extensive opportunities to expand Pakistan-Qatar economic cooperation, particularly in trade and investment, agriculture, livestock, information technology and mining and minerals. The statement said that the Qatari minister thanked Pakistan for its hospitality. He also conveyed Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani's congratulatory messages and best wishes to the prime minister. "He appreciated Pakistan's role and efforts for promoting peace and stability in the region," the statement added. Last month, in a meeting in Doha, Naqvi and and the Qatari counterpart agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in internal security.

Kundi directs legal reforms to strengthen inspection team

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday directed the Provincial Inspection Team (PIT) to adopt an e-governance system in collaboration with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board to improve transparency, efficiency and accountability in its functioning. Chairing a meeting on the affairs of the Provincial Inspection Team at the Governor House, the Governor was briefed by PIT Chairman Khayam Hassan Khan and team members on the institution's manpower, budget, mandate, inquiry procedures, overall performance and challenges. The meeting was informed that the team had initiated 105 inquiries during the current year, of which 45 had been completed. The Governor also directed the authorities to conduct a comparative review of the Provincial Inspection Team Act and its powers with similar laws in other provinces to identify areas requiring legal and administrative reforms. He stressed that all relevant departments should ensure timely implementation of the approved recommendations of the Provincial Inspection Team. He further emphasized the need to make the inquiry mechanism more effective and transparent to safeguard public resources and curb corruption. Governor Kundi said the Provincial Inspection Team should play a more proactive role in ensuring prompt redressal of public complaints and improving the performance of government departments through effective oversight and accountability.–DNA

Progress of cervical cancer vaccination campaign

PESHAWAR: A high-level delegation of World Health Organization (WHO) visited Charsadda district to review progress, field activities and administrative arrangements for the ongoing cervical cancer vaccination campaign in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The campaign, launched on November 11, is scheduled to continue until November 24, 2026. According to a press release issued here, District Health Officer (DHO) Charsadda Dr. Hammad welcomed the visiting delegation, which included Dr. Xia Wei, Team Lead Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), WHO Pakistan; Dr. Kashif Mukarab, WHO Surveillance Lead; Dr. Hamza Munir, EPI Coordinator Charsadda; Ajmal Khan, Assistant Director EPI; and Mubashir, Field Supervisor.

During the visit, the delegation inspected Government Girls Middle School, Hol Abad No. 2 (MC-4), and reviewed arrangements and activities under the ongoing vaccination campaign. The team also visited an outreach vaccination session in MC-3, Charsadda, where it observed the vaccination process, field implementation and performance of campaign staff. Later, the WHO delegation held a meeting with Deputy Commissioner Charsadda Mansoor Arshad and Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Reena Abbasi to review the campaign's progress and discuss measures for improving vaccination coverage. The meeting focused on strengthening field monitoring, enhancing coordination between the Health and Education departments, and ensuring effective support from the district administration to achieve the campaign targets. WHO Team Lead Dr. Xia Wei appreciated the efforts and effective coordination of the district administration, Health Department and other relevant institutions in implementing the vaccination campaign. On the occasion, DHO Dr. Hammad thanked the deputy commissioner, additional deputy commissioner and teams of the Health and Education departments for their continued support and cooperation.–**DNA**

Smog alert issued for 17 Punjab districts

ISLAMABAD:The National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Thursday issued an alert warning of intensifying smog over the next two days across several districts of Punjab, including Lahore, Gujranwala, Faisalabad and Multan, cautioning that deteriorating air quality could pose serious health risks, reduce visibility and disrupt road traffic, particularly during late night and early morning hours.

According to the NDMA, smog intensity is expected to increase in Lahore, Kasur, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Nankana Sahib, Sargodha, Sheikhupura, Sialkot, Narowal, Okara and Faisalabad.

Other areas likely to experience smog include Jhang, Khanewal, Multan, Khanpur, Kot Addu and Bahawalpur, along with other parts of the province.

The Authority warned that a combination of smog and fog could significantly reduce visibility, particularly at night and during early morning hours, increasing the risk of road accidents and causing disruptions to traffic flow.

Rising air pollution levels could also trigger respiratory difficulties, breathing problems and eye irritation, posing additional health concerns for vulnerable segments of the population.

The NDMA advised children, elderly people and individuals suffering from respiratory illnesses to avoid unnecessary outdoor exposure and follow recommended precautionary measures to minimize the health impacts of polluted air.

The Authority also urged the public and relevant government departments to closely monitor the Air Quality Index (AQI) and visibility conditions while ensuring timely implementation of preventive measures.

Motorists have been advised to exercise extra caution, follow traffic advisories and comply with safety instructions issued by the relevant authorities. Citizens have also been urged to avoid unnecessary travel during periods of dense smog and fog. The NDMA emphasized the importance of staying informed through reliable weather updates and official alerts, advising citizens to use the Pak NDMA Disaster Alert mobile application for timely information and guidance regarding weather conditions and potential hazards.–**APP**

Maryam offers Punjab's skills training model for AJK uplift

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has offered to share Punjab's skills development model with Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), saying market-oriented training programmes can create employment opportunities and help people become financially self-reliant.

Addressing a special meeting in Muzaffarabad on AJK's 100-day development plan, she said the government's responsibility went beyond launching development projects and included ensuring effective service delivery, remaining accessible to the public and promptly resolving their problems.

She said 500,000 people had received IT training in Punjab over the past two and a half years, with many securing employment abroad. The provincial government had also provided financial assistance, including support for travel expenses and visa processing.

Maryam said Punjab had designed its skills development programmes after assessing international job market requirements, enabling participants to acquire market-oriented skills within six months and earn a respectable livelihood, either in their own areas or abroad. She said the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB), whose foundation was laid by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif during his tenure as Punjab chief minister, had become a backbone of the provincial government's administrative and development activities.–**DNA**

Call for global regulation of autonomous weapons

ISLAMABAD "An unregulated competition in Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) would be costly and destabilizing, particularly in a region like South Asia where the warning times are short, and crises move fast." This was stated by Ambassador Tahir Hussain Andrabi in his video message to the participants of the seminar titled "Lethal Autonomous Weapons: From International Deliberation to a Legal Response," hosted by the Institute of Strategic Studies in collaboration with Sustainable Pace and Development Organization (SPADO).

The event was attended by strategic experts, academicians, and diplomats, said a press release issued on Thursday. Ambassador Tahir Hussain Andrabi stated that Pakistan has been actively engaged on LAWS since 2013, when few countries were paying attention to the issue, calling for regulation and governance of weapons that transfer decisions on the use of force from humans to machines. He underscored that besides humanitarian risks, Pakistan has also been highlighting the security dimension of LAWS and their implications for regional and global security and stability. Speaking on the "Global Movement against LAWS," Raza Shah Khan, Executive Director, SPADO, highlighted that LAWS use artificial intelligence to identify, select, and engage human targets without human intervention, raising serious concerns regarding their ability to distinguish between civilian and military targets. He also discussed the role of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots in advocating the peaceful use of technology and a ban on LAWS.

Ms. Nicole Van Rooijen, Executive Director, Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, traced international deliberations on LAWS, which raised fundamental ethical questions about delegating life-and-death decisions to machines. She commended Pakistan's longstanding leadership and its instrumental role in advancing efforts towards a much-needed sixth protocol to the CCW on autonomous weapon systems to ensure compliance with international law and the protection of civilians during armed conflict. Dr. Adil Sultan, Dean, Faculty of Aerospace and Strategic Studies, Air University, Islamabad, highlighted the growing role of AI, cyber, and quantum technologies in future warfare, emphasizing the risks of entanglement between conventional and nuclear operations. He stressed the need for adaptive verification mechanisms to address emerging challenges.–**APP**

Pakistan, Turkiye for strategic partnership for regional peace

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), jointly with the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye Directorate of Communications and the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Islamabad, organised a STRATCOM Public Forum titled "Reshaping Regional Security Architecture: Strategic Partnership and Multilateral Cooperation from a Türkiye-Pakistan Perspective." In his opening remarks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BOG, ISSI, highlighted the deep-rooted historical, cultural and strategic bonds between Pakistan and Türkiye, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening cooperation in defence, security, trade, technology and regional connectivity, as well as promoting regional peace, stability and a balanced international order.

Ambassador Irfan Neziroglu, Ambassador of Türkiye to Pakistan, emphasised the unique people-to-people bonds underpinning bilateral relations. He stressed the need to counter disinformation, strengthen information resilience and explore opportunities arising from growing trade ties and Turkish investment in Pakistan.

Professor Dr. Burhanettin Duran, Head of Communications, Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, highlighted the growing importance of strategic communication amid geopolitical and technological transformations. He underscored the challenges posed by disinformation and digital manipulation, emphasising international cooperation, information integrity and public trust, while highlighting the STRATCOM Summit's role in fostering dialogue and societal resilience. A panel discussion followed, moderated by Dr. Hayati ÜNLÜ, Faculty Member, Turkish National Defence University. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, highlighted the longstanding Pakistan–Türkiye partnership and called for institutionalised cooperation in strategic communications to counter disinformation and digital threats. He proposed a bilateral strategic communications agreement and a joint working group comprising government institutions, academia and think tanks. Fikri Işık, Former Minister of National Defence of Türkiye, emphasised accelerating bilateral cooperation against hybrid threats, cyberattacks and technological competition. He called for moving beyond traditional defence cooperation towards joint research, development and production, alongside stronger institutional mechanisms and inclusive regional security partnerships. Burhan Kayatürk, Member of Parliament and Chair of the EU Harmonization Committee, Türkiye, underscored the historical bonds and mutual solidarity between the two countries. He called for greater economic cooperation, including achieving the $5 billion bilateral trade target, and highlighted the Makkah Accord's significance in strengthening regional security.



Islamabad POST
METROLITE
Friday November 20 , 2026

National Days and Armed Forces Days

NOVEMBER

Nov 01/Algeria National Day

Nov 04/Italy Armed Forces Day

Nov 07/Russian Federation Socialist Revolution

Nov 09/Cambodia National Day

Nov 11/Poland Independence Day

Nov 14/Jordan Birthday of King Hussein

Nov 15/Belgium Kings Day

Nov 15/Brazil Republic Day

Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus National Day

Nov 18/Oman National Day

Nov 18/Morocco Independence Day

Nov 21/Bangladesh Armed Forces Day

Nov 22/Lebanon Independence Day

Nov 25/Suriname National Day

Nov 28/Mauritania National Day

Nov 28/Albania Flags Day



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Pak, Türkiye explore avenues for enhanced coop in digital media

Fahd Haroon emphasised that responsible governance of the digital space, the protection of citizens online and countering misinformation and disinformation are essential to building a safe, credible and accountable digital ecosystem

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State / Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Digital Media Fahd Haroon received a high-level delegation from the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, led by Prof. Ferhat Pirinççi, Deputy Head of Communications at its Directorate of Communications. His Excellency Dr. rfan Neziro lu, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan, was also present on the occasion.

Discussions centred on strengthening institutional collaboration, sharing expertise and best practices and exploring new avenues for bilateral exchanges. Key areas included combating misinformation and disinformation, promoting online safety, safeguarding children in the digital environment and addressing emerging challenges posed by digital platforms. Both sides also discussed digital media regulation, responsible online communication and effective institutional responses to the evolving digital landscape. Fahd Haroon emphasised that responsible governance of the digital space, the protection of citizens online and countering misinformation and disinformation are essential to building a safe, credible and accountable digital ecosystem. He underscored Pakistan's commitment to strengthening institutional capacities, promoting responsible digital engagement and working closely with Türkiye to address emerging challenges through closer institutional collaboration and the exchange of expertise and best practices. The Turkish delegation also included Kas m leri, Head of the Department of Strategic Communications and Crisis Management at the Directorate of Communications, Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, along with other senior officials. Also in attendance from the Pakistani side were Ms. Ambreen Jan, Chairperson PEMRA; Barrister Sikandar Chaudhry, Executive Member PEMRA; representatives of media institutions and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Both sides expressed their shared desire to further strengthen bilateral ties through continued dialogue, closer institutional engagement and expanded exchanges of expertise in areas of mutual interest, building on the longstanding bonds of friendship and brotherhood between Pakistan and Türkiye.

CDA to launch 30 new pink buses for women

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is planning to launch an exclusive electric bus service for women.

If all goes as planned, the civic agency will introduce the service with 30 new pink buses.

Sources said that on the directions of the federal government and the Ministry of Interior, the CDA was in the process of engaging its partners to acquire 30 electric pink buses for the new service.

They said the CDA would engage Heavy Industries Taxila (HIT) to import the buses, likely from China, following the same arrangement used for the existing fleet of 160 electric buses.

