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Bilawal affirms PPP support for key 27th Amendment provisions

PPP CEC reviews 27th Amendment draft, calls for reduced government role in Election Commission

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the party's Central Executive Committee has decided to support the proposed 27th Amendment, with conditional approval for provisions related to establishing Constitutional Courts and reforms in the judicial transfer process.

Speaking at a press conference following the CEC meeting in Karachi, Bilawal stated, "I made it clear yesterday as well that the PPP will support Article 243 and will also vote in its favour." He reiterated that PPP is considering supporting three key changes, including Article 243, Constitutional Courts, and judge transfers, ensuring reforms align with democratic principles and

judicial independence.

He said, "There are primarily three points in the constitutional amendment that the PPP is considering supporting. The first is the 243 amendment, which has been under discussion for some time and is seen as a key step in strengthening parliamentary oversight. The second concerns the establishment of Constitutional Courts, particularly in light of ongoing consultations with the government over which aspects of the Charter of Democracy it is prepared to implement at this stage. The third relates to the transfer of judges, provided that both incoming and outgoing chief justices remain members of the commission tasked with overseeing these decisions."

He added that the idea

of Constitutional Courts originated from the PPP itself. "This initiative has been part of every PPP manifesto, and it was also included in the Charter of Democracy, which mentions the establishment of Constitutional Courts," he maintained.

The PPP chairperson further said the party's CEC deliberated on the matter for two days and concluded that while the PPP supports the principle of establishing Constitutional Courts, other components of the Charter of Democracy must also move forward to ensure balance. "We will engage with the government to see where further consensus can be built," he noted.

Addressing the pro

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KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari chairs PPP Central Executive Committee meeting at Bilawal House in Karachi.

Deadlock persists in Pakistan-Afghanistan talks in Istanbul: Tarar

Says Pakistan thankful to Turkiye, Qatar for mediating talks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Friday said Pakistan is thankful to Turkiye and Qatar for mediating talks with Afghanistan, amid a deadlock in Istanbul negotiations. In a post on X, the minister reiterated that Pakistan remains committed to its principled position that Afghanistan bears responsibility for curbing terrorism originating from its soil.

He noted that the Af-

ghan Taliban has so far failed to fulfil its international, regional, and bilateral commitments under the 2021 Doha Agreement.

Tarar emphasized that Pakistan continues to extend goodwill towards the Afghan people and desires a peaceful future for them. However, he stressed that Pakistan will never support any measures by the Taliban government that are detrimental to the interests of the Afghan people or neighbouring countries.

JUI-F vows not to accept amendment in Article 243 'if it affects democracy'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rahman has warned

been made public so far, so we cannot comment on it at this stage."

Maulana Fazl added



that any change to Article 243 that undermines democracy would be unacceptable.

Speaking at a press conference in Islamabad, he said: "No draft of the proposed 27th Amendment has

that the government had withdrawn 35 clauses during the 26th Constitutional Amendment, and including any of these in the 27th Amendment would amount

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Quetta Divisional Monitoring Committee meets: LEAs, administrations instructed to jointly profile suspected terrorists, facilitators to strengthen security database

Special attention directed toward upgradation of Fourth Schedule lists in light of current security concerns & monitoring requirement

Independent Report
QUETTA: The review meeting of Divisional Monitoring Committee was held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Quetta Division, Shahzeb Khan Kakar here on Friday.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Mehruallah Badini, Lieuten-

ant Colonel Muhammad Asif Khan of Anti-Narcotics Force, Assistant Commissioner (Political) Quetta Division Syed Kaleemullah, as well as representatives from the Excise and Taxation Department, Customs, Special Branch, SSP Admin Quetta, and other officials.

The meeting reviewed the progress of District

Implementation Committees, regular uploading of complaints on the BISA Dashboard, profiling of terrorists and their facilitators, updating of the Fourth Schedule, action against the illegal use of small arms (SMAs), disciplinary measures against teachers in

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BAKU: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with President of Azerbaijan H.E. Ilham Aliyev; Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir is also present.

Disrespecting security institutions would never be tolerated: CM Bugti strongly reacts to irresponsible and provocative statement of KP's counterpart against security forces

Mir Sarfraz terms CM KP's statement against national unity & attempt to reinforce enemy's narrative; demands immediate apology to nation and to families of martyrs for statement

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has strongly reacted to the irresponsible and provocative statement of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa against the security forces.

In a statement issued here on Friday, the Chief Minister Balochistan termed the CM KP's statement against national unity and an attempt to reinforce the enemy's narrative.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that the brave officers and soldiers who have sacrificed their lives for the protection and peace of the homeland are the nation's heroes, and the entire nation is proud of their sacrifices. He added that any negative or baseless remarks about

such patriotic individuals are unacceptable to any sensible Pakistani.

He further stated that statement of the KP's Chief Minister is not only an insult to the security institutions but also an affront to the emotions of thousands of martyrs' families who sacrificed their lives to restore peace in the country.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti emphasized that such remarks only please hostile forces and undermine public confidence.

He made it clear that the sacrifices of the security forces are eternal, and both the nation and the international community recognize their vital role.

He added that these are the same forces who,

from Balochistan to Khyber, laid down their lives and emerged victorious in the war against terrorism. Mir Sarfraz Bugti demanded that the Chief Minister of KP should immediately apologize to the nation and to the families of the martyrs for his irresponsible statement, as such remarks serve the enemy's agenda and harm the country's peace and stability.

He said that while political differences may exist, disrespecting the security institutions would never be tolerated. The security forces are the symbol of our pride and stability, and the Balochistan government fully stands with them at every level, he concluded.

Opp. delegation meets NA speaker over leader of opposition appointment

ISLAMABAD (APP): A parliamentary delegation of opposition members led by Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, called on National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House on Friday to hold discussions regarding the appointment of the Leader of the Opposition in the House.

The delegation comprises former Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser along with other opposition members in the National Assembly.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held regarding the appointment of the Leader of the Opposition in the House. The delegation requested for the nomination of the Leader of the Opposition.

Coalition govt enjoys support of 237 MNAs for 27th Amendment

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government is gearing up for tabling the 27th Constitutional Amendment in the parliament with expected support of 237 parliamentarians including the coalition partners.

The mission to get the 27th Constitutional Amendment approved by parliament is underway.

The National Assembly consists of 336 members. Due to 10 vacant seats, the number of members in the House is 326. The support of 224 members is required for a constitutional amendment. The government coalition currently has the support of 237 members, including the PPP. The PML-N is the largest political party in the government coalition with 125 members.

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QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Shahzaib Khan Kakar presides over the meeting of Divisional Monitoring Committee.

PM Sharif, President Aliyev vow to deepen Pakistan, Azerbaijan Partnership

Azerbaijan president lauds Pakistan for promoting regional stability

BAKU (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday held a wide-ranging meeting with President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev here at the Presidential Palace flanked by Chief of the Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif thanked President Aliyev for inviting him to attend Azerbaijan's Victory Day celebrations, which commemorate the country's historic triumph in the 44-day Karabakh Liberation War against Armenia, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

Extending warm felicitations to the government and people of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister said the nation's victory stood as a "beacon of hope for all oppressed peoples striving for

self-determination," including those in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine.

The two leaders discussed the full spectrum of bilateral ties and agreed to enhance multi-dimensional cooperation between Pakistan and Azerbaijan in the areas of politics, trade and investment, energy, connectivity, and defence.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also invited President Ilham Aliyev to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience, a gesture graciously accepted by the Azerbaijani leader.

Acknowledging the progress made in the South Caucasus, the Prime Minister lauded President Aliyev's leadership and his signing of the landmark peace agreement with Armenia earlier this year.



ISLAMABAD: U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, at MoFA.

Quetta roads closed, internet suspended ahead of PTI rally

QUETTA (INP): Ahead of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Tehreek-e-Tahafuz-e-Aeen Pakistan rally in Quetta, district administration has closed major roads and streets across the city.

Authorities have also suspended mobile and internet services as part of heightened security measures in the city.

Officials said that the PTI has denied permission under Section 144, which bans public gatherings across the province for a month. However, despite the restrictions, PTI has insisted on holding the rally.

The road closures have caused serious disruption for citizens, particularly students trying to reach schools and colleges. Many reported being unable to attend classes, while blockades at main roads and intersections have created massive traffic jams, leaving commuters stranded for hours.

The administration has alerted security forces to closely monitor the situation and urged residents to avoid unnecessary travel until conditions stabilize. The internet suspension has further affected communication and daily activities in the city. Despite these measures, PTI leadership has reaffirmed its determination to hold the rally, describing it as a demonstration in support of constitutional supremacy and the restoration of democratic rights.



QUETTA: A view of closed road due to security reasons which disturb routine life badly.

Cop among 18 killed in armed clash between bandit gangs in Sindh's Katcha area

KATCHA AREA (INP): As many as 18 people, including a policeman, women, and children, lost their lives when groups of armed bandit clashed in the Katcha area of Sindh. The fierce gunfire also left 18 others injured. According to police and area people, "Since Thursday, Ronti has turned into a battlefield, with continuous sounds of explosions and gunfire echoing through the region."

The violence erupted on the night between Wednesday and Thursday when more than 50 armed members of the Shar Gang stormed the village of Mahboob Seelro. The at-

tack, both sudden and well-coordinated, caught members of the Seelro tribe off guard, resulting in six fatalities. The assailants used modern automatic weapons, leaving 18 people — including women and children — injured.

Reports from the area suggest that the Shar Gang was supported by members of the Kosh tribe, long-time rivals of the Seelro tribe. In retaliation, the Seelro tribe launched a counterattack that forced the Shar Gang to retreat and take cover in an Otaq (a local meeting place). Intense gunfire ensued, trapping the bandits inside.

Traders and transporters demand reopening of Chaman Border for bilateral trade

Closure causing economic losses, thousands of laborers facing hardship

Independent Report
CHAMAN: Business leaders, transporters, and labor representatives in Chaman have strongly demanded the immediate reopening of the Pak-Afghan border crossing, warning that the prolonged closure has severely disrupted trade, livelihoods, and cross-border connectivity.

Addressing a joint press conference at Chaman Press Club, representatives of the local chamber of commerce and transport associations said that the closure has caused heavy economic losses to traders and daily wage earners who depend on cross-

border commerce for their survival.

They added that hundreds of trucks carrying perishable goods, including fruits, vegetables, and essential commodities, are stranded on both sides of the border.

The delay, they said, is not only affecting traders but also undermining regional trade and people-to-people ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Local transport leader Haji Abdul Manan said that the closure has rendered thousands of laborers jobless and urged the federal and provincial governments

to intervene on humanitarian grounds. "Trade and movement across the Chaman border are the lifelines of Balochistan's economy — their suspension is creating deep economic distress," he remarked.

The speakers also urged authorities to streamline border management and security procedures to ensure that trade and security objectives could function simultaneously.

They appealed for a permanent mechanism to prevent recurring border closures, which repeatedly harm small traders and transport workers.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Health Dawood Khan Khilji presides over the meeting regarding Balochistan Health Card Program

DC Sibi chairs DCC meeting to review development projects

Calls for timely completion and transparency in all ongoing schemes

Independent Report
SIBI: Deputy Commissioner Sibi, Muhammad Ramzan Pllal, chaired an important meeting of the District Coordination Committee on Thursday to review the progress of ongoing development projects and discuss the law and order situation in the district.

The meeting was attended by tribal leaders, local representatives, and key government officials including Chief Sardar Muhammad Haroon Khan Jamali of the Jamali tribe. The session focused on ensuring timely completion of development initiatives across sectors such as education, health, roads, and public welfare.

During the briefing, department heads informed the committee about the current status of district-level schemes. Deputy Commissioner Pllal emphasized that all projects must be completed with full transparency and accountability. "Delays and negli-

gence will not be tolerated — public service delivery is our foremost priority," he stated.

Participants also discussed community engagement in developmental monitoring to ensure that funds are used effectively and according to local needs. The Deputy Commissioner praised the coordination among departments but directed officials to expedite pending schemes before the next quarterly review.

Sardar Haroon Khan Jamali lauded the district administration's efforts for maintaining law and order and called for continued collaboration between local communities and the government to sustain peace and development in the region.

The meeting concluded with a consensus to maintain strict oversight of all projects and ensure efficient use of public funds for the welfare of the people of Sibi district.

Loralai CIA seizes machine gun, four pistols, five suspects arrested

Independent Report
LORALAI: Under directives from DIG Loralai Range Junaid Ahmed Shaikh and SSP Malik Muhammad Asghar, the CIA Loralai conducted multiple operations and arrested five suspects, recovering four pistols and a machine gun. The operations were supervised by SDPO Kareem Mandokhail and led by CIA In-Charge Sub-Inspector Mumtaz Ahmed along with ASI Gul Noor and team members. Police confirmed that one of the arrested suspects, Sarfaraz s/o Muhammad Asif, was a wanted fugitive in a murder case (FIR No. 368/022) registered at Karachi's Aziz Bhatti Police Station. He was formally taken into custody. Separately, City SHO Inspector Humayun Nasir recovered another pistol from a suspect and arrested proclaimed offender Abdul Hafeez s/o Abdul Washe. According to the police spokesperson, cases have been registered under the Balochistan Arms Act, and operations against criminal elements will continue without interruption.



GWADAR: MPA Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch inaugurates Ganz Mubarak Qazi Library established with cooperation of Deputy Commissioner Hamood-ur-Rehman.

Development and security reviewed in district coordination committee meeting at Usta Muhammad

Deputy Commissioner approves multiple projects including construction of Girls Degree College

Independent Report
USTA MUHAMMAD: A crucial meeting of the District Coordination Committee was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Usta Muhammad, Muhammad Ramzan Pllal, to review ongoing development projects and the law-and-order situation in the district.

According to details, the meeting was attended by Chief of Jamali Tribe Sardar Muhammad Haroon Khan Jamali, FC Captain Hamza, SSP Ghulam Hussain Bajoi, District Health Officer Dr. Amir Ali Jamali, principals of boys and girls degree colleges, and senior officials from the

Irrigation, Buildings and Roads, Local Government, Treasury, Excise, and Special Branch departments.

The committee discussed in detail the progress of various development schemes presented by the health, education, irrigation, finance, and police departments.

During the session, the construction of the Government Girls Degree College was approved following the auction of the old food warehouse, along with several other key development projects.

The law-and-order situation was also reviewed in depth. The Deputy Commissioner instructed all departments to maintain

strict surveillance on suspicious elements, prevent negative activities, and ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property.

Addressing the participants, DC Muhammad Ramzan Pllal reaffirmed that public service, protection, and timely provision of basic facilities are the top priorities of the district administration. He urged all departmental officers to perform their duties diligently to ensure sustainable development and public welfare in the district.

The meeting concluded with directives to ensure immediate and effective implementation of all administrative and developmental decisions.



LORALAI: DIG Police Loralai Region Junaid Ahmed Sheikh presides over the meeting regarding eradication of poppy cultivation in the area.



QUETTA: Former Deputy Mayor Quetta Younas Lehri and Chaudhary Shabbir meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Balochistan Finance Department, REMIT team discuss climate and gender budget tagging framework

Independent Report
QUETTA: A delegation of the Balochistan Finance Department, led by Special Secretary Muhammad Jahangir Kakar, held a detailed meeting with the REMIT team to discuss the implementation of Climate Budget Tagging and Gender Budget Tagging frameworks.