The CDA, through its contractor, has already been running an electric bus service on over 20 routes in Islamabad with a fleet of over 160 buses, with overwhelming response from citizens.

Civic agency in process of acquiring 30 electric pink buses, says official

However, sources said that it had been noticed that women and girls faced difficulty for getting space in these 60 buses during peak hours.

Therefore, it has been decided that an exclusive bus service with 30 pink buses will be introduced for women only.

"Yes, we have decided to introduce pink bus service as well. We have directed the concerned wing of the CDA to bring a summary for board and after approval of board, we will move forward to engage HIT for importing buses from China," said a senior officer of CDA.

He said that the response of citizens to the existing bus service was overwhelming and highly encouraging, therefore, "we are going to introduce a dedicated bus service for women, which will ply on different routes," he said.

To a query, the officer said the buses will be ply on same routes where existing bus service is in operation, but in case of a need new routes could also be added.

It is relevant to note that a few months ago the CDA had decided to start a double-decker bus service for promotion of tourism in Islamabad.

The CDA had approached HIT for a feasibility study and estimate for procuring the buses.

Initially, the CDA plans to start the service of double-decker with four buses for the city tour – a 25km trip – starting from F-9 Park and covering all important points, including Faisal Mosque, Lok Virsa and Shakarparian.

After this announcement of double-decker, the CDA recently got approval from its board, and subsequently the Development Working Party (DWP) also approved the PC-I of double-decker bus service.

"I guess, the double-decker bus service will be started soon as we are at an advanced stage. But pink bus service will also be introduced as soon as possible, may be within three months," the officer said.–**DNA**

NCCIA educates students on cybercrime, online safety

ISLAMABAD: National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Islamabad Assistant Director Tanveer Hussain Awan on Thursday conducted a cybercrime awareness session at The Thinkers College Islamabad, educating students about online fraud, cyber harassment, identity theft and measures to protect their personal information on digital platforms.

An NCCIA official told that the session aimed to promote digital awareness among young people and encourage the safe and responsible use of the internet and social media. He said students were briefed on various forms of cybercrime, including online financial fraud, cyber harassment, fake links, identity theft and unauthorised use of personal information. During the session, Tanveer Hussain Awan explained precautionary measures for protecting social media accounts, personal data and online activities from cyber threats. He advised students to remain cautious while opening suspicious links, responding to messages from unknown numbers and dealing with fraudulent online activities. The students were also informed about the procedure for registering cybercrime complaints and approaching the relevant authorities in case of online fraud or harassment.

The official said the awareness session was part of efforts to educate the younger generation about emerging cyber threats and promote a safer digital environment.

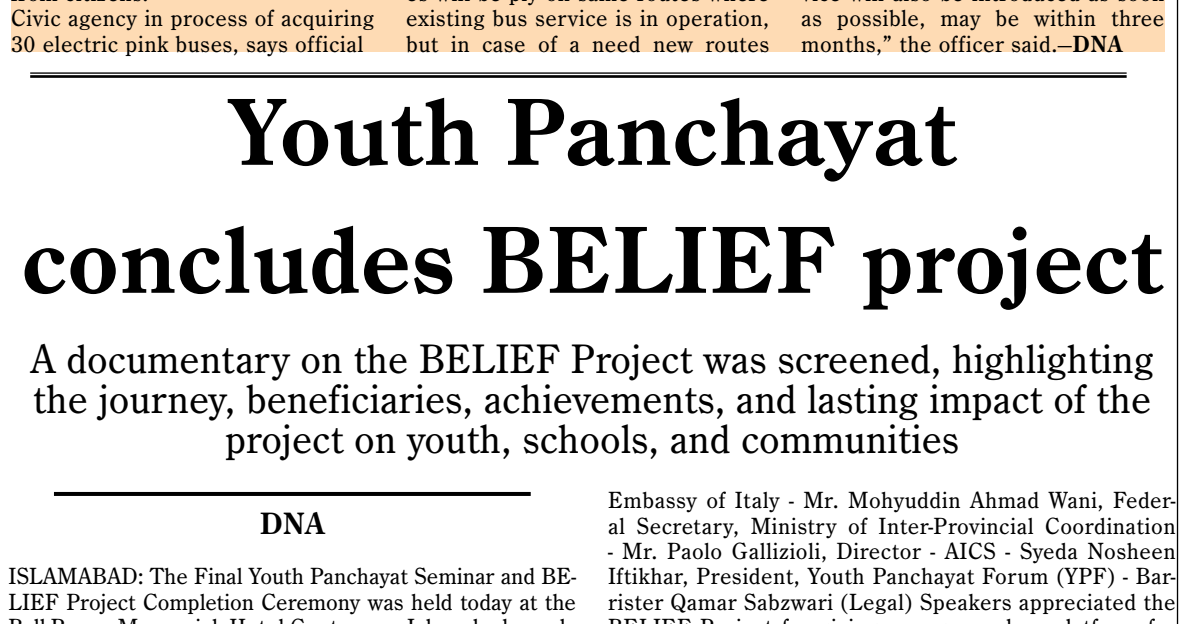
He added that encouraging responsible and positive use of digital platforms was essential to protecting young internet users from cybercrime.

Youth Panchayat concludes BELIEF project

A documentary on the BELIEF Project was screened, highlighting the journey, beneficiaries, achievements, and lasting impact of the project on youth, schools, and communities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Final Youth Panchayat Seminar and BELIEF Project Completion Ceremony was held today at the Ball Room, Movenpick Hotel Centaurus, Islamabad, marking the successful completion of a landmark initiative for inclusive citizenship, interfaith harmony, and equal opportunities for youth in Pakistan. The event was organized by ISCOS in collaboration with the Youth Panchayat Forum (YPF) and partners, bringing together diplomats, federal government officials, religious leaders, educators, civil society representatives, and young leaders from across the country. The seminar opened with welcome remarks by Syed M Ali Shah, Country Head - ISCOS, followed by an introduction to the Youth Panchayat and BELIEF Project journey by Mr. Khalid Abbass and Mr. Zauq Akhtar. A documentary on the BELIEF Project was screened, highlighting the journey, beneficiaries, achievements, and lasting impact of the project on youth, schools, and communities. High-Level Stakeholder Remarks were moderated by Ms. Naveeda Mansoor, featuring: - Ms. Sarena Muroni, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Italy - Mr. Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination - Mr. Paolo Gallizioli, Director - AICS - Syeda Nosheen Iftikhar, President, Youth Panchayat Forum (YPF) - Barrister Qamar Sabzwari (Legal) Speakers appreciated the BELIEF Project for giving young people a platform for dialogue, leadership, and democratic participation, and stressed the need to continue institutional support for inclusive citizenship in Pakistan. Partner institutions also shared their reflections, including Fr. Nobel Lal (Don Bosco Lahore), Br. Farancis (Sargodha Catholic High School), Br. Qamar (La Salle Brother), and Fr. Qaiser, who spoke about the project's impact on students, teachers, and interfaith understanding at the grassroots level. A key highlight was the panel discussion, moderated by Harmeet Singh, on the theme: "From Grassroots Dialogue to Institutional Action: Advancing Inclusive Citizenship and Equal Opportunities." Panelists Tahir Malik, Sabookh Syed, Tanzeela Mazhar, and Amir Khalil discussed how youth dialogue can be transformed into policy, institutional reform, and sustained community action. The ceremony concluded with closing remarks and a vote of thanks by Mr. Paolo Pozo, followed by refreshments and networking.



HEC opens registration for DLSEI 3.0 Cohort 4

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan has opened registration for DLSEI 3.0 – Cohort 4, an initiative in collaboration with Coursera, offering free Coursera licenses to university students and faculty members across the country.

According to HEC, all active students of public and private sector universities, as well as faculty and staff members, can now apply for a free six-month Coursera license. Under the programme, applicants will get free access to more than 25,000 courses, industry-recognized certificates, in-demand digital skills, career-focused specializations and professional certificates from leading global universities and companies. HEC said slots are limited and interested candidates should apply at the earliest through the online portal: https://eservices.hec.gov.pk/ For details on how to apply, applicants can visit:https://dlsei.hec.gov.pk/site/registrationinfo The Digital Learning and Skills Enrichment Initiative (DLSEI) aims to equip Pakistani youth and academia with globally competitive digital skills and improve employability through certified learning from top-ranked institutions. –**APP**

PCFHI trains nursing staff

ISLAMABAD: Pak-China Friendship Hospital Islamabad (PCFHI) managed by the Indus Hospital & Health Network, has conducted a practical training session on International Patient Safety Goals (IPSG) to strengthen clinical standards, minimize medical risks, and improve patient care. Organized by the hospital's Nursing Education Services, the session focused on two key patient safety objectives included correct patient identification and effective communication among healthcare professionals. Under the first objective, nurses and clinical staff practiced the two-identifier rule, bedside sample labelling, and safety checks for drowsy and high-risk patients through simulated blood-drawing exercises. The second objective focused on improving communication through emergency role-playing exercises, enabling participants to practice the Write-Down, Read-Back and Confirm (WRC) protocol for critical laboratory results and the ISBAR framework for structured clinical updates.–**APP**

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

PROCUREMENT OF GROUP TERM ASSURANCE FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF STATE BANK OF PAKISTAN AND SBP BANKING SERVICES CORPORATION

1. The **State Bank of Pakistan Banking Services Corporation (SBP BSC) Head Office Karachi (General Services Department)** has reserved Funds for the procurement planned for FY **2026-27.** The **State Bank of Pakistan Banking Services Corporation (SBP BSC) Head Office Karachi (General Services Department)** intends to apply part of the proceeds of this Fund to cover eligible payments under the contract for the **"Procurement of Group Term Assurance for the Employees of State Bank of Pakistan and SBP Banking Services Corporation"** with the reference of **"P197247"**
2. The **State Bank of Pakistan Banking Services Corporation (SBP BSC) Head Office Karachi (General Services Department)** invites Bids through **EPADS v2.0** from eligible Bidders registered on **EPADS v2.0** for provision of Non-Consultancy Services.
3. **Single Stage-Two Envelope** Procedure of Principal Method of Procurement (i.e. Open Competitive Bidding) will be used by adopting **Least Cost Based Selection (LCBS)** Technique for the subject procurement, in line with the Public Procurement Rules, 2026 and any Regulations, and Instructions issued by the Authority (from time to time).
4. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of Rs. 2,000,000/- as described in Bid Security Section in Bidding Document in the form of **Pay Order, Banker's Cheque, Call at Deposit, Bank Guarantee, Demand Draft.**
5. A pre-bid meeting will be held on **Thursday, November 26, 2026 11:00 AM** via Zoom Meeting Application. Meeting ID & Password is given in the RFP Documents. The prospective firms can also obtain the Meeting ID & Passcode through an email request at gsd.proc2@sbp.org.pk.
6. E-Bidding documents, containing detailed terms & conditions, specifications and requirements etc. are available on **e-Pak Acquisition and Disposal System (EPADS) at https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/procurements/197247.**
7. The e-bids, prepared in accordance with the instructions in the e-Bidding documents, must be submitted through **EPADS v2.0** on or before **Monday, December 7, 2026 11:00 AM.** E-bids will be opened on the same day at **Monday, December 7, 2026 11:30 AM.** Manual submission of Bids shall not be entertained. Those vendors who have not yet registered on the new version of **EPADS v2.0,** may register themselves on https://vendors.epads.gov.pk/. A tutorial to explain the registration process is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNW6T38v7tc

In terms of Rules 65 of Public Procurement Rules, 2026 Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) is notified for the subject procurement and notification copy is available on the procuring agency's website and also available on **EPADS v2.0** as well as Authority's website at **(www.ppra.gov.pk)**.

Joint Director, General Services Department
State Bank of Pakistan Banking Services Corporation
(SBP BSC) Head Office Karachi
3rd Floor, BSC House Building, I.I Chundrigar Road, Karachi.
Phone: +92-331-353-06 | **Email:** gsd.proc2@sbp.org.pk

PID K.1643/26

Solangi calls for collective action to protect children

Murtaza Solangi expressed particular concern over the growing initiation of smoking among children. He stated that an estimated 1,200 children in Pakistan start smoking every day, exposing them to serious health risks and the dangers of nicotine addiction



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tobacco use remains one of the leading threats to public health worldwide, claiming approximately 7 million lives every year, said Spokesperson to the President Murtaza Solangi while addressing an event held in connection with Universal Children's Day 2026 in Islamabad.

He said that nearly 19,000 people lose their lives every day due to tobacco-related causes across the globe. The situation in Pakistan is equally alarming, with approximately 450 people dying every day from tobacco-related illnesses and complications, he added.

Murtaza Solangi expressed particular concern over the growing initiation of smoking among children. He stated that an estimated 1,200 children in Pakistan start smoking every day, exposing them to serious health risks and the dangers of nicotine addiction.

He said that protecting children and young people from tobacco use was an urgent public health priority. Parents, teachers, educational institutions and all segments of society must play their role in preventing children from being exposed to tobacco products and discouraging smoking at an early age, he added.

He further said that raising public awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco, restricting children's access to tobacco products and promoting healthier lifestyles were essential steps towards building a healthier society.

Murtaza Solangi stressed that collective efforts are imperative to protect future generations from the devastating consequences of tobacco use and to create a tobacco-free society.

Briefs

Senate panel reviews progress on Islamabad Model Jail

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee on Housing and Works convened a site visit and meeting under the Chairmanship of Senator Nasir Mehmood, alongside Senators Abdul Shakoor, Husna Bano, Jan Muhammad, Naseema Ahsan, Saifullah Abro, here on Thursday at the Islamabad Model Jail in Sector H-16, Islamabad, to review the physical progress, financial status, and operational readiness of the facility.

During the briefing, officials from the Capital Development Authority (CDA), the Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control, and the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives apprised the Committee that Phase-I of the project—approved under the second revised PC-I at a cost of Rs 7,399.12 million—has achieved 99 percent overall physical progress and 95 percent financial progress.

The Committee noted with satisfaction the substantial improvements observed since its previous visit and commended the authorities for the accelerated pace of work and compliance with earlier recommendations.

In reviewing the revised project scope, the Committee was informed that dedicated barracks for women and facilities for juvenile prisoners were excluded from Phase-I and shifted to Phase-II in order to enhance Phase-I capacity from 486 to 800 prisoners within the existing cost, addressing acute overcrowding at Adiala Jail pursuant to court and Prime Minister's Office directives.

Regarding Phase-II, officials reported that preliminary documentation and consultant design work are currently underway, with an initial allocation of Rs 1 billion that will be enhanced over a projected one-year completion timeline.

Taking note of the pending Compliance Report required by the Central Development Working Party (CDWP), the Committee directed the relevant authorities to finalize the Phase-II PC-I and submit a comprehensive progress report prior to December 10.

During an extensive inspection of the facility, the Committee reviewed the command and control center, modernized kitchen and food storage areas capable of producing 600 rotis in a single batch with strict hygiene protocols, customized kitchen setups, emergency panic buttons, a skill development center, four designated courtrooms, and an on-site hospital staffed with doctors and nursing personnel available round-the-clock. While appreciating these arrangements, the Chairman emphasized the immediate installation of surveillance cameras in the recreational play area to ensure prisoner safety and directed that the height of the barracks washroom walls be increased._**APP**

DHO reviews efforts to reach zero-dose

ISLAMABAD: The District Health Office (DHO), Islamabad, has reviewed challenges in reaching zero-dose and defaulter children and discussed strategies to improve routine immunization coverage ahead of the upcoming vaccination campaign. A meeting in this regard was chaired by Dr. Shazia Gul, EPI In-charge, DHO Islamabad, and attended by supervisors from across the district. During the meeting, participants discussed field-level challenges, community mobilisation, follow-up of due lists and measures to strengthen routine immunisation. Dr. Shazia Gul directed the supervisors to ensure effective microplanning, targeted outreach and close monitoring of vaccination activities to identify and cover every missed child.—APP

DHO intensifies sanitary inspections

ISLAMABAD: The District Health Office (DHO), Islamabad, has continued sanitary inspections at public places across the federal capital to ensure cleanliness, hygiene and compliance with prescribed sanitary standards.

According to the DHO, sanitary inspectors and field teams are visiting different areas to assess hygiene conditions at public places and ensure adherence to health and sanitation requirements.

The teams are also educating food handlers, business operators and other relevant individuals about maintaining cleanliness, personal hygiene and implementing proper sanitary practices.

The ongoing activities aim to promote a clean, safe and healthy environment while strengthening compliance with public health standards.

Citizens can register their complaints and report public health-related issues through the DHO Islamabad website at www.dhoict.gov.pk.—**APP**

Committee reviews progress on CRVS system

ISLAMABAD, Nov 19 (APP):The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination has reviewed progress on the implementation of the Birth and Death Notification and Registration Tool (B/DNRT) in Islamabad to strengthen the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system.

A meeting of the Steering Committee on B/DNRT was held under the chairmanship of the Director General Health, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination. During the meeting, the District Health Officer (DHO), Islamabad, briefed the committee on the implementation status of the digital tool in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), highlighting progress achieved, operational challenges and its role in improving birth and death registration.

The committee discussed the importance of strengthening coordination among relevant stakeholders, including health authorities and NADRA, to improve the notification and registration process. The initiative aims to enhance the accuracy, accessibility and reliability of vital statistics through improved digital reporting and registration mechanisms. —**APP**

Experts stress awareness to address vitamin D deficiency

ISLAMABAD: Health experts have stressed the need for greater public awareness, timely diagnosis and treatment to address vitamin D deficiency in Pakistan, highlighting its impact on bone health, women's health and overall well-being across different stages of life. The views were shared at the D Connect Summit 2026, organized by Scotmann Pharmaceuticals in connection with World Vitamin D Day, bringing together leading medical professionals and healthcare experts to discuss the country's vitamin D deficiency burden and appropriate management strategies. Speaking at the summit, Dr. Rizwan Athar, Consultant Medical Specialist and Pulmonologist at NESCOM Hospital and Ali Medical Center, highlighted the importance of recognising vitamin D deficiency as a significant healthcare concern. Addressing the topic, "Mapping the Burden, Mastering the Management: Pakistan's Vitamin-D Crisis and PSIM Guidelines," he emphasized appropriate diagnosis, evidence-based treatment and adherence to medical guidelines to improve patient care. Prof. Dr. Aamer Nabi Nur, Professor of Orthopedics and Consultant Orthopaedics and Trauma Surgeon at Shifa International Hospital, discussed the role of vitamin D in bone health from childhood to old age. He highlighted its importance in calcium absorption, bone development and maintaining skeletal strength, stressing that adequate nutrition, physical activity and appropriate vitamin D levels are essential throughout life. Prof. Dr. Ghazala Mahmood, Professor of Gynaecology and Obstetrics and Medical Director at ICRM, Islamabad, highlighted the importance of vitamin D in women's health, from reproductive years and pregnancy to postmenopause. She stressed the need for greater awareness of nutritional deficiencies and timely medical assessment to support reproductive, maternal and bone health. The summit also featured a panel discussion involving medical experts, including Prof. Dr. Javed Aslam Butt, Hepatologist, General Physician and Gastroenterologist and former head of Gastroenterology at PIMS, Dr. Muhammad Ayaz, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at NIRM Hospital, Islamabad and Prof. Dr. Syeda Batool Mazhar, Professor of Gynaecology and Obstetrics and President of the Pakistan Menopause Society. The experts shared their clinical perspectives on nutritional deficiencies, preventive healthcare, bone health and women's health, emphasizing comprehensive patient assessment, appropriate medical guidance and timely intervention to reduce the risk of related complications. The D Connect Summit 2026 provided a platform for medical professionals to exchange knowledge and promote evidence-based approaches to the prevention and management of vitamin D deficiency. Speakers also highlighted the importance of responsible supplementation under medical supervision.—**DNA**

Rs 100b Sukuk to boost electricity transmission network

ISLAMABAD: National Grid Company of Pakistan Limited is taking an important step towards raising up to Rs. 100 billion through a Shariah-compliant Sukuk programme to finance the expansion and modernization of Pakistan's national electricity transmission network. As part of this initiative, NationalGrid has recently issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the appointment of Lead Manager(s) to structure and arrange the proposed Sukuk issuance. The initiative forms part of NationalGrid's broader strategy to secure long-term financing for critical electricity transmission projects, improve grid reliability and support the country's growing electricity needs. A key feature of the proposed programme is that NationalGrid intends to raise financing on the strength of its own financial position, without relying on a Government of Pakistan guarantee. This represents an important step towards greater financial independence and access to market-based financing for public sector infrastructure. By raising funds in Pakistani Rupees, NationalGrid also aims to reduce the risks associated with foreign currency borrowing, as its revenues are primarily earned in local currency. The proposed Sukuk programme, of up to Rs. 100 billion with an inaugural issuance of up to Rs.20 billion, is intended to be publicly offered and listed, with funds raised in phases according to project requirements and market conditions. The Sukuk may have a repayment period of up to 10 years, subject to final structuring and necessary approvals. The programme is expected to offer investment opportunities to banks, Islamic financial institutions, pension funds, insurance companies, mutual funds and other investors. Subject to the approved offering structure, it may also allow individual Pakistanis to invest in a Shariah-compliant financial instrument that supports the development of the country's electricity infrastructure. —**DNA**

Abbasi lauds security forces for operation

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi Thursday paid tribute to security forces for eliminating 22 terrorists in successful operations in South Waziristan, Bannu and Tank districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The security forces killed 22 terrorists belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna al-Khawarij during the operations, the minister said, lauding the forces for their professional expertise, courage and bravery.

He said the security forces had successfully foiled the nefarious designs of terrorists and saluted their unwavering commitment to defending the country.

Hanif Abbasi said the sacrifices and struggle of security forces would continue until terrorism was completely eradicated from the country, adding that the entire nation stood firmly behind its brave armed forces and security personnel.

He said Pakistan would never allow elements involved in spreading terrorism with Indian patronage and support to succeed in their nefarious designs. The minister said the evil designs of Fitna al-Khawarij and their facilitators would be thwarted on every front, and no one would be allowed to disturb the peace and stability of the country.

He said Pakistan's security forces were the pride of the nation in the war against terrorism and their sacrifices would not go in vain.—**DNA**

FAO awareness campaign on antimicrobial resistance among kids

DNA

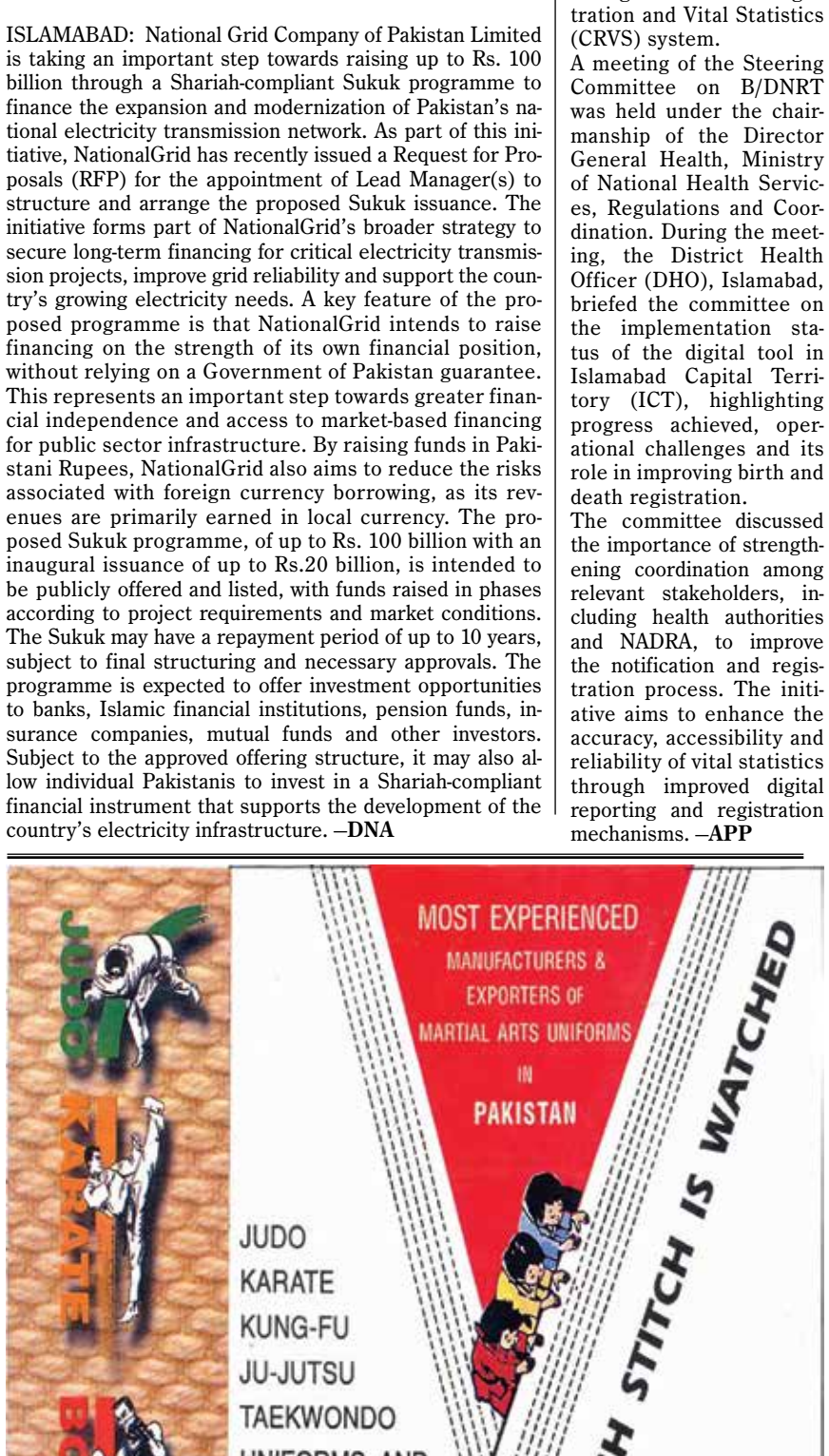
ISLAMABAD: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Pakistan organized interactive awareness sessions for school students in Islamabad today to mark World Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Awareness Week, observed globally from 18 to 24 November. The sessions aimed to introduce young people to the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance and encourage them to become advocates for the responsible use of medicines and the prevention of infections.