The REMIT team was headed by Musharraf Rasool Siyan (Macroeconomy Lead, REMIT-ASI and NFC Member Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Tanzeer Butt (former Ad-

ditional Secretary, Finance Division). During the session, the team presented a comprehensive briefing based on federal and provincial practices in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, highlighting budget frameworks, climate categories, and the integration of tagging codes within the SAP system.

It was decided that the Balochistan Finance Department would share its budget guidelines, forms, and templates with the REMIT team for alignment with climate and gender tag-

ging requirements. REMIT will also conduct capacity-building sessions for CFOs, Additional Secretaries, Heads of Units, and Section Officers to ensure effective implementation.

Special Secretary Muhammad Jahangir Kakar stated: "The Government of Balochistan is fully committed to fiscal discipline, sustainable development, and inclusive planning. Implementing climate and gender budget tagging will mark a major step forward in achieving these goals."



QUETTA: A delegation led by Special Secretary Finance Jehangir Kakar meeting with Musharraf Rasool Cyan REMIT team.

Gwadar gets new Public Park, adding to City's tourism attraction

GWADAR (INP): Gwadar has added a new recreational landmark with the inauguration of a public park in the Sangar Phase-I Housing Scheme, further enhancing the port city's tourism appeal and civic infrastructure.

The park was formally inaugurated on Friday by Major General Habib Nawaz, General Officer Commanding (GOC), and Deputy Commissioner Hamood-ur-Rehman, according to Gwadar Pro.

During the event, the

GOC and DC toured various sections of the new park, inspecting its landscaping and infrastructure.

They lauded the project team for delivering a modern public facility that complements Gwadar's emerging image as a clean and green coastal city.

Adding a touch of local culture, the ceremony concluded with a refreshment gathering and a Balochi music program, celebrating the city's traditions and community spirit.

According to an offi

Advocate Zaheer felicitates newly elected Balochistan Bar Council representatives

Independent Report
QUETTA: Member of the Quetta Tax Bar, Advocate Muhammad Zaheer Usman, has extended warm congratulations to all the successful candidates in the Balochistan Bar Council Elections 2025-2030.

In his felicitation message, Advocate Usman expressed confidence that the newly elected members will employ their professional experience, integrity, and

dedication to resolve the pressing issues confronting the legal fraternity. He emphasized the need to strengthen the rule of law, uphold justice, and safeguard the fundamental rights of the people of Balochistan. He also prayed that Almighty Allah grant the representatives wisdom, strength, and determination to serve the lawyer community with renewed zeal and commitment.



SIBI: Deputy Commissioner Sibi Major (ret'd) Ilyaz Kibzai presides over the meeting of District Coordination Committee.

BFA cracks down on substandard bakery products; multiple bakeries sealed, heavy fines imposed

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan Food Authority (BFA) continued its special campaign against hazardous and substandard bakery items for the second consecutive day. Inspection teams conducted detailed visits to 62 bakeries and baking units across various areas of Quetta and the city of Sibi.

During inspections, four bakeries were sealed, while 24 owners were fined for various violations, including poor hygiene, expired ingredients, rusted machinery, and the use of inferior materials. Additionally, 18 bakeries were issued improvement notices for minor deficiencies.

A large quantity of harmful non-food colors, expired ingredients, and substandard bakery items

was confiscated during the operations.

Director General BFA Waqar Khurshid Alam stated that, under the directives of the Provincial Minister and Chairman BFA, all zonal teams have been instructed to strictly enforce a zero-tolerance policy against unsafe and substandard food products.

He emphasized that there will be no compromise on matters concerning public health. Teams remain actively engaged across Quetta and other districts to eliminate the supply of low-quality bakery items.

Waqar Khurshid Alam also urged the public to ensure the use of safe and high-quality bakery products and to promptly report any complaints to the Balochistan Food Authority.

Tractor accident in Manjho Shori claims two lives, injures one student

Independent Report
NASIRABAD: A tragic road accident occurred near Bari Mor, Manjho Shori police limits, where a tractor hit three students riding a motorcycle. The accident resulted in two students dying on the spot, while one girl sustained serious injuries.

The deceased were identified as Asghar Ali, son of Habibullah, Golah community, and Rashid Ali, son of Hakim Ali, Golah community, while the injured girl is Noor Bibi, daughter of Hakim Ali, resident of Goth Abdul Khaliq Golah.

Eyewitnesses stated that the students were returning home from school on a motorcycle when a speeding tractor struck them near Bari Shakh.

MPA Maulana Hidayat inaugurates Guns Mubarak Qazi Library in Gwadar

Independent Report
GWADAR: Provincial Assembly member Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch, in collaboration with Deputy Commissioner Hamood-ur-Rehman, officially inaugurated the Guns Mubarak Qazi Library in Gwadar. The ceremony was attended by Tehsildar Munir Ahmed Baloch, Singar Housing Project in-charge Nazeer Ahmed, notable local figure Adil Baloch, as well as a large gathering of citizens and students.

The library features modern amenities, including solar power, air conditioning, comfortable furniture, well-lit and quiet study areas, and an academically friendly environment designed to enhance learning for students.

During the event, Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch emphasized the importance of education and encouraged students to make reading a lifelong habit, assuring continued support for initiatives promoting education and health.

Deputy Commissioner Hamood-ur-Rehman, known for his personal commitment to education, has previously inaugurated the Syed Zahoor Shah Hashmi Digital Library in Gwadar, one of Pakistan's top libraries. With the establishment of Guns Mubarak Qazi Library near Giwani village, local students now have access to a new center of knowledge and learning.

During the event, Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch emphasized the importance of education and encouraged students to make reading a lifelong habit, assuring continued support for initiatives promoting education and health.



QUETTA: MPA Malik Naeem Khan Bazai inaugurates solar tubewell at Kili Miryaniabad Beeli.

DC Chaman chairs progress review meeting of district development committee

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Chaman Habib Ahmed Bangulzai on Friday chaired a progress review meeting of District development committee.

In the progress review meeting of the executing agencies, detailed discussions were held regarding the BSDI schemes.

The meeting was attended by Lieutenant Colonel Usman, heads of executing agencies.

The heads of all relevant departments were informed about the progress of development schemes so far.

Addressing the meeting, the DC Chaman said that these schemes are community-based, which is why the efforts of the Balochistan government and 12 Corps have ensured that the material used in these schemes should be of standard and best quality and in accordance with PC-1.



USTAMUHAMMAD: Deputy Commissioner Usta Muhammad, Muhammad Ramzan Palal being briefed by XEN B&R Abdul Sattar Bangulzai regarding under construction complex.

DIG directs unified crackdown as 24 acres of narcotics crops destroyed

Independent Report
LORALAI: A high-level consultative meeting chaired by DIG Loralai Junaid Ahmad Sheikh on Friday reiterated that the fight against drugs is a collective civic responsibility and pledged uncompromising action against those involved in cultivation and trafficking.

In the meeting, attended by Deputy Commissioner Miran Baloch, SSP Loralai Malik Muhammad Asghar, SP Duki Anwar Badini, Major Irfan (Loralai Scouts), FC Noorullah, Director IB A.D. Zeeshan Ahmed, Anti-Narcotics representatives, Excise and Taxation officer Jamil Ahmed and other intelligence officials, the DIG warned that narcotics — described

as a "deadly poison" — erode family and social values and vowed to drive cultivation and trade to zero.

Key decisions and developments • Joint inter-agency field teams comprising police, levies, anti-narcotics and intelligence units will conduct systematic surveys to identify and dismantle cultivation sites and hideouts.

Recent operations resulted in the destruction of opium and cannabis plantations across Shahkariz, Zhardkariz, Barganon Laghai and Kili Minara — affecting roughly 24 acres. Water bore pumps used for cultivation were sealed, solar panels confiscated and illicit structures demolished.

AC Turbat inspects fisheries department construction projects

Independent Report
TURBAT: Assistant Commissioner Muhammad Jan Baloch, following special directives from Commissioner Makran Qadir Bakhsb Parkani and Deputy Commissioner Keoh Major Bashir Ahmed Baghich, conducted a detailed inspection of the under-construction Fisheries Department building and residential quarters near the Agriculture Research Farm.