The participating students engaged in lively discussions, quiz competitions and an interactive message hunt activity, exploring what antimicrobial resistance is, how it develops, why the misuse and overuse of antibiotics are a concern, and what individuals can do to help prevent it.

Observed internationally under the theme "One Health, One Action: Prevent AMR Now," this year's campaign highlights the urgent need for responsible antimicrobial use and coordinated action across human, animal and environmental health.

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when microorganisms, including bacteria, develop the ability to withstand medicines designed to treat infections. The misuse and overuse of antibiotics and other antimicrobials accelerate this process, making infections increasingly difficult to treat and threatening the effectiveness of medicines that protect people and animals. The school engagement forms part of FAO Pakistan's wider public awareness campaign for World AMR Awareness Week, being implemented in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan and One Health partners. FAO supports the Government of Pakistan and relevant institutions in strengthening animal health systems, improving disease surveillance, promoting responsible antimicrobial use, enhancing veterinary services and advancing the One Health approach. Preventing AMR requires action from everyone. People can contribute by avoiding self-medication and using antibiotics only on qualified medical advice, following prescribed treatment as directed, maintaining good hygiene, practicing food safety and ensuring responsible use of antimicrobials in animals.





Daily Islamabad POST

Friday, November 20, 2026

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 07 Issue: 73

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

World must do more to protect children from war

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

AS the world on Thursday observes UN World Children's Day under the theme "My day. My rights. My future," the reality for millions of children trapped in armed conflict is very different from this hopeful message. In many places, such as Sudan and Yemen, children are not merely bystanders to adult wars – they are the ones who suffer the deepest and most lasting harm.

Killed by drones and landmines, recruited as fighters, driven from their homes, starved by the blocking of aid and denied schooling and medical care, they carry problems and wounds that shape the rest of their lives. These are not the unavoidable side effects of conflict. They are the predictable result of choices made by aggressive armed groups and governments and an international community that has too often failed to prioritize the protection of children. The scale of the crisis is unprecedented. The latest Report of the UN Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict verified 38,558 grave violations against children in armed conflict in 2025, affecting 24,174 children – the highest number recorded since the Children and Armed Conflict mandate began 30 years earlier. Land mines and explosive remnants continue to kill and maim children gathering firewood or simply playing Killing and maiming accounted for the largest share, followed by denial of humanitarian access, the recruitment and use of children, and abduction. Explosive weapons caused about 70 percent of child casualties. These figures capture only verified cases; the true number is most likely higher.

The Houthis' renewed aggression in Yemen this year illustrates how quickly progress can reverse. More than 12 million children there already require life-saving assistance. The intensified fighting initiated by the Houthis in September displaced at least 300,000 people, including an estimated 110,000 children, in the opening weeks alone. Families have fled shelling around Taiz and other front lines only to confront overcrowded shelters, collapsing services and restricted humanitarian access. Child recruitment remains especially grave. The UN verified 262 cases of recruitment and the use of children in Yemen in 2025 – 127 of which were attributed to the Houthis. Investigations have documented abductions of children as young as 11, ideological summer camps that channel youth into military pipelines and boys who left home on ordinary errands only to appear on the front lines.. Land mines and explosive remnants continue to kill and maim children gathering firewood or simply playing. Schools have been damaged or closed and health services disrupted. An entire generation is growing up without the basic security, nutrition, education and care that childhood demands. Sudan presents an equally devastating picture. Between January and September, UNICEF recorded 410 children killed or injured, with about two-thirds of those casualties resulting from armed drone strikes.



Drones bring the war to places once considered relatively safe, destroying power stations that pump water, disrupting vaccine cold chains and forcing families to use unsafe water sources that spread disease.

Hunger has increased the damage. An estimated 825,000 Sudanese children under five are expected to suffer severe acute malnutrition in 2026 – the form that kills. Nearly 19.5 million people face high levels of acute food insecurity. Millions have been displaced. At least 8 million children are out of school in key regions. Health facilities have been destroyed or rendered nonfunctional.

A protected childhood is not a luxury, it is the foundation of healthy individuals and stable societies The combination of drones, drought and blocked aid has created a lethal cycle from which children cannot escape on their own.

A protected childhood is not a luxury, it is the foundation of healthy individuals and stable societies. The early years shape brain architecture, emotional regulation and the capacity for trust and learning. When children are recruited into fighting forces, they lose not only their present but also the skills and relationships needed for later civilian life. Survivors often face stigma, trauma and limited economic options, raising the risk of re-recruitment or further violence. In addition, chronic malnutrition permanently impairs cognitive development. Displacement severs social networks and access to education. The long-term costs – mental health crises, lost productivity, intergenerational poverty and cycles of violence – fall on entire communities and impact future generations.

We know that international law is unambiguous: the recruitment and use of children under 15 in hostilities is a war crime. Broader obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions require parties to conflict to protect children, facilitate humanitarian access and refrain from attacks on schools and hospitals.

Statements of concern are no longer sufficient. Concrete measures are required. Existing action plans must be fully implemented. The Houthis signed a UN action plan in 2022 to end child recruitment – they must immediately release children associated with their forces, cease new recruitment, allow independent age verification and grant the UN unimpeded access to detention and training sites. Accountability must be strengthened. The UN Security Council should maintain and expand lists of parties that recruit or kill children and support mechanisms that document evidence for potential prosecutions. Targeted measures against commanders responsible for child recruitment and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas can raise the cost of violations. Humanitarian space must be protected. Attacks on water systems, power infrastructure, schools and health facilities must be investigated and condemned without double standards. Sustained and flexible funding for child protection, nutrition, education in emergencies and mine action is essential. Children's specific needs and rights must be elevated in every peace process. Any settlement that ignores the harms done to them will plant the seeds of future instability. In summary, children bear the most pain in any conflict. They are the ones who lose the most – their safety, their health, their education, their future – and they are the ones we have the clearest duty to protect. Childhood is the most formative period of human life; damage inflicted then echoes for decades. International organizations, governments and communities must therefore do everything in their power to shield children from the violence of adults.

Xi–Putin–Trump Summit: A Turning Point in the Global Order

Qamar Bashir



Yet beyond these rivalries lies a far greater opportunity. The Ukraine and Iran conflicts have consumed enormous resources, disrupted international trade, threatened energy security and diverted national wealth from development toward destruction. Their consequences reach households, industries and governments far removed from the battlefields. The three presidents possess sufficient collective influence to explore settlements addressing the underlying disputes rather than merely managing their military consequences

THE proposed meeting of Presidents Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump in China could become a defining moment in shaping the international order for decades. The publicly declared agenda may revolve around global peace, nuclear security, trade, economic cooperation and strategic stability. Beneath these diplomatic priorities, however, lie competing geopolitical ambitions, concealed strategic calculations and opportunities to resolve two devastating wars that have inflicted enormous economic suffering upon the world.

The three leaders approach the negotiating table with vastly different political circumstances. Trump faces the fallout of the midterm elections, the unresolved confrontation with Iran and strained relationships with traditional allies in Europe, Canada and the Middle East. Putin remains deeply embroiled in Ukraine, where prolonged warfare continues to consume Russia's military, economic and human resources. Xi Jinping, by contrast, faces no comparable military entanglement and commands an expanding network of international economic partnerships.

Each president nevertheless possesses extraordinary geopolitical leverage. The United States remains the world's largest economy, a dominant consumer market and a formidable military and technological power. Its leadership in artificial intelligence, financial markets and innovation gives Washington enormous international influence. A single presidential statement can shake stock exchanges, influence energy prices and alter diplomatic calculations across continents. American economic sanctions, military capabilities and financial institutions remain powerful instruments of international pressure.

Russia's strength rests upon its nuclear arsenal, vast territory and immense reserves of oil, natural gas, minerals and other strategic resources. Yet its continuing involvement in Ukraine has restricted its diplomatic flexibility, strained its economy and complicated its relationships with Europe. Ukrainian strikes deep inside Russian territory further demonstrate the mounting costs of prolonged confrontation. Moscow therefore has powerful incentives to seek a settlement that protects its security interests while ending an increasingly expensive conflict. China possesses a different and potentially more consequential form of leverage. As the manufacturing powerhouse of the world, it commands industrial production, global supply chains, rare-earth processing and permanent magnet manufacturing. Its Belt and Road Initiative connects more than 140 participating countries through infrastructure, trade and investment. Expanding maritime networks, alternative transport corridors, digital connectivity and international financial arrangements further strengthen Beijing's influence.

China's growing use of the renminbi in international settlements also represents a long-term challenge to the dollar-dominated financial system. Although the dollar remains the principal global reserve currency, Beijing is steadily developing alternatives that could reduce dependence upon American financial institutions. China's industrial strength and supply-chain influence provide Xi with considerable negotiating leverage, even without matching America's worldwide military reach or Russia's natural-resource abundance. These contrasting strengths create three distinct negotiating agendas. Trump may seek recognition of American military success against Iran and demand that China and Russia reduce their economic, diplomatic and strategic support for Tehran. Xi may insist that China's relations with Iran are sovereign bilateral matters beyond Washington's authority. Putin, meanwhile, may seek American and Chinese recognition of Russia's security concerns and negotiating position in Ukraine, including concessions that European governments might strongly oppose.

The political atmosphere surrounding such negotiations could also be influenced by intelligence controversies. Allegations involving Nvidia's Jensen Huang and an alleged Chinese honey-trap operation have generated competing narratives about espionage and political manipulation. The historical use of sexual entrapment and blackmail by intelligence services associated with Britain, the United States, Russia and Israel raises questions about attempts to attribute similar practices to Beijing. If accusations against China are unfounded, their exploitation for diplomatic advantage could backfire against Washington.

Yet beyond these rivalries lies a far greater opportunity. The Ukraine and Iran conflicts have consumed enormous resources, disrupted international trade, threatened energy security and diverted national wealth from development toward destruction. Their consequences reach households, industries and governments far removed from the battlefields. The three presidents possess sufficient collective influence to explore settlements addressing the underlying disputes rather than merely managing their military consequences. In Ukraine, the central diplomatic bargain could involve denying NATO membership in exchange for Russia's complete withdrawal from occupied Ukrainian territory. Moscow would receive negotiated security assurances, while Kyiv would recover its internationally recognized borders, independence and territorial integrity. International guarantees, monitoring arrangements and phased sanctions relief could reinforce implementation. Such a settlement would require Ukraine's agreement and credible protection against renewed aggression.

For Russia, peace would release enormous resources currently consumed by warfare and open possibilities for economic recovery. Ukraine could begin reconstruction, restore productive capacity and facilitate the return of displaced citizens. Europe could reduce the economic burden of confrontation, restore commercial confidence and redirect resources toward industrial development, infrastructure and public welfare. A negotiated security arrangement could replace a destructive military stalemate with a framework for long-term regional stability.

The Middle Eastern conflict demands an equally fundamental political settlement. The unresolved Palestinian question remains a central source of regional hostility. A genuine two-state solution establishing an independent, sovereign and viable Palestine alongside Israel could transform the strategic environment. Palestinian independence, recognized borders and security guarantees for both states could create conditions for reconciliation that decades of military confrontation have failed to achieve.

For Iran, Palestinian liberation has remained a principal declared objective of its regional policy. Establishing a sovereign Palestinian state could satisfy that objective and substantially diminish one of the political foundations of confrontation with Israel and the United States. Washington would then have an opportunity to replace military intervention with diplomacy, while Israel could pursue lasting security through political accommodation rather than recurring warfare. Ending both conflicts would also serve China's fundamental economic interests. Secure maritime routes, uninterrupted energy supplies, predictable commodity prices and stable international commerce are indispensable to its manufacturing economy. Reduced threats to the Strait of Hormuz and other strategic waterways could lower shipping risks, stabilize markets and restore confidence throughout global supply chains. Russia and the United States would likewise benefit from reduced military expenditures and expanding economic opportunities.