The inspection team included Assistant Director Fisheries Haji Subzul and representatives from the

Agriculture Research department. Officials reviewed ongoing construction works and expressed satisfaction with the quality and pace of progress.

Muhammad Jan Baloch instructed the staff to ensure that the project is completed on time and to high standards, providing improved residential facilities for government personnel. He also visited the old Fisheries Department office near Girls High School Shahabad to assess its condition and available facilities.



QUETTA: District administration blocks Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) rally in Quetta with Containers.

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Paper promises

Nearly three years after the much-celebrated launch of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) at COP27, not a single dollar has reached countries devastated by climate disasters.

The fund, conceived as a rapid response mechanism to deliver relief within days of a catastrophe, has instead become mired in the very red tape it was meant to bypass. With pledges of about \$700 million — but only \$300 million actually in hand — the FRLD is proving a hollow promise for nations like Pakistan that bear the brunt of a crisis they did little to cause.

As COP30 opens later this month in Belem, Pakistan plans to submit proposals worth up to \$20m to the FRLD board despite deep misgivings.

Climate Minister Musadik Malik confirmed that the country has yet to receive a single dollar in support, even as it reels from the losses of recurring floods, droughts, and glacial melt.

Of the \$300m available, half is reserved for Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries — leaving Pakistan and others to compete for a share of roughly \$100-150m. The sums are negligible when measured against the billions in damage Pakistan suffered during the 2022 floods alone, or the continuing climate-related displacements now unfolding across its provinces and rural communities.

Civil society groups have condemned the fund’s structure as “slow, bureaucratic, and unfit for purpose”. Following the seventh board meeting in Manila last month, the ‘Fill the Fund’ campaign described the outcome as “a profound injustice”.

They note that the fund’s multi-month project cycle “betrays its core mandate” to deliver aid within 24-48 hours of a disaster. Even the World Bank’s interim hosting role has drawn criticism for reinforcing cumbersome procedures and adding layers of conditionality that obstruct direct access and transparency.

This inertia reflects a deeper North-South divide.

Wealthy nations insist on elaborate frameworks before disbursing funds; vulnerable countries demand quick, grant-based relief. As Pakistan’s climate minister put it, the Global North continues to “shift its burden” to developing economies while lecturing them on compliance. Meanwhile, climate victims wait in despair. The hypocrisy is glaring: those most responsible for the crisis remain reluctant to finance its fallout, even after the International Court of Justice affirmed that such support is a legal obligation, not charity.

At COP30, Pakistan and other climate-vulnerable states must renew pressure for a mechanism that delivers, not deliberates. The FRLD was not meant to be another showcase of bureaucratic caution or diplomatic posturing. Unless donor nations fill the fund and unblock its flow, the world’s ‘rapid response’ to loss and damage risks becoming yet another illusion — proof that even in the face of existential threat, justice can still drown in paperwork.

Faisal Bari

One of the issues that has been mentioned, though we do not have any details or the draft of the proposed amendments yet, is that the 27th constitutional amendment will ‘take back’ education to the federation again.

Since we do not have any details, it is not clear what ‘taking back’ education means but we need to have clarity on what it should or should not mean.

Before the 18th Constitutional Amendment, education was a shared responsibility between the federation and the provinces. Will the 27th amendment take it back to sharing or will education be solely the centre’s domain?

Teacher recruitment, posting, transfer, teacher training and teacher management have always been a provincial subject. As have been school management and administration. Textbook publishing has also been a provincial subject. Examination boards are and have been under provincial govern-

ments as well, although there is a federal body that ensures compatibility across boards.

The only thing that was at the federation level, prior to the 18th Amendment, was the curriculum and this was devolved after the amendment’s passage. Will the 27th amendment take it back to the federal level?

It clearly does not make sense for the federation to be involved in teacher recruitment, posting, transfers, teacher training or teacher management. Punjab has some 400,000 teachers. A similar number must be there for all other provinces combined.

It is hard to manage teacher issues from even a provincial capital — our provinces are too large. We need to take teacher management to the local level. The principle should be that the decision-making should happen at the level where we have the information for the required decisions and where stakeholders impacted by the decision can have a say.

Similarly, school ad-

ministration and management needs to be devolved to the local level too. I am pretty certain the federation has no interest in school management and administrative issues.

What it boils down to, of course, is the curriculum. This has been a thorn in the side of successive federal governments and deep state elements since independence and it continues to be one.

Historically, from a technical point of view, the federal government has always had a large or complete role in curriculum setting. And though the curriculum was devolved by the 18th Amendment, for many years the provinces continued to use the pre-18th Amendment curriculum since they did not have capacity for curriculum work.

When they started getting ready for curriculum work, the federal government came up with the brilliant idea of the Single National Curriculum and most of the curriculum debate was taken up with the useless and damaging discussion about the benefits of having a single cur-

riculum across the country. Though most provinces were ‘persuaded’ to go along with the SNC, some were quite reluctant and resisted it.

Clearly, it is not about the curriculum of science or mathematics that is the issue here. When have we heard the debate that provinces have diverged in what they teach in mathematics or science or that Punjab is teaching a different mathematics or science compared to Sindh? It is always about local culture and local languages and how they might impact the unitary identity that the federation has always wanted to impose and has imposed.

The federation fears local control over the curriculum might lead to changes that allow local languages and cultures to become so dissipative that our identity as Pakistani and Muslim may get threatened or diluted.

Is the 27th amendment an attempt to ensure there is no resistance to the idea of a single curriculum? Is it the continued game of ensuring that we shape young minds to

have a particular religious and Pakistani identity? Have 76 years of these attempts taught us nothing? We introduced Islamiat and Pakistan Studies as compulsory subjects in the 1970s.

Have we started producing better Muslims and Pakistanis as a result? If we had, we would not keep insisting that we need to do more. We have now added Quranic studies and Islamiat topics in Urdu and English as well. But we are still not satisfied with the results.

What we are not willing to learn is that this is not the way to ensure a particular identity or address issues of personality formation. True, religion is important and has a place in the curriculum, but it need not be overwhelming and at the cost of local cultures, languages and traditions. The same is true of national identity.

In fact, local languages and cultures are the strength that allows stronger national and religious identities. The federation has looked at the issue of unity from the wrong lens and continues to make the same mistake. Having five

or six national languages does not mean Urdu or English lose out.

Better education in local language at the start of a child’s academic journey will strengthen not only his or her language skills in the regional tongue but also help in learning other languages. And it will help in developing students’ cognitive abilities for other subjects and in general as well. Clearly, local cultures have to be part of our individual identity to have a full sense of belonging.

So, why the insistence on ‘taking back’ education? The federation, when it had education, did not do a stellar job. The provinces have not done much either but are no better or worse than when the federation had control. In principle, education should be devolved as much as possible.

Will the federation be able to do any better this time? Of course not. And if the interest is only in controlling the narrative on identity, culture, religion and language, how is that helpful for education or for Pakistan in general?

Laws and rights in transition

Banari Baloch

As Martin Luther King once said, “An unjust law is no law at all.”

In recent years, Pakistan has witnessed constitutional changes and amendments whose effects have rippled across the country, particularly in Balochistan.

These amendments have reshaped the structure of judicial authority and introduced laws that suppress fundamental rights under the guise of national security.

Every democratic state rests on the independence of its three pillars: legislature, executive and judiciary. But the 26th Constitutional Amendment disrupted this balance by directly interfering in the judiciary’s independence, effectively turning it into another arm of the executive.

This violates Article 175(3) of the Constitution, which states, “The judiciary shall be separated progressively from the executive”. Before the 26th Amendment, the Judicial Commission of Pakistan was composed mostly of judges: the chief justice of Pakistan (chairman), the

four senior-most Supreme Court judges, a former Supreme Court judge nominated by the CJP, the federal law minister, the attorney general, and a senior advocate of the Supreme Court.