The decisive question is whether the three leaders will use their immense leverage to extract unilateral concessions or construct mutually acceptable settlements. Washington could encourage Israeli acceptance of Palestinian statehood, Moscow could accept Ukraine's territorial restoration, and Beijing could facilitate diplomatic guarantees, reconstruction and economic cooperation. Their collective influence could help transform two costly conflicts into opportunities for international reconciliation.

Xi Jinping's vision that the planet is large enough for all nations to develop and prosper together offers a framework for such cooperation. Rather than pursuing supremacy through military confrontation, economic coercion and strategic rivalry, the three powers could demonstrate that their competing strengths can contribute to collective security and prosperity. If wisdom prevails, the Xi–Putin–Trump summit could achieve far more than diplomatic declarations. It could initiate two historic settlements, remove major sources of international instability and establish the foundations of an emerging world order in which peace replaces confrontation, cooperation replaces coercion, and shared prosperity triumphs over destructive geopolitical rivalry.

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

The Forgotten Humanity Behind Closed Doors

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



Equally troubling is the manner in which many such cases are handled. Families, already poor and powerless, are sometimes pressured into silence through threats, influence or financial compensation. The death of a child is reduced to a matter of negotiation, as though a human life could be valued in monetary terms

IN the struggle for survival, countless people are compelled to risk their lives merely to earn enough to keep their families alive. On scorching afternoons in May and June, one finds men standing beside blazing tandoors, baking bread amid suffocating heat. Others toil beneath the relentless sun, repairing roads, lifting stones and carrying loads until their clothes are soaked with perspiration. Thousands more travel to distant Gulf countries, labouring as masons and construction workers, often at dizzying heights more than temperature of 50 C, far from their homes and loved ones.. Their only ambition is to secure a modest livelihood for their families. Such people endure hardship without complaint, for poverty leaves them with little choice. Yet, among the many forms of human suffering, few are as disgraceful as the exploitation of those who have no voice, no influence and no means of defending themselves. Across several parts of the country, families working at brick kilns remain trapped in generations of debt. Their labour is exploited, their freedom restricted and their dignity denied. They are treated not as human beings entitled to respect, but as possessions whose lives and labour belong to their employers. It is a tragedy that such practices continue in a society that frequently speaks of compassion, morality and religious responsibility.

The shame becomes even greater when cruelty is found not merely in remote rural settlements but behind the guarded gates and imposing walls of wealthy urban households. In villages, feudal landlords and tribal chieftains have long exercised authority over their workers in ways that resemble servitude. Such conduct is sometimes defended under the convenient expression of local custom or tradition. But no tradition can justify the humiliation of another human being. What is even more disturbing is that similar attitudes have found their way into the homes of the affluent and influential in our cities, where wealth and social standing are often mistaken for the right to command without restraint. Among the most vulnerable victims are young domestic workers, particularly girls between the ages of eleven and seventeen. Many are brought from distant villages by their parents, who are themselves struggling against poverty. The promise of a small monthly payment, food and accommodation, together with an assurance that their eventual marriage expenses will be borne by the employer, appears to offer some relief to desperate families. Trusting these assurances, parents place their daughters in unfamiliar households, hoping that they will find security and a better future. For these children, however, the promised opportunity can turn into a life of fear and humiliation. From the early hours of the morning until late at night, they are expected to remain at the constant service of their employers. They are deprived of the ordinary pleasures of childhood, the freedom to play, the opportunity to study and, sometimes, even the right to rest. A minor mistake, an accidental breakage or an inability to fulfil an unreasonable demand may provoke an outburst of anger and violence. In some horrifying cases, such brutality has resulted in the loss of innocent young lives.

Reports of these incidents have become increasingly disturbing. The details emerging from medical examinations and post-mortem reports often reveal a degree of cruelty that is difficult for any civilised conscience to comprehend. Bruises, burns and other injuries tell stories that the victims themselves were never permitted to narrate. The silence of the dead becomes the most painful testimony against those who were entrusted with their care but instead subjected them to unimaginable suffering.

Equally troubling is the manner in which many such cases are handled. Families, already poor and powerless, are sometimes pressured into silence through threats, influence or financial compensation. The death of a child is reduced to a matter of negotiation, as though a human life could be valued in monetary terms. Meanwhile, those who possess wealth, influence and connections often seek to escape accountability. Society watches, expresses temporary outrage and then moves on until another innocent life is lost. This is not merely a question of domestic employment; it is a question of humanity, justice and the moral character of our society. The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees dignity, protection against exploitation and safeguards for children. Our laws must not remain confined to official documents and courtroom declarations. Their purpose is defeated when a child can be abused within a private residence simply because the household belongs to someone influential. The state must ensure effective inspections, prompt investigations, protection for vulnerable children and exemplary punishment for those found guilty of such crimes. No private boundary should become a sanctuary for cruelty. Parents, too, must be made aware that a child's future cannot be secured by surrendering her childhood to strangers. Poverty may compel difficult decisions, but it should strengthen our collective responsibility to provide families with education, social protection and dignified employment rather than leave children exposed to exploitation.

At this point, the words attributed to Hazrat Umar (May Allah be pleased with him) deserve particular reflection: "If even a single dog were to die of thirst on the banks of the Euphrates, I would be held accountable for it on the Day of Judgment." These words represent a remarkable understanding of responsibility, in which even the suffering of a voiceless creature is not beyond the concern of a ruler.

If such accountability was recognised for an animal, how can we remain indifferent to the suffering of innocent children entrusted to human care? The question is not only what their employers have done, but also what we, as a society, have allowed to happen through our silence.

A nation cannot claim to be civilised merely because its cities are adorned with magnificent houses, its roads are paved and its markets are prosperous. Its true character is reflected in the treatment it extends to those who possess neither wealth nor power. The hands that bake our bread, construct our buildings and clean our homes deserve respect, not exploitation. Above all, a child deserves protection, affection and the opportunity to live.

The time has come to open not only the doors of these houses but also the doors of our conscience. For when the cries of the helpless fail to disturb a society, its greatest tragedy is no longer poverty, but the death of its humanity.

Islamabad POST
Friday, November 20, 2026

Briefs

Shehbaz vows to place Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01

He assured American investors that the government was ready to address their genuine grievances and remove bureaucratic hurdles, red tape and procedural delays that discouraged investment. "I am here to listen to you very attentively and, without delay, put in place a mechanism to address your genuine grievances," he said, emphasizing that transparency, efficiency and timely decision-making were essential to attracting investment. The prime minister appreciated American companies for maintaining confidence in Pakistan's economy and described them as important ambassadors of the country, acknowledging their contribution to investment, employment generation, exports and national revenue. Highlighting the improvement in key economic indicators, he said Pakistan's total foreign exchange reserves had reached around US$ 27 billion, including holdings of commercial and central banks, compared with the difficult economic situation in 2023 when the country was facing a serious threat of default.

Pakistan, ASEAN agree to...

FROM PAGE 01

Highlighting ASEAN's growing global relevance, Senator Dar praised the organization's role in promoting regional integration, dialogue and consensus-building at a time of increasing geopolitical uncertainty and economic challenges. He said ASEAN's experience in fostering cooperation among diverse nations offered valuable lessons for addressing contemporary regional and global issues. The two sides agreed to enhance collaboration in tackling non-traditional security challenges, including climate change, food insecurity, cyber threats and disruptions in global energy supplies. Senator Dar noted that such challenges transcend national boundaries and require collective responses rooted in cooperation and shared responsibility. Economic cooperation featured prominently in the discussions. Both sides explored measures aimed at facilitating trade, improving connectivity and advancing digital integration between Pakistan and ASEAN member states. Officials reviewed opportunities to strengthen investment flows and create greater market access for businesses on both sides.

MQM-P urges action...

FROM PAGE 01

the Constitution and the law, but would resist any move imposed through force. The development comes amid intensifying debate over the creation of new provinces, with the PPP at odds with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led federal government and its allies on the issue. Speaking during today's presser, the MQM-P chairman said the issue of the new provinces is being discussed across Pakistan and has also come under debate in legislative assemblies. He maintained that provinces, like districts and divisions, were administrative units and argued that new provinces should be created across the country in accordance with population. "The demand being raised by urban areas of Sindh is now being discussed across the country," Siddiqui said. He said that MQM-P had never demanded a separate Karachi province or a province exclusively for the Muhajir community. The MQM-P chief also questioned why new provinces could be considered in Punjab but not in Sindh, referring to a resolution presented by the PPP in the Punjab Assembly. Siddiqui argued that the 1973 Constitution provided for the creation of new provinces, adding that the authority to establish them rested with the federal government.

Chinese AI firm, Pakistani university sign deal on AI hospital

Li said clinical judgement, patient safety and privacy would be priorities as the partners explored AI applications in hospital services, medical education and joint research. He said he hoped this would translate their shared ideas into practical results, creating lasting value for healthcare professionals, students and patients

BEIJING: Chinese medical AI company Tairex and Pakistan's Riphah International University have signed a strategic cooperation agreement to advance plans for an AI hospital in Pakistan, less than a month after the two sides publicly outlined their proposed partnership, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Thursday.

The agreement was signed on Tuesday at Tairex's Beijing office, with university leaders also joining online from Pakistan.

The company said the planned cooperation would cover AI hospital development, AI-assisted diagnosis and treatment, medical education and the training of healthcare professionals. Speaking at Tuesday's ceremony, Riphah Chancellor Hassan Muhammad Khan said Pakistan faced funding constraints and limited access to healthcare in some outlying areas.

He saw opportunities for the collaboration to change how care was delivered, from primary care to more specialised services.

Calling the cooperation a "fantastic opportunity", Khan said he hoped AI could help reach underserved communities and envisaged a future in which "we can bring healthcare to every doorstep", in developing and advanced economies alike.

He pledged continued support from the university for the teams involved, including their organisational and budgetary needs.



He said the partnership would give both organisations opportunities for research and development in healthcare, and that experience gained through their joint work could also influence how Riphah trains future medical professionals. "It's going to impact our curriculum as well," he said.

James Li, Tairex's president and chief marketing officer, said the company brought healthcare AI technology, while Riphah contributed experience in medical education and research and an understanding of Pakistan's healthcare needs.

"We hope that by combining technology with medical experience and local knowledge, we can develop solutions that meet real needs," he said.

Li said clinical judgement, patient safety and privacy would be priorities as the partners explored AI applications in hospital services, medical education and joint research. He said he hoped this would translate their shared ideas into practical results, creating lasting value for healthcare professionals, students and patients.

CEN reported on Oct 23, following a launch event in Beijing two days earlier, that Riphah hoped to introduce Tairex's Agent Hospital system in Pakistan.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Khan said he had visited a Beijing hospital several months earlier, observing the use of AI in outpatient care and speaking to a paediatrics specialist. Tairex was incubated by Tsinghua University's Institute for AI Industry Research (AIR). The company says its Agent Hospital system lets medical students and doctors practise simulated consultations with virtual patients, while AI agents help clinicians with preliminary consultations, clinical decision-making, medical record writing and follow-up care. – **APP**

Arrive and Drive World Cup will give karting global boost

DNA

DUBAI: The FIA Karting Arrive and Drive World Cup will continue to open up the sport to a wider pool of international competitors by reducing the traditional barriers to entry, says FIA president Mohammed Ben Sulayem. The competition's second edition begins on Thursday with 78 drivers from 37 nations in action at the LYL International Circuit in Selangor, Malaysia, Asia's largest karting venue. The four-day event, hosted by Motor Sports Singapore, will see junior (12-14) and senior (14-18) drivers compete in standardized Kosmic Mercury karts with Vortex SV engines, provided by OTK Group and Vega Tyres.

The format reduces costs for competitors while keeping the emphasis on driver skill, reinforcing the FIA's commitment to making motorsport more accessible, encouraging wider participation and developing the next generation of talent.

Ben Sulayem believes the recent emergence of Kimi Antonelli as the youngest-ever F1 world driver's champion is perfectly timed to increase the impact of the Arrive and Drive World Cup as an exciting new chapter for grassroots motorsport. The 20-year-old Italian enjoyed a successful karting career before breaking into F1.

"The FIA Karting Arrive and Drive World Cup is one of the flagship events on the international karting calendar, building on the success of its inaugural edition and demonstrating the exciting potential of this innovative format," said Ben Sulayem. "Returning to the LYL International Circuit in Malaysia, the competition continues to showcase how Arrive and Drive is transforming karting by reducing barriers to entry, increasing affordability and ensuring that talent remains the defining factor on track."