The 26th Amendment, however, amended Article 175(A), expanding the commission to include political members — two senators, two MNAs (one each from treasury and opposition), and a representative nominated by the Speaker. It also allowed the chief justice to be appointed from among the top three judges through a parliamentary committee.

These changes forced the judiciary to share its core function of appointing judges with political representatives, eroding its independence. The amendment also curtailed the Supreme Court’s suo motu powers, while the new constitutional bench has since issued controversial rulings — permitting military trials of civilians, upholding judicial transfers, and denying PTI reserved seats.

Last month, the Supreme Court’s constitutional bench heard petitions challenging the 26th Amendment. The matter is now

fixed for hearing on Nov 10, when the court will decide whether the same bench will continue or a full court should be constituted to examine its legality.

While the legality of the 26th Amendment remains under challenge, the government is preparing to table the 27th constitutional amendment bill in the Senate. The proposed amendment seeks to create a federal constitutional court, effectively curtailing the Supreme Court’s powers and striking at the spirit of the 18th Amendment. If passed, there may be no constitutional bench left by the time the case resumes.

Ironically, the very bench constituted under the 26th Amendment is now tasked with examining its own legality. The judges had a chance to exercise damage control by referring the matter to a full court of judges appointed before the 26th Amendment — an act that could have restored public confidence. That opportunity was not taken. And now, before any formal order has been issued, the 27th amendment looms, threatening to fundamentally alter the judicial structure by introducing a parallel court system.

The erosion of judicial independence and the violation of fundamental rights did not stop there. This year, the Balochistan Assembly passed the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act 2025, granting sweeping powers to law enforcement, including detention of individuals for up to 90 days without informing families or granting a fair trial. This directly violates Article 10, which requires a detainee to be produced before a court within 24 hours.

The amendment raises a constitutional issue: the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 is a federal law — can a province amend it? Under Article 143, federal law prevails in case of conflict. The federal Act mandates that detainees be presented within 24 hours, while the provincial amendment allows 90-day detention, clearly violating constitutional protections. Similar amendments have now been introduced at the federal level, further expanding the state’s power to curtail individual liberty.

These measures also undermine the principle of the presumption of innocence. Across the world, individuals are presumed

innocent until proven guilty. But under these amendments, the people of Balochistan are treated as guilty by default, forced to prove innocence during detention.

Both the 26th and proposed 27th amendments and the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act in Balochistan are unjust and unconstitutional. Both seek to institutionalise executive control by reducing the Supreme Court’s role as the final arbiter of constitutional interpretation. The Balochistan Bar Council, human rights groups, and international organisations such as Amnesty International and the UN have warned that these measures violate covenants like the ICCPR and undermine fundamental freedoms.

Recently, another anti-terrorism amendment act in Balochistan has been debated, though its text is yet to be published. From reported provisions, it appears even more draconian: a Grade-21 officer will have the power to choose judges for trials from names sent by the chief justice of the Balochistan High Court — giving final authority over judicial assignments

to the executive.

It also introduces secrecy: judges, prosecutors, and lawyers will operate under codes rather than in open court. How can trials be considered fair when justice is hidden from public view? Such measures undermine the principle that ‘justice must not only be done but must also be seen to be done’.

Together, the 26th and proposed 27th amendments and the provincial anti-terrorism amendments reveal a disturbing trend — weakening judicial authority and eroding constitutional protections. Laws meant to uphold justice are being reshaped into instruments of control, suppressing dissent and undermining democracy.

So where does this leave us? Are these laws meant to strengthen democracy, or are they shaping a system that bends under its own weight? Can a society call itself free when its courts answer to politics and its citizens can be silenced without trial?

Perhaps the deeper question is not about law at all, but about power: who truly holds it — the people, the Parliament, or the silence written into law?

Iqbal’s humanism

Saad Malook

Sir Muhammad Iqbal’s entire philosophical corpus underpins an ardent striving for humanism to build a better society. Iqbal steadfastly believes in human potential and supports a humane approach towards life. His humanism, thus, comprises a cluster of ideas, including human dignity, freedom, equality, friendship, solidarity, and, in general, human development.

Overall, humanism not only emphasises the centrality of humanity but also its sanctity in this world. It requires the removal of major sources of crimes against humanity: sectarianism, terrorism, war, oppression, exploitation, humiliation, exclusion, discrimination, and the violation of human rights. Despite the unprecedented achievements of science and technology in the age of AI, humanity is facing incessant dehumanisation through various means; for instance, the violation of human rights and genocide in Palestine and in held Kashmir by Israel and India are atrocious crimes against humanity.

Iqbal’s humanism has metaphysical and ethical aspects. Metaphysically, Iqbal posits selfhood to rescue human individuality, which was lost in pantheism largely propagated by Ibn al-Arabi in the Muslim tradition. Iqbal’s selfhood claims that each human is endowed with infinite human potential — rational, creative, moral, political and artistic — which can be developed further.

According to Iqbal, freedom, equality, fraternity, love and dignity are necessary conditions for the development of human individuality. In contrast, repression, inequality, economic dependency, exclusion, exploi-

tation and humiliation thwart development. Significantly, Iqbal anticipated the ‘human development programme’ in the first quarter of the 20th century, which was later developed and advanced by Mahbub ul Haq, Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum.

Ethically, Iqbal’s humanism embraces people beyond any racial, cultural, national, or linguistic identity to acquire the moral unity of humanity. In a new year message, Iqbal says, “Only one unity is dependable, and that unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour, or language”. He adds: “Remember, man can be maintained on this earth only by honouring mankind ... until the educational forces of the whole world are directed to inculcating in man respect for mankind”.

At the 2023 Allama Iqbal Memorial Lecture at Oxford University ‘The Geopolitics of Peace in a Post-Western World’, American scholar Jeffrey Sachs stated: “Iqbal ... offered the goal of Islam as a message for all humanity, not just a message for the believers. He argued that we need to search for rational foundations in science and Islam.” Sachs rightly endorsed Iqbal’s humanism and his urge for rationality in science and religion. Without the use of rationality, no society can progress.

In Javed Nama, Iqbal articulates: “The status of a human being is higher than the heavens”. “The basis of real civilisation is reverence for humanity”. He again states, “Reverence for a human being is humanity; Be aware of the status of the human being; Human beings develop in a firm relationship with each other; “Follow the footsteps of a friendship.” This pre-

cisely encapsulates Iqbal’s philosophy.

In the preface to Islam and Open Society, Charles Taylor writes about Iqbal: “It is the voice of a man who has left behind all identitarian rigidity, who has ‘broken all the idols of tribe and caste’ to address himself to all human beings. But an unhappy accident has meant that this voice was buried, both in the general forgetting of Islamic modernism and in the very country that he named before its ex-istence, Pakistan, whose multiple rigidities — political, religious, military — constitute a continual refutation of the very essence of his thought.” Taylor’s judgement is not false because neither the other Muslim countries nor Pakistan take Iqbal’s philosophy of humanism seriously to promote human equality.

Sectarianism, provincial parochialism and intellectual relativism pose existential challenges for Pakistan. If the challenges are not addressed in time, there will be grave sociopolitical and economic consequences. Political vision, joint commitment and rational decisions are vital to handle the elephant in the room by reforming and strengthening educational institutions, updating madrassahs in line with modern education, and promoting dialogue in the public sphere to develop consensus on national and international challenges.

Thus, Iqbal’s humanism needs to be adopted in its true spirit, in theory and practice, to respect human diversity, democratic process, freedom of thought, peaceful coexistence, cooperation beyond borders, human rights, social justice, and particularly, to enhance human development for a progressive Pakistan.