He added: "This event provides an important platform for emerging drivers from around the world to demonstrate their abilities and take the next step in their sporting careers. As we continue to strengthen the pathway from grassroots to the highest levels of our sport, initiatives such as Arrive and Drive play a vital role in identifying and developing the champions of the future." Ben Sulayem is aware of the need to open up motorsport to a larger young audience worldwide and believes karting plays an important role. This was his motivation for founding the MENA Karting Championship Nations Cup in 2020.

Among the young hopefuls chasing success in Malaysia over the next three days is Bahrain-based Vedant Menon, who qualified for the senior class as a top finisher at the Arrive and Drive Asia-Pacific Championships at the Circuit of Macau Coloane in September. Leading finishers in the continental championships in Europe and South America also qualified for the world cup, while the remaining grid places were allocated to individual drivers through a wildcard process.

Saudi Arabia will organize the best tournament

DNA

BANGKOK: The president of the Asian Football Confederation, Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, says he is confident Saudi Arabia will host the best edition of the AFC Asian Cup in history. He has also emphasized that the decision to postpone next year's tournament from January to December was made with the agreement of all stakeholders, including the teams. Speaking exclusively to Asharq Al-Awsat following the AFC's Executive Committee meeting in Bangkok, Al-Khalifa said: "The meeting was short and the items on the agenda were few, the most prominent of which was postponing the Asian Cup to December 2027. I believe everyone agrees on our desire to see this tournament at the best possible time, in agreement with the organizing committee and the Saudi Arabian Football Federation." He added: "We know that the Saudi Arabian Football Federation will organize the best tournament in the history of the Asian Cup, and we wish them success." Al-Khalifa also confirmed that the decision to postpone the tournament came after consultation with all concerned parties. He said: "The decision is a joint one between all parties, whether the organizing committee, the Saudi Federation, or the Asian Federation, and after listening to the opinions of the participating teams, we want the tournament to be held in the best atmosphere, and to choose the most appropriate time for it.

Spanish World Cup winner Mata retires from football

DNA

BARCELONA: Spanish World Cup winner Juan Mata retired from football on Wednesday at the age of 38.

The former Chelsea and Manchester United playmaker left Australian side Melbourne Victory in September.

Sometimes, to love... is to let go. Thanks football," Mata wrote on social media as he announced his retirement.

Mata was part of the Spain squad that won the 2010 World Cup in South Africa and the 2012 European Championship.

The midfield maestro broke through at Valencia, where he won the Copa del Rey, before joining Chelsea in 2011.

Mata won the Champions League in 2012 with the London club among other trophies and later signed for Manchester United in 2014, before heading to Turkish club Galatasaray, Japanese side Vissel Kobe, Western Sydney Wanderers and finally Melbourne Victory. Football will never leave my life," added Mata on his website. "There are so many ways to continue loving the game, so many ways to keep using it as a vehicle for development. "I may stop playing professionally, but I will never stop being a footballer." Mata remains involved with Melbourne Victory after taking a minority ownership stake in the club. The Spaniard also has stakes in Formula One team Alpine and Major League Soccer club San Diego FC.

Bayern coach Kompany on cusp of return after illness

DNA

BERLIN: After being hospitalized last month with meningeal irritation, Bayern Munich coach Vincent Kompany has returned to work and will meet the press Thursday, the Bundesliga champions have indicated.

The Belgian was rushed to hospital after collapsing on the training pitch in Munich last month, before being diagnosed with the illness.

But after his return to the training ground this week Bayern's pre-Bundesliga press invitations stated the former Manchester City star, 40, will be back on media duty ahead of his side's league meeting with Cologne on Friday.

Carlos Alcaraz beats Medvedev at ATP Finals

"I was playing great and suddenly I felt a little problem in my hamstring," Alcaraz said

TURIN, Italy: Carlos Alcaraz kept up his strong end-of-season form with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Daniil Medvedev at the ATP Finals on Wednesday despite taking a medical timeout and getting his left thigh strapped.

Alcaraz, the seven-time Grand Slam champion, extended his winning streak to 11 matches as he seeks a third consecutive indoor title after trophies in Vienna and Paris.

Alcaraz also secured a spot in the semifinals of the elite eight-man event for a second consecutive year when Frances Tiafoe beat home player Flavio Cobolli 7-6 (6), 6-0 in the other group match later. Alcaraz's win was his fifth in six matches against top-five players this year. His lone loss came against Jannik Sinner in the Monte Carlo Masters final. The medical timeout came early in the second set. "I was playing great and suddenly I felt a little problem in my hamstring," Alcaraz said. "But just a little bit. I mean, I could play really good tennis since that moment until the end of the match.

"I was trying to stay relaxed, to move not too aggressive. Right now I'm just feeling OK. We will see with my team, with my physio, but I think the rest of the day and tomorrow is really going to be important."

Alcaraz missed 4 months — he sat out the French Open and Wimbledon — earlier this year due to a right wrist injury. In a matchup of two players making their debut at Finals, Cobolli had two set points in the tiebreaker but Tiafoe saved them both.

After shaking up his diet and training regimen, Tiafoe had the most consistent year of his career, reached the US Open semifinals for a third time, and reached the Finals for the first time at age 28. It was Tiafoe's first win at the tournament after Alcaraz beat him in their opener. Cobolli, a French Open finalist this year, acknowledged after getting beat by Medvedev in his opener that he feels more pressure due to the absence of two-time defending champion and fellow Italian Sinner. – **DNA**

F1 hits Vegas with titles settled, podiums up for grabs

Russell sits third in the rankings on 262 points, trailing Red Bull's Verstappen — who is enjoying a stellar end to the season — by 17, and leading Ferrari's Hamilton by a single point. While Verstappen and Hamilton, with 11 world titles between them, are unlikely to be too preoccupied by the goal of finishing the season in second place, two other men could yet storm up rankings

DNA

LAS VEGAS, USA: With Kimi Antonelli and Mercedes already crowned as this year's champions, F1 descends on Las Vegas this weekend with the rest of the podium spots still up for grabs, as five drivers vie for second place. For a fourth year running, Nevada's gambling metropolis will transform its famous 'Strip' into a nighttime racing circuit flanked by giant, illuminated casinos, from Thursday through Saturday.

While Antonelli — confirmed as the youngest world champion in F1 history — can soak up the adulation, his teammate George Russell will jostle for points with multiple-time world champions Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton, in the 21st of 23 rounds this season. "Winning both world championships was an incredible achievement and we have taken the time to celebrate that," said Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. But Wolff insisted it was "back to work," with the team goals of "helping George finish as high as possible in the drivers' championship, ending the year with momentum, and continuing to unlock more performance from the car."

Russell has endured a challenging season. The British driver has won only three Grand Prix races, totally overshadowed by his 20-year-old Italian prodigy teammate.

Russell sits third in the rankings on 262 points, trailing Red Bull's Verstappen — who is enjoying a stellar end to the season — by 17, and leading Ferrari's Hamilton by a single point. While Verstappen and Hamilton, with 11 world titles between them, are unlikely to be too preoccupied by the goal of finishing the season in second place, two other men could yet storm up the rankings.

Hamilton's Monegasque teammate Charles Leclerc, on 249 points, and 2025 world champion Lando Norris of McLaren, on 246, can also grab the runner-up slot, with season-capping races in Qatar and Abu Dhabi still on the calendar.

Organizers say those rounds, set for late November and early December respectively, will go ahead despite the uncertainty caused by ongoing war in the Middle East region. The Saudi Arabia Grand Prix earlier this year was scrapped following the outbreak of the United States and Israel's war with Iran, while the Bahrain race was delayed and moved to Malaysia.

Mercedes, with 652 points, has emphatically wrapped up the constructors' title, far ahead of Ferrari on 510 and Red Bull on 415. Verstappen — who won last year's Las Vegas race — and Red Bull teammate Isack Hadjar are ending the season in strong form. But their team could still be knocked off the podium by McLaren, spearheaded by Norris and Oscar Piastri.

The British outfit, which won the 2024 and 2025 titles, currently sits on 398 points and racing director Randy Singh has vowed to "do our best to make sure it goes down to the wire and in our favor."

Chasing third place, "we've got plenty of time to try and harvest as many points as we can," he said. Saturday's 50-lap, 193-mile (310-km) race begins at 8:00pm local time (0400 GMT Sunday).

Piastri, who has had a lackluster season, faces a ten-place grid penalty after taking his fifth internal combustion engine of the season. But McLaren will hope the Australian can make up ground on the very long 3.9-mile Las Vegas circuit, which features two lengthy straights up which cars have reached speeds above 220 miles per hour, as well as 17 corners. In the third US Grand Prix of the year — after Miami and Austin — the Nevada desert night could provide the coldest conditions of the entire season, posing a challenge for getting tires up to the optimal operating temperatures.

JI team meets DPM Dar

FROM PAGE 01

price adjustments, have enabled significant reductions in fuel prices, bringing petrol down by Rs. 133 and diesel by Rs. 162 per litre since April 2026. The meeting was attended by the Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives; Adviser to the Prime Minister on Inter-Provincial Coordination; and Secretary Petroleum. The Jamaat-e-Islami delegation comprised Syed Farasat Shah, Mr Anayat Ullah and Mr Ziauddin Ansari.

Security forces kill 22 India...

FROM PAGE 01

KP also recorded the highest number of violent incidents, with 151 cases, representing 57% of the nationwide total. Balochistan followed with 94 incidents, or 35%, underscoring the concentration of militant activity in the two provinces.

Qatar lauds Pakistan role in...

FROM PAGE 01

bilateral security cooperation were discussed. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries, particularly in the fields of security, counterterrorism and institutional cooperation. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and stability and acknowledged the longstanding fraternal ties between Pakistan and Qatar. COAS & CDF reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further deepen bilateral engagement with Qatar and underscored the importance of close cooperation in addressing shared security challenges.

Air space ban on Indian...

FROM PAGE 01

or Indian-operated airlines with immediate effect, as it retaliated against New Delhi's slew of aggressive measures against the country. New Delhi, without evidence, had alleged that Islamabad backed the Pahalgam attack. However, Pakistan had strongly denied any involvement and offered a neutral probe. The nuclear powers had the fiercest air battle in May, in which Pakistan said it downed seven Indian fighter jets. Since then, Pakistan has extended the airspace ban several times, forcing Indian carriers to use longer and costlier routes. For Air India, the country's only carrier with a major international network, fuel costs rose by as much as 29 per cent and journey times by up to three hours on some long-haul routes, according to a document submitted to Indian officials last October.

CDF Munir visits Turbat

FROM PAGE 01

The army chief reaffirmed the Pakistan Army's commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Balochistan in their continued pursuit of peace, prosperity and sustainable development. During the visit, the army chief was also apprised of the progress of various ongoing socio-economic development initiatives for the people of Balochistan. CDF Munir's visit comes days after two Pakistan Army personnel, including a major, were martyred and eight terrorists were killed in Balochistan's Kolpur area. According to the ISPR, the India-backed terrorists targeted military vehicles on patrol using armed quadcopters on November 14, resulting in the martyrdom of Major Omer Minhas Nasir and Havildar Muhammad Adnan Khan. Pakistan has witnessed a surge in terror activities, particularly in its Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan provinces, since 2021, when the Afghan Taliban came into power. According to a report by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS).

Islamabad POST
Friday November 20 , 2026

Briefs

Diaspora urged to promote investment in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD:Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday urged the Pakistani diaspora and business community in Singapore to play an active role in promoting Pakistan as an investment destination and strengthening economic ties between the two countries.

He made these remarks during an interaction with members of the Pakistani diaspora and business community at a dinner hosted by Pakistan's High Commissioner to Singapore, Rabia Shafiq, at Pakistan House, according to press release issued by finance ministry.

The minister briefed participants on Pakistan's improving macroeconomic stability and the government's measures to strengthen the economy and reduce the fiscal deficit.

He highlighted the government's commitment to fiscal discipline, structural reforms and creating a conducive environment for investment.

Recalling his time spent in Singapore, Senator Aurangzeb described the Pakistani diaspora as a valuable national asset and an important partner in the country's economic development. He encouraged overseas Pakistanis, particularly business community members, to facilitate greater engagement between Pakistani and Singaporean investors.

He also highlighted investment opportunities in Pakistan across various sectors and briefed participants on the government's privatisation programme. He noted that the privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) would help reduce the financial burden on the national exchequer, contain government expenditure and improve economic efficiency.

Members of the Pakistani business community shared their perspectives on strengthening Pakistan's investment appeal and attracting foreign investors.