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

It has been almost 20 years since the PML-N and PPP signed the Charter of Democracy in exile. With the Musharraf dictatorship at its zenith, the country’s two biggest mainstream parties seemingly realised the significance of collectively resisting militarisation of state and society. Today, both are part of a regime that couldn’t care less about ‘civilian supremacy’. Only a few months after the passing of the 26th Amendment to clip the tails of an already compromised anti-people judicial apparatus of state, the government is now gearing up to pass the 27th amendment. This will further cement the security establishment’s role as Pakistan’s arbiter of power. The 18th Amendment, widely perceived as the biggest success of Pakistan’s emaciated democracy in recent times, may also be rolled back.

To put it bluntly, the Charter of Democracy has largely been consigned to the dustbin of history, effectively replaced by a ‘Charter of Oligarchy’. Barely two years after a dubious electoral exercise that brought the current regime into existence, Pakistan’s political order is further than ever from representing the will of its people. What do I mean by a ‘Charter of Oligarchy’? Many associate oligarchy with the domination of political dynasties like the Bhuttos and Sharifs. In a similar vein, the security establishment’s centrality to the structure of power tends to be reduced to the current top brass. The rot actually runs much deeper.

More than 50 years ago, Pakistan’s most celebrated Marxist thinker Hamza Alavi theorised

Oligarchy at work

class rule in Pakistan as being the preserve of landowners, big business and global capital, with what he called the ‘bureaucratic-military oligarchy’ playing the role of ultimate arbiter. While Alavi’s insights need considerable amendments, the basic skeleton of power that he described is very much intact in contemporary Pakistan.

Unelected, bureaucratic state apparatuses remain at the top of the pile. Alongside coercive powers, they articulate an autonomous agenda of profit maximisation through official ‘development’ projects, as well as a vast corporate empire including real estate, construction, logistics, banking and other business initiatives. The establishment shares economic interests with the propertied landed, business and foreign capitalist classes. Put differently, mainstream political parties are not guided by a foundational economic agenda — meeting the needs of Pakistan’s working masses — that is at odds with the ‘bureaucratic-military oligarchy’.

The high stakes of the political-economic game certainly generate conflict between various segments of the ruling order but the establishment remains more coherent than any other player, thus maintaining its role of arbiter. Meanwhile the propertied classes, which dominate all mainstream political parties, don’t want ‘civilian supremacy’ enough to remain out of governmental power for too long. So they wax lyrical about democracy, the plight of the peripheries and working masses when in the opposition, then cut a deal with the establishment to find a way back into power.

The Charter of Democracy was largely silent about the underlying

economic logics of the militarised power structure. These logics do not determine everything, but are as important as any other aspect of the game of thrones. The question is how to transcend the palace intrigues masquerading as democracy. A comparison with a not dissimilar oligarchic context may help. Zohran Mamdani’s victory in New York City’s mayoral election has electrified Pakistanis. He is young, proudly owns his Muslim-Indian-Ugandan heritage and speaks to arguably the world’s most ethnically diverse city. But arguably, the single biggest reason for Mamdani’s triumph is his explicit socialist agenda focusing on the needs of working people in opposition to the barons of Wall Street. Mamdani also speaks truth to Zionists, and the Trumpian White House. He names many shades of the US oligarchy, including the establishment within the Democratic Party itself. Time will tell whether or not he can deliver on his ideals. But the point is that there really is no democracy without challenging the oligarchy that dominates existing power structures.

The responses to Mamdani’s victory in Pakistan have largely been tragicomic. The PPP has been reciting its roti, kapra, makan mantra, not mentioning that it has shown no commitment to socialism or challenged the establishment for at least a generation. PTI supporters have given to declaring Imran Khan the Pakistani Mamdani. Others are bashing Pakistani Marxists as irrelevant. Beyond the banter, a meaningful analysis of Pakistan’s structure of power is the bare minimum to democratise it. Challenging capitalist robber barons comes next.

**PESHAWAR:** Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi in a group photo with the participants of 27th NDU National Security Workshop who visited Governor House.

Punjab Governor says: Peaceful society can only be achieved by guaranteeing the provision of justice to all

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor of Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, stated that a just and peaceful society can only be achieved by guaranteeing the provision of justice to all, without discrimination. He said this during a meeting with President Islamabad High Court Bar Association Syed Wajid Ali Shah Gilani, who met him in Islamabad along with a delegation.

The Governor acknowledged the lawyers' movement as a pivotal chapter in the country's history, highlighting their struggle for democratic sta-

bility and judicial independence. He emphasized the enduring bond between the legal community and the PPP, affirming the party's commitment to this valued relationship. The Governor Punjab further said that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has proven his capabilities in a very short time. He said that Chairman Bilawal Bhutto exposed the cunning face of India at the global level. The Punjab Governor said that Bilawal Bhutto is a hero and a ray of hope for the young generation. The Punjab Governor said that he started politics with the PPP and will end with the

PPP.

In addition, Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan paid tribute to the Sindh government for the killing of dacoit Shahnawaz alias Shahu and his 11 accomplices in the Sindh Police operation. He said that the successful operation against the dacoit wanted in several cases in both Sindh and Punjab provinces is a great success of the Sindh Police. The Punjab Governor said that we are proud of our law enforcement agencies. He also paid tribute to the policeman who was martyred during the operation.

Govt sets course for film industry revival: Musadik

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal government has agreed to draw up new policy measures aimed at reviving Pakistan's film and cinema industry, following the first meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee for the Revival of Film and Cinema chaired by Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr Musadik Malik on Friday.

The meeting, held in Islamabad, brought together Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Culture and

Heritage, Huzafa Rehman, along with senior officials from the Ministries of Information and Broadcasting, and Federal Education and Professional Training.

Participants reviewed the existing regulatory and institutional frameworks governing the film sector, and agreed to enhance co-ordination among ministries to create a more enabling environment for production, distribution and exhibition.

Dr Malik said the government's priority was to revitalise cinema as a platform for national storytelling and creative growth.

KP CM Sohail Afridi orders inquiry into alleged custodial killing

PESHAWAR (INP): On the directives of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi, the Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar has constituted an inquiry committee to investigate the alleged killing of Inzamam, son of Israr, belonging to the Aka Khel tribe.

According to the details, the committee will conduct a comprehensive, impartial, and transparent investigation to ensure that justice is served to the deceased and his family.

Meanwhile, the CCPO Peshawar has also formed a three-member inquiry committee to ascertain the real facts regarding Case FIR No. 1560/2025,

registered at Police Station Badaber, Peshawar.

The committee will be headed by the SSP Investigation CCP Peshawar as chairman, with the SSP Co-ordination and SP Saddar CCP Peshawar as members.

The inquiry was ordered following reports from locals alleging that certain persons not related to the case had been taken into custody by the local police.

The committee has been tasked with conducting a thorough investigation to determine whether any unlawful detentions occurred and to identify any lapses or negligence on the part of the police officials involved.

**KARACHI:** Ambassador of Ireland Mary O'Neill called on Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah.

KP to launch comprehensive reforms to strengthen local bodies: Minister

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Local Government, Mina Khan Afridi, has directed the formulation of a comprehensive reform strategy to enhance the administrative, financial, and developmental performance of local bodies across the province.

Chairing a review meeting of the Local Council Board and the Directorate General of Local Government, the minister reviewed the overall performance, service delivery mechanisms, and administrative affairs of the department.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Local Government Aslam Saqib Raza, Secretary Local Council Board, Director General Local Government, and senior officials from various Tehsil Municipal Administrations (TMAs). Officials briefed the minister on different administrative, financial, and opera-

tional matters concerning the local government system.

Speaking on the occasion, Mina Khan Afridi said that the Local Government Department plays a key role in delivering essential civic services and ensuring good governance at the grassroots level.

He stressed that transparency, efficiency, and public trust must remain the guiding principles of local government operations.

The minister instructed concerned authorities to develop and implement a comprehensive reform plan aimed at improving governance structures, enhancing accountability, and expediting developmental projects within local bodies.

Afridi emphasized that strengthening the role of TMAs is essential for effective service delivery and addressing public needs promptly.