They also discussed opportunities for greater business-to-business engagement and offered suggestions for promoting investment and economic cooperation.–**APP**

Rupee gains 03 paisa against Dollar

ISLAMABAD: Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 03 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 276.52, down from the previous day's close of Rs 276.55.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the dollar's open-market buying and selling rates were Rs 277.25 and Rs 279.80, respectively.

The Euro increased by Rs 0.56 to close at Rs 303.78, down from Rs 303.22 the previous day, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.73, while the British Pound came down by Rs 0.30 to Rs 363.72 from Rs 364.02 the previous day. The exchange rates of the Emirate Dirham and the Saudi Riyal remained unchanged, closing at Rs 75.29 and Rs 73.71, respectively.–**APP**

PSX turns bullish, gains 477 points

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) bounced back to a bullish trend on Thursday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index gaining 477.86 points, a positive change of 0.27 percent, to close at 176,772.19 points against 176,294.33 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 724.776 million shares, compared to 742.121 million shares traded in the previous session. The traded value of the ready market stood at Rs21.153 billion, down from Rs25.975 billion a day earlier. Meanwhile, total market capitalisation increased to Rs19.233 trillion from Rs19.198 trillion recorded in the previous session.–APP

Pak offers strategic gateway for Hong Kong investors: Zikria

ICCI President said that Hong Kong Trade Office in Islamabad can transform bilateral business engagement

DNA



ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has called for establishing stronger institutional linkages between Pakistan and Hong Kong, including direct trade connections and a Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Islamabad, to unlock new opportunities for bilateral trade, investment and business collaboration across multiple sectors.

The proposal was put forward by ICCI President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia during an interactive meeting with a delegation of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Kuala Lumpur, headed by its Director, Fung Ho Yin Owin, which visited ICCI to explore avenues for expanding trade and investment cooperation between the two sides. The delegation, accompanied by Asim Nawaz Tiwana, Director, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), Islamabad, comprised Ms. Wong See Yui Audrey, Deputy Director; Lam Po Kui Leonard, Deputy Director; Ms. Chen King Wan Vivien; Ms. Yuen Yuk Ling Stephanie; and Song Chee Weng Damien.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Fung Ho Yin Owin said that it was his first visit to Pakistan and described the experience as impressive, meaningful and encouraging for exploring the country's business and investment potential. He expressed interest in developing stronger engagement with Pakistan, particularly in areas offering mutual economic benefits.

He also underscored the importance of educational and cultural exchanges, observing that closer people-to-people interaction could play a significant role in bringing the communities of both sides closer and creating a stronger foundation for sustainable economic relations.

Welcoming the delegation, ICCI President Mohammad Zikria Akbar Zia said that Pakistan and Hong Kong shared considerable potential for mutually beneficial economic cooperation, which needed to be translated into practical business partnerships through stronger institutional connectivity and direct engagement between their business communities.

He emphasized that establishing direct linkages between the two sides would facilitate closer coordination, enhance business-to-business interaction and encourage investment partnerships. He particularly highlighted the importance of B2B and people-to-people (P2P) engagements in building lasting commercial relationships.

The ICCI President observed that Pakistan could serve as an effective gateway for Hong Kong businesses seeking access to wider regional markets, owing to its strategic location and diverse economic opportunities. He proposed that establishing a Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Islamabad would serve as a catalyst for strengthening institutional cooperation, facilitating investors and promoting bilateral commercial engagement.

On the occasion, Asim Nawaz Tiwana, Director TDAP, Islamabad, gave an impressive overview of TDAP's initiatives and facilitation measures aimed at promoting Pakistan's exports, developing international trade linkages and connecting foreign businesses with Pakistani enterprises.

ICCI Senior Vice President Mohammad Ashfaq Hussain Chatha and Executive Committee members also participated in the discussion and exchanged views on strengthening economic engagement between Pakistan and Hong Kong.

Others present included Executive members Kamran Kakhel, Chaudhry Mazher, Ms. Aima Hayat, Deputy Manager; Amin-ur-Rehman Marwat; and Raja Ehsan Akbar, Protocol Officer and other.

Pakistan Maldives agree on priority sectors uplift

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the Maldives agreed that a Minister led delegation of Pakistani officials and business representatives shall visit in December pursuant to the agreement to enhance Pak-Maldives trade to $ 200 million, between Prime Minister of Pakistan and President of Maldives. The two sides agreed, in principle, to establish institutional arrangement by creating joint working groups to expand bilateral trade, assess the feasibility of a direct Karachi–Malé shipping service and facilitate Maldivian imports of essential commodities from Pakistan, said a release issued here on Thursday. Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan led the Pakistani side in the virtual meeting with Mohamed Saeed, Minister of Economic Development, Transport and Trade of the Maldives. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan and Secretary Commerce Jawad Paul attended the meeting. The Maldivian High Commissioner to Pakistan, senior officials from the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Commerce, and representatives of the Maldives State Trading Organization, Maldives Ports Limited and Invest Maldives also participated. Jam Kamal Khan said on the directions of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, a Pakistani delegation will visit the Maldives at the earliest to follow up on President Dr Mohamed Muizzu's recent visit to Pakistan. Mohamed Saeed welcomed the proposal and identified direct maritime connectivity and imports of essential commodities from Pakistan as immediate priorities for the Maldives. He said identifying the types and volumes of cargo available for shipment would help determine the viability of the proposed route. He highlighted Maldivian demand for construction materials, rice, flour, sugar, fruits and vegetables and pharmaceuticals as priority sector. Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry said Pakistan was ready to explore a direct Karachi–Malé shipping service, subject to sufficient cargo volumes. He also highlighted opportunities for cooperation in ports, fisheries and maritime training. Haroon Akhtar Khan said a direct shipping link could expand trade in construction materials and supplies for the hospitality sector. He called for exchanges of government and business delegations to connect Pakistani suppliers with Maldivian buyers. He also highlighted the potential for Pakistani pharmaceutical manufacturers to supply the Maldivian market. Jam Kamal Khan proposed a virtual meeting between Pakistani suppliers and Maldivian buyers ahead of the visit so they could identify products of interest before meeting in person. The Commerce Minister proposed that the joint working groups bring together government officials, technical experts and private-sector representatives, with a designated focal person and a clear timeline for each group. He said the groups should assess commercial viability, identify barriers to trade and transport, and submit recommendations for ministerial review.–**DNA**

Why Gulf states are steadily storing their oil abroad

MUSKAT: Overseas storage offers the twin advantage of protecting market access during crises and generating commercial value through trading, logistics and distribution Economic diversification is hardly a new ambition for Gulf economies. It has featured in national development strategies since the late 1960s and early 1970s to reduce dependence on oil and gas revenues, initially through investments in industrialisation, infrastructure and non-oil productive sectors. More than five decades later, however, the concept of economic security is expanding beyond diversifying sources of economic growth and government revenues to diversifying where essential resources are sourced, stored, and accessed, reducing exposure to disruptions in trade corridors and supply chains.

Gulf economies remain heavily dependent on hydrocarbons. In 2024, oil accounted for approximately 64% of total GCC government revenues, generating $422bn compared to $237bn from non-oil sources. As a result, any disruption to hydrocarbon production or export routes extends well beyond energy-sector earnings, pressuring government finances, public investment, and broader economic stability. This makes the geography of resilience as important as its scale. Energy and economic security increasingly depend on the geographic distribution of reserves, access to foreign markets, and alternative transportation corridors, especially when primary routes fail. Strategic reserves, once treated mainly as emergency insurance, are becoming a core instrument of national and global economic security. GCC states are now acting on this, building reserves and access routes both at home and in strategic destinations abroad. The 2026 disruption to the Strait of Hormuz showed that maintaining production capacity is not enough. Securing reliable access to export markets matters just as much. Nearly 30% of global oil and 20% of liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports were disrupted, Brent crude exceeded $100 per barrel, and European gas prices surged by approximately 60%. The IMF downgraded its 2026 global growth forecast by 0.2 percentage points to 3.1%. The crisis demonstrated that disruptions to Gulf energy exports extend far beyond regional supply shortages, generating global economic repercussions through higher inflation, disrupted trade, weaker industrial production and increased financial market volatility. Exposure and vulnerabilities differed among Gulf exporters. Saudi Arabia and the UAE are the only Gulf producers with existing pipelines that can substantially bypass Hormuz. Saudi Arabia's East-West line to Yanbu on the Red Sea, rated at up to 7 million b/d, and the UAE's Habshan–Fujairah line to the Gulf of Oman, at around 1.5-1.8 million b/d. Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain had no alternatives. Gulf producers reliant on the strait saw shipments fall by more than a third in the first month, with export revenues down an estimated $15.2bn. –**DNA**

Pakistani student's search for rural uplift lessons from forest to farms

BEIJING: Rows of strawberry plants stood neatly arranged on black plastic mulch inside a greenhouse at Yanjiagang Farm in Harbin, a city in northeast China.

Temperature, humidity and light were carefully controlled. Nearby, a display chart traced rice production through ten stages, from seed selection to harvest, with each stage linked to specific techniques and equipment.

For Shehar Shehar Bano, a Pakistani doctoral student in Western Economics at Heilongjiang University, the scene offered a new perspective on agriculture.

Before the visit, she had largely associated farming in Pakistan with small plots cultivated by families, often relying on experience and weather conditions. The greenhouse showed her how precisely agricultural production could be managed. "I had never realized that farming could be managed in such detail, with every stage of crop growth planned and monitored," she said. Shehar Bano was taking part in the "Study in Heilongjiang" autumn social practice programme. She visited the Forest Museum at Northeast Forestry University and Yanjiagang Farm, followed by a visit to Maoershan Teaching Area the next day. The experience prompted her to consider how natural resources, agricultural production and local communities are connected.

At the Forest Museum, Shehar Bano saw how forests contribute not only timber but also water and soil conservation, climate regulation and biodiversity protection. The exhibits led her to reflect on Pakistan's environmental challenges. Despite its diverse natural landscapes, including the northern mountains and the Indus River basin, Pakistan has relatively limited forest coverage. Climate change, floods and droughts also put pressure on agricultural production and rural livelihoods. Pakistan has pursued tree-planting and ecological restoration initiatives, including the Billion Tree Tsunami programme. But Shehar Bano believes that conservation needs to go beyond planting trees. "Forest protection should not stop at planting trees. Local communities should also be able to benefit from it," she said.

She sees potential in linking forest conservation with local employment through ecological tourism, forest-based products and community services. Such activities, she believes, could create additional income opportunities while encouraging residents to protect the natural resources on which their livelihoods depend. At Yanjiagang Farm, Shehar Bano found a practical example of how technology and management can shape agricultural production. The visit challenged her earlier assumption that access to land and capital were the main requirements for rural development. The way these resources are organized, she said, can be just as important. "What often creates the gap in development is not necessarily how much land people have, but their ability to organize and manage it," she said. For Shehar Bano, modern agriculture involves more than cultivating land. It requires bringing together technology, labour, investment and market connections. The observation has particular relevance to Pakistan, where agriculture remains a major part of the economy but many small farmers face constraints in accessing quality seeds, irrigation, storage facilities and reliable sales channels. Her economics studies had introduced her to concepts such as economies of scale and market failures. At Yanjiagang, she began connecting those ideas with practical questions: why can farmers working similar areas of land earn very different incomes? Why do some struggle to cope with price fluctuations after a year of hard work? And how much value is lost when produce cannot be properly stored or transported.–**DNA**



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chaired a review meeting on the performance of Ministry of National Food Security and Research under Prime Minister's Office System.-DNA

CI-UAF wins outstanding achievement in localization

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Confucius Institute at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) has won the Outstanding Achievement Award in Localization, recognizing its successful transition to a sustainable, locally managed operational model, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday.

According to CI-UAF, the award was presented by the China International Education Foundation (CIEF) and China's Ministry of Education. The institute was selected from among more than 1,200 Confucius Institutes and Centers worldwide. Vice President of XJAU, Prof. Dr. Gao Ping, received the award on behalf of CI-UAF. Since completing its localization in June 2022, the institute has expanded its operations across Pakistan and strengthened educational and cultural cooperation between Pakistan and China.

From 2022 to 2026, CI-UAF conducted 656 Chinese language classes, facilitated 22,961 student enrollments, organized 46 HSK examinations and facilitated 11,037 examination candidates. It also established 16 subcenters across the country.

As a pioneering member of the Global Agriculture Alliance of Confucius Institutes, CI-UAF has expanded its activities beyond language education to include research collaboration, technology transfer, skills development, scholarships, fellowships, industrial linkages and business-to-business engagements. CIEF has recognized the institute as a successful example of localization and recommended that other Confucius Institutes and centers learn from and follow its operational model. –**APP**

Two Syrian security personnel killed, four wounded

DAMASCUS: Two Syrian Internal Security Forces personnel were killed and four others wounded on Wednesday when two security patrols came under fire during an official mission in Jaramana, Damascus Countryside, SANA reported.

A security source told SANA that the incident began after a citizen filed a complaint against his son at a police station. Officers were dispatched to arrest the son at the request of the Public Prosecution, but the suspect opened fire, wounding two personnel. The patrol called for reinforcements, but the supporting security personnel also came under fire from the gunman, leaving two officers dead and two others wounded, the source said.

The shooting ended with the gunman being killed, according to the source.–**APP**

COP31 draft climate deal removes mention of fossil fuels

ANTALYA: COP31 co-host Australia unveiled a new draft agreement Thursday that drops any mention of fossil fuels, the leading driver of climate change.

The nearly 200 nations involved in the global climate talks in Turkiye have until Friday to strike a final agreement, though the marathon negotiations often run into overtime.

A sweeping draft pact unveiled earlier in the week laid out competing positions on flashpoint topics from energy to finance and trade, drawing criticism for its length and complexity.

After days of tense consultations, negotiations chair Australia published a slimmed-down text half the original length containing fresh language and new proposals on some of the most contentious issues.

But a proposal "for accelerated action to phase out fossil fuels" was nixed in the revised text, which also made no explicit mention of coal, oil or gas by name.Many countries have pressed for strong language on fossil fuels in Antalya after last year's summit in Brazil ended with no mention of them in the final deal. –**APP**

CENTRELINE
Largest Diplomatic Magazine

Daily
Islamabad POST

DNA
DIPLOMATIC NEWS AGENCY

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2026 | WWW.ISLAMABADPOST.COM.PK

Briefs

Musaadah to lead Pak team to India

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: At the invitation of the Minister of Culture and Tourism of India, Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr. Musadik Masood Malik, will lead Pakistan's delegation to the first SCO Civilizations Dialogue Forum, commencing in New Delhi tomorrow.

Musadik Malik will share Pakistan's perspective on the salience of dialogue among civilizations and Pakistan's contribution to this area of diplomacy.

The Minister's statement will also highlight Pakistan's constructive role in the SCO, as well as Pakistan's diverse civilizational and cultural heritage.

Pakistan's delegation will also participate in the thematic sessions of the Forum and engage with SCO Member States on the sidelines of the Forum.

10 killed in train, coach collision

GWADAR: At least 10 people, including a woman and a child, were killed and several others sustained burn injuries when a Karachi-bound passenger coach collided with a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bowser and caught fire near Basol in Ormara on Thursday, police said.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Makran Coastal Highway Police Muhammad Aslam Bangulzai confirmed the death toll, saying the coach was travelling from Turbat to Karachi when the collision occurred.

"The impact triggered a fire that quickly engulfed both vehicles, trapping passengers inside," he added.

Rescue teams, coastal highway police personnel and local administration officials rushed to the scene, while the injured were taken to the Ormara Health Centre for treatment, Bangulzai said. He added that traffic on the Makran Coastal Highway remained suspended for several hours following the accident, leaving long queues of vehicles stranded near Basol and Ormara.

In a similar incident in August, six members of a family were burnt to death after a speeding gas bowser hit their car head-on and overturned on the coastal highway in the Ormara area of Gwadar district. In March, seven people, including a child, were killed and eight others injured in a head-on collision between two vehicles on the coastal highway. In January, a passenger vehicle overturned on the coastal highway in Ormara, killing 10 people and leaving more than 30 others injured. – **APP**

Naval Chief says

Navy's combat capabilities significantly enhanced

The naval chief further said that the navy's combat capabilities "have recently undergone significant enhancement and transformation across all operational domains aligned with contemporary and future warfare demands". The navy is set to induct a total of eight Hangor-class submarines. The first one arrived at Karachi Port in June and conducted its maiden live weapon firing in the Arabian Sea in September

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Naveed Ashraf on Thursday said the Pakistan Navy has significantly enhanced its combat capabilities across all operational domains. He made the remarks while addressing the graduation parade of the Pakistan Air Force Academy Asghar Khan in Risalpur in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Nowshera district. CNS Admiral Ashraf stated that the Pakistan Navy was making significant headway towards modernising its fleet.

"The induction of state-of-the-art warships, Hangor-class submarines, indigenously developed long-range weapons, unmanned systems, and the establishment of Pakistan Maritime Science & Technology Park are some of the important developments taking place," he highlighted.

The naval chief further said that the navy's combat capabilities "have recently undergone significant enhancement and transformation across all operational domains aligned with contemporary and future warfare demands". The navy is set to induct a total of eight Hangor-class submarines. The first one arrived at Karachi Port in June and conducted its maiden live weapon firing in the Arabian Sea in September.

In mid-April, the Pakistan Navy fired a locally developed anti-ship ballistic missile to engage targets at an extended range. Days later, it conducted a successful test of an indigenously developed anti-ship weapon system, Taimoor. In November last year, the navy conducted a successful test of an indigenously developed ship-launched anti-ship ballistic missile.



Speaking at the parade, CNS Ashraf noted that the character of modern warfare has altered dramatically and is "evolving at an unprecedented pace".

"One of the key factors behind this transformation is the emergence of new technologies. As such, warfare today is closely linked with technology, leading to revolutionary changes in concepts, doctrines and organisational restructuring," he explained.

Admiral Ashraf pointed out that conflicts were no longer restricted to traditional battlefields, and spanned the electronic warfare, cyber, space and cognitive domains. "More so, autonomous systems, artificial intelligence, and information warfare have reshaped the very texture of how battles are fought and won," he added.

Admiral Ashraf noted that the global and regional strategic environment has become more complex, particularly in the backdrop of heightened tensions in the Middle East. "Geopolitical dynamics are shifting rapidly, presenting multifaceted security challenges that demand constant vigilance, strategic foresight, and remarkable operational readiness to deter conventional, as well as hybrid and asymmetric threats," the naval chief noted.

Formation of election reforms committee delayed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Affairs Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Thursday said the formation of the Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms (PCER) had been delayed because the opposition had yet to submit its nominees.

He made the remarks after meeting opposition chief whip Malik Amir Dogar to discuss the committee's formation. In a post on X, Chaudhry said the government and its allied parties had submitted all their nominees for the committee.

"The opposition should finalise its nominees soon; the (National Assembly) Speaker will issue the notification to form the committee as soon as the names are received," he said.

Chaudhry further said that if the PTI wanted to return to mainstream politics, it should join the electoral reforms committee and present its position there instead of expressing reservations on talk shows and in the assembly. "PTI will have the opportunity to address its concerns about the upcoming elections in the committee," he said, adding that the party's "constructive proposals" would be incorporated into the final draft of the electoral reforms.

Trump says summit with Xi, Putin 'making history'

DNA

SHENZHEN: The presidents of China, the United States and Russia held an unprecedented summit in China on Thursday, with Donald Trump saying the three men were "making history." The meeting behind closed doors between Trump, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin in Kylin Villa in Shenzhen ended after an hour and 20 minutes.

At the start the three men made opening remarks touching on weighty topics from nuclear weapons to the war in Ukraine as they met around a large, dark round table with a pink flower arrangement at its center.

"I'm delighted that this trip has also given us the opportunity for this first ever trilateral meeting between the leaders of the United States, Russia and China," Trump said. "So in that sense, and I think in lots of other ways, we are really making history," he added. The summit, which analysts expect to be heavier in symbolism than breakthroughs, comes with Russia's Ukraine offensive approaching the five-year mark, and has sparked both alarm and derision around the world. Xi told his counterparts that the three countries should "jointly safeguard world peace and stability," while Putin said they had a shared interest to resolve the Ukraine war. "Our countries have many converging interests when it comes to resolving regional conflicts, including, of course, the conflict in Ukraine," Putin said, adding they had a "shared responsibility for maintaining international peace and security."



He said the closed-door discussions would also touch on food and energy security – both of which have been upended by conflicts in Iran and Ukraine. Trump is bogged down by his war with Iran that has choked oil supplies and pushed up consumer prices worldwide, while an ascendant China is looking to strengthen its hand in East Asia. The Kylin Villa summit has stoked fears that the three powerful men want to divide the globe into spheres of influence, for example by making decisions impacting Ukraine over the heads of Kyiv or Europe.

Tarar calls for institutional mechanism between Pakistan, Türkiye

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has called for establishing an institutional mechanism between Pakistan and Türkiye to strengthen strategic communication and effectively counter emerging challenges, including misinformation and cyber threats.

He was addressing the STRATCOM Public Forum jointly organized by the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad and Turkish Embassy in the federal capital today. The Minister proposed the formation of a joint working group comprising representatives from academia, think tanks and different segments of society. The Minister stressed the need for a new agreement on strategic communication based on technology and facts to safeguard the ideological foundations of the long-standing friendship between the two countries. He further stressed enhanced cooperation between Pakistan's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Directorate of Communications of the Turkish Presidency to identify emerging challenges and develop a coordinated response.



Attaullah Tarar said the relationship between Pakistan and Türkiye is rooted in shared history and solidarity, even before the creation of Pakistan and has grown stronger over the years. – **DNA**

Mideast crisis 'largest threat' to energy security ever: IEA

PARIS: The crisis in the Middle East sparked in February by the US and Israeli bombing of Iran has created the "largest threat" to energy security in history, the International Energy Agency (IEA) warned Thursday. The agency said in its flagship annual World Energy Outlook that consumers were increasingly footing the bill as the world runs out of ways to absorb the impact of the conflict on energy supplies. The crisis, just like previous energy shocks, would certainly leave "lasting marks", the agency warned.

Gulf countries have been struggling to export oil since Iran began blockading the Strait of Hormuz and targeting tankers in the area, following US and Israeli strikes that sparked the crisis in February.

Despite attempts by the United States to escort vessels through the channel – which pre-crisis carried about one-fifth of global oil shipments – supply lines remain severely disrupted. "The Strait of Hormuz crisis has created the largest threat to energy security in history, one that dwarfs the scale of the oil shocks of the 1970s," IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol wrote in his foreword to the report.

He highlighted the efforts countries had taken to protect households, with producing nations bringing more supplies into the market and using alternative routes, and China buying less from international markets. "Governments have intervened to try and provide some shelter for consumers, but they have nonetheless faced higher prices and, in some cases, shortfalls of supply," Birol wrote. The report said elsewhere that "increasingly it is falling to consumers – and high prices – to absorb the impact as other buffers are run down". Birol had struck a more hopeful tone in July when he wrote that the oil market was still benefiting from "several cushioning factors". – **APP**

Pakistan tells UN India cannot hold its 240m people hostage

Ambassador Jadoon calls for resource sovereignty and equitable sharing of natural wealth and its benefits

DNA

NEW YORK: Pakistan has rejected India's unilateral move to place the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in abeyance, warning that using shared water resources as a tool of political pressure could threaten regional peace and put millions of lives and livelihoods at risk. Speaking at a UN Security Council meeting in New York, Pakistan's Deputy Permanent Representative Ambassador Usman Jadoon said on Wednesday that India had sought to "weaponise water" against Pakistan by unilaterally placing the treaty in abeyance and threatening to stop water flows.

He said such actions endangered the livelihoods and well-being of more than 240 million people and risked escalating tensions between the two neighbouring countries.

Jadoon said the Permanent Court of Arbitration, in its award of August 31, 2026, had reaffirmed that the treaty remained fully in force and that India continued to be bound by its obligations. He said no country should be allowed to use shared natural resources as instruments of coercion or political pressure in violation of international law and binding treaty obligations.

The envoy's remarks come amid a dispute over India's April 2025 decision to place the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance following the killing of 26 people in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. New Delhi accused Islamabad of involvement in the attack, a charge Pakistan denied. The treaty, brokered by the World Bank, allocates the eastern rivers Ravi, Beas and Sutlej to India and the western rivers Indus, Jhelum and Chenab largely to Pakistan. It contains no provision allowing either country to unilaterally suspend or terminate the agreement.

Jadoon stressed that cooperation between neighbouring countries and the peaceful settlement of disputes were essential to regional stability, particularly in the management of shared transboundary resources such as water.

Referring to UN Security Council Resolution 2788, he called for the use of peaceful dispute-settlement mechanisms under Article 33 of the UN Charter, saying respect for international law and mutually agreed arrangements was indispensable to regional peace. The ambassador was speaking during an Arria-formula meeting on "Natural Resources and Conflict: Strengthening Cooperation for Prevention and Peace", convened by Liberia. The broader discussion focused on preventing resource-related conflicts, curbing illicit resource exploitation and ensuring resource wealth benefits local populations.

Published by Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, Printed at Rohani Art Press, Islamabad Ph: 051-8488394 Email: newsroomisbpost@gmail.com