**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, presenting a traditional shawl to a folk artist as a mark of respect during the inaugural ceremony of the ten-day annual folk festival "Lok Mela 2025" at Lok Virsa.

Abid Raza says: Measures should be taken to finalize all arrangements for upcoming election in GB

ASTORE (APP): Provincial Election Commissioner of Gilgit-Baltistan, Abid Raza, paid a detailed visit to the Baltistan Division regarding the electoral rolls and delimitation matters for the upcoming elections.

During the visit, he met with the district administration officers, including Deputy Commissioners, I.G & RD officers, and Assistant Commissioners of various districts — Skardu, Shigar, Ghanche, and the newly established district of Roundu — to review preparations related to the electoral lists, voter registration, and delimitation process for the forthcoming elections.

On this occasion, the

Deputy Commissioners presented their suggestions to the Provincial Election Commissioner regarding the preparation of electoral rolls and voter lists. The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioners of Skardu and Shigar, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Roundu, Assistant Commissioner Skardu Headquarters, and other government and administrative officers. Addressing the participants, the Provincial Election Commissioner of Gilgit-Baltistan, Abid Raza, emphasized the need to accelerate the efforts to finalize all arrangements for the upcoming elections to ensure their free and fair conduct.

Five WAPDA employees recovered safely after 55 days in captivity

PESHAWAR (APP): Five employees of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), who were abducted from the Peer Dil Khel area of district Bannu, have been safely recovered after 55 days in captivity.

The WAPDA team was carrying out electricity repair work when unknown armed assailants attacked and kidnapped five personnel, including the driver.

The recovered employees were identified as Adnan (driver), Nageeb ur Rehman, Farhad, Abdul Wahab, and Javedullah.

**ISLAMABAD:** Governor of Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in a group photo with delegation led by President Islamabad High Court Bar Association Syed Wajid Ali Shah Gilani.

ECP allots symbols to candidates for NA-18 Haripur by-election

HARIPUR (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Friday has officially allotted election symbols to the contesting candidates for the upcoming by-election in NA-18 (Haripur). According to Form-33 issued by Returning Officer Naveed ur Rehman, a total of nine candidates will contest the seat vacated in the National Assembly. As per the list, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate Babar Nawaz Khan has been allotted the "Tiger" symbol, while Irum Fatima of the Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) will contest with the "Arrow" symbol.

IHC reserves decision on petition to stay by-polls in PP-73 Sargodha

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday reserved its decision on a petition to stay the by-elections in Punjab Assembly constituency PP-73 Sargodha. Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro heard the case and reserved the decision after the arguments of the parties were completed. The petition was filed by the head of Pasban-e-Watan Pakistan Party, Sheikh Mukhtar.

The petitioner's lawyer took the stand that his client wanted to participate in the by-elections, but the Election Commission did not receive his nomination pa-

pers. The lawyer said that the by-elections were postponed due to floods in September, but when the new schedule was issued, he was not allowed to submit nomination papers again. Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro inquired why the PP-73 seat fell vacant? To which the Election Commission's lawyer said that PTI member from this constituency, Ansar Iqbal Haral, was convicted in the May 9 incident case, as a result of which he was disqualified.

The Election Commission's lawyer further said that the schedule for the by-election has been issued.

**KARACHI:** Members of Insaf Lawyers Forum protest against 26th and 27th constitutional amendments at Karachi Press Club.

KP facing threats from India backed terrorists, cross-border aggression: Governor Kundi

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has said that the province continues to face serious challenges from India-backed terrorists and cross-border aggression.

He said that due to its proximity and shared borders with Afghanistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remains heavily affected by such threats.

"There seems to be no alternative to intelligence-based operations for the complete eradication of terrorism," he emphasized.

The Governor was speaking to participants of the 27th National Security Workshop from the National Defence University (NDU) during their study visit to the Governor's House, Peshawar on Friday.

The delegation was led by Major General Muhammad Raza, Director General of the Institute of Strategic Studies and Research Analysis (ISSRA).

The participants included members of parliament, academia, bureaucracy, business community representatives, and civil society members.

Governor Kundi welcomed the visitors and briefed them on the overall security situation in the province, including the merged tribal districts, as well as issues related to natural resources and economic development.

Responding to questions, the Governor said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had hosted millions of Afghan refugees for decades, extending hospitality and shelter, but regrettably, Afghan nationals have been found involved in several terrorist incidents. He stressed that strict action must be taken against those who do not respect Pakistan's Constitution and laws.

Highlighting the province's development needs, Governor Kundi said peace and stability are es-

sential for investment and progress.

He said that the province faces severe challenges from climate change, citing recent cloudbursts and glacial outbursts as alarming signs.

The Governor pointed out that although the tribal areas have been merged into the province, administrative, financial, and regional challenges still persist.

He lamented that despite Khyber Pakhtunkhwa being the largest producer of electricity, no major dam has been constructed after Tarbela, which could have helped in water conservation and power generation.

Emphasizing tourism potential, Governor Kundi said that the province's rich historical and religious heritage offers vast opportunities for promoting tourism.

"By developing the tourism sector, we can ensure peace and prosperity in the province," he concluded.

**Federal Minister Dr. Musadik Malik Chairs First Meeting of Prime Minister's Committee for Revival of Film and Cinema in Islamabad.**

Six dacoits eliminated in Rangers-police operation in Obaro

OBARO (INP): Six dacoits, including three unidentified accused, were shot dead during a joint operation of the police and Pakistan Rangers in Sindh city of Obaro.

The joint operation was conducted in the Ronti Kacha area of Obaro. Intense clashes between suspects and police personnel in the Kacha area were still continuing.

Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Obaro Abdul Qadir Soomro said that the dead accused included Akbar, Gulab and Nazir Shar, and three other unknown accused.

Obaro police recovered a large quantity of heavy weapons from the possession of the accused.

Earlier, on November 6, 2025, five people were killed and seven, including a woman, were injured in firing during a clash between two rival groups of Shar and Selro communities in the Ronti Kacha area of Obaro.

According to police, Ali Gohar Dhondo, Sobu Selro, Ibrahim Selro, and others were among the deceased. Bodies and the injured were shifted to Tehsil Hospital Obaro by rescue personnel.

DC chairs meeting to reviews public welfare projects

KOHAH (APP): A high-level meeting on public service delivery Friday convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Kohat, Rahimullah Mehsud, at his office.

The session brought together officers from the district administration, line departments, and other relevant institutions to assess the progress of ongoing public welfare initiatives across the district.

During the meeting, a comprehensive review of development and service delivery projects was conducted. Deputy Commissioner Mehsud emphasized the need for prompt, transparent, and sustainable solutions to public issues. He stressed to provide basic amenities to the people at their doorsteps without delay.

Highlighting the significance of the Chief Minister's Initiative, the deputy commissioner described it as a symbol of improved public service systems and effective governance at the district level.

He urged all departments to prioritize the timely completion of welfare projects through mutual cooperation and integrated strategies.

LHC directs Punjab govt to launch rigorous drive against smoke-emitting vehicles

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday directed the Punjab government to launch a rigorous province-wide campaign against smoke-emitting vehicles in an effort to curb worsening smog and air pollution.

Justice Shahid Karim issued the order while hearing multiple petitions related to environmental pollution and the rising smog levels across the province. He stressed on strict action against polluting vehicles.

He instructed the authorities to conduct the campaign for at least two to three weeks and ensure its strict implementation, noting that vehicles traveling long distances, particularly from Lahore to Karachi, were a major source of air pollution.

Officials from the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), Parks and Horticultural Authority (PHA), and other departments appeared before the court. However, Justice Karim expressed dissatisfaction over the absence of a director-level officer from the EPA, despite his earlier directive. Taking exception to vehicular pollution, the judge ordered the EPA to install banners across Lahore warning motorists that smoke-emitting vehicles would be impounded. An EPA official informed the court that such banners had already been placed in various parts of the city.

Justice Karim instructed the agency to deploy its officers, along with police personnel, at intercity bus terminals and motorway toll plazas to check vehicles. He also directed authorities to conduct strict inspections along the GT Road from Lahore to Multan.

"If the court's previous orders had been implemented in letter and spirit, Lahore's atmosphere would have been clean," Justice Karim remarked, directing the authorities to take action against anyone responsible for contributing to pollution. The court also ordered the Punjab government's law officer to convene a joint meeting involving the environment department, the chief traffic officer, and the transport department to coordinate enforcement efforts.

**PESHAWAR:** Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations, Shafiullah Jan, addresses media at Peshawar Press Club.

Punjab govt to expand hospital network across province: Khawaja Salman

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has announced that the provincial government is laying a comprehensive network of new hospitals across Punjab to ensure access to quality healthcare for all citizens.

Presiding over a meeting on Friday, the minister said that in line with the vision of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the government is striving to provide world-class health facilities to the people of the province. Former Chief Secretary Punjab and Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners Major (Retd) Azam Suleman Khan co-chaired the meeting.

The meeting decided to further expand the scope of hospital inspections by the Punjab Healthcare

Commission (PHC) across Punjab. The participants reviewed ongoing measures to improve hospital standards and healthcare delivery. The administrations of Lahore General Hospital and Mayo Hospital Lahore were praised for their commendable performance during recent PHC inspections. Khawaja Salman Rafique appreciated the efforts of the PHC and directed hospitals to provide quality treatment and care in line with PHC standards. He also announced a province-wide crackdown on quackery, terming quacks as "enemies of human health."

Highlighting new health initiatives, the minister said that the state-of-the-art Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and Research.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chairing a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet at the Finance Division.

PM hails Google's decision to set-up offices, invest in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday welcomed Google's decision to establish offices and invest in Pakistan, terming the establishment of Google's product assembly line in Haripur a positive development.

The International IT companies like Google are expressing confidence in the government's policies aimed at promoting ease of doing business and investment in Pakistan, the prime minister said in a statement issued by the PM Office.

He said the local production of IT products will not only make these prod-

ucts more affordable for the people of Pakistan but also increase foreign exchange reserves through the development of an export-oriented industry.

From day one, making Pakistan a digital nation has been a top priority, the prime minister said adding that the government was taking all possible measures to empower youth in the IT sector.

"The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Google for IT training of Pakistani youth is an important step in this direction," PM Shehbaz Sharif added.

He pointed out that the federal government was

providing laptops to 100,000 talented young people, enabling them to access resources for progress in the IT field.

He highlighted that the IT training programs were ongoing across the country for youth, including women. "These training programs are enhancing the competitiveness of young people in the international service industry, enabling them to become self-reliant through respectable employment."

The prime minister said that the government was taking further steps on a fast track basis to make Pakistan the hub of information technology in the region.

Hanif Abbasi inaugurates renovated Golra Railway Station in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi on Friday inaugurated the newly renovated Golra Railway Station in Islamabad, marking the completion of a major restoration project aimed at preserving Pakistan's rich railway heritage.

Originally built in 1881, Golra Railway Station stands as one of the most iconic landmarks of the subcontinent's railway history.

Surrounded by century-old trees, vintage travel artifacts, and historic railway sleepers, the station has been meticulously restored to showcase its

original colonial-era design.

A grand inauguration ceremony was held at the station, attended by federal ministers, senators, ambassadors, and media representatives.

Speaking at the event, Hanif Abbasi said the restoration was part of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's broader vision to modernize and digitize Pakistan Railways. He said that initiatives such as Safe and Smart Stations, cashless ticketing, and free Wi-Fi services were being launched in collaboration with the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) and the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB).

ECC endorses Frameworks for energy sector reforms, phased rationalization of remittance schemes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Friday endorsed the agreed framework among the concerned entities for the settlement of outstanding dues and waiver of specific financial claims to support fiscal balance and tariff rationalization.

The ECC, which met here under the chairmanship of Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb

took up a summary submitted by the Power Division regarding the rationalization of tariffs and payment adjustments for nuclear power plants (NPPs), Government-owned Power Plants (GPPs), OGDCL and SNGPL. The proposal formulated through the Prime Minister's Task Force on Power Sector Reforms, aims to enhance financial sustainability, streamline payments, and reduce overall costs in the power sector.

These measures are part of the government's broader efforts to strengthen the financial health of the energy sector and ensure long-term cost efficiency, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance.

The ECC also considered and approved another summary by the Power Division for issuance of a Government of Pakistan guarantee amounting to Rs659.646 billion for circular debt financing of Rs1.225 trillion. The guarantee is intended for the settlement of Power Holding Limited's debt and overdue payments to Independent Power Producers.

The ECC also authorized the Finance Division to issue a Letter of Comfort accordingly. Power Division was directed to report back to ECC on the time frame for the closure of PHL following the settlement of debt issue.

In another decision, the Committee considered and approved a summary regarding the gradual phasing out of Home Remittance Incentive Schemes (HRIS).

The ECC endorsed a phased, data-driven approach to ensure stability in remittance inflows and to avoid any abrupt disruption that could adversely impact the economy.

The Committee agreed with the State Bank of Pakistan's assessment that a sudden termination of the HRIS could pose risks to remittance continuity, emphasizing that any rationalization should be gradual and guided by empirical evidence. It was further decided that the Government may consider completing the phase-out process beyond FY27, subject to a review of remittance performance and the outcomes of the FY26 revisions.

The Committee also approved a proposal by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research for the reallocation of funds within the Division.

The approval allows the transfer of resources from the IPC Division through a technical supplementary grant to support ongoing agricultural research initiatives.



ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatisation and Chairman Privatisation Commission, Muhammad Ali chairing the Privatisation Commission Board Meeting.

Govt committed to empowering SMEs through technology: Haroon

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production, Haroon Akhtar Khan said here on Friday that the government was committed to empower Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through technology and innovation.

The special assistant was speaking at a meeting with representatives of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) clusters from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) here, according to press release issued by Ministry of Industries and Production.

Among others, the meeting was also attended by Acting CEO SMEDA Ms. Nadia, Additional Secretary for Industries and Production, and the Director General to the SAPM.

During the meeting, Akhtar Khan shared the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). He stated

that the Prime Minister envisions aligning SMEs with modern technology to enhance productivity and competitiveness.

"Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif believes that small businesses are the backbone of economic growth, employment generation, and export promotion," he said, emphasizing that the Prime Minister was committed to empowering women through entrepreneurship and skill development to achieve inclusive economic progress.

Khan noted that no country can achieve sustainable economic development without strengthening its small and medium enterprises.

He said the government was facilitating SMEs through banks and collaborating with international consultants to introduce best practices.

Haroon Akhtar Khan highlighted that Pakistan was playing a leading role

in promoting SME cooperation among D-8 countries. The SME representatives appreciated the Ministry of Industries and Production's efforts and expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and SAPM Haroon Akhtar Khan for their initiatives to uplift the SME sector.

He also underscored that the provision of Islamic banking facilities, financial support, and funding mechanisms will ensure SME growth.

SMEDA, he said, will continue to provide technical assistance and technology upgradation to SMEs, enabling them to compete regionally and globally.

He praised the performance of SMEs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa despite numerous challenges and directed that coordination with the provincial government be enhanced for the establishment of new industrial estates in the region.



RAWALPINDI: People selecting and purchasing used clothes along the roadside at Bagh Sardaran area in the city.

Belarus replaces 3bn m3 of natural gas with local energy resources annually

MINSK (BelTA/APP): Belarus replaces 3 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually using local energy resources, Deputy Chairman of the State Standardization Committee of Belarus, Director of the Energy Efficiency Department Vitaly Kretsky told journalists during the press conference, BelTA has learned.

Vitaly Kretsky noted that in comparison with neighboring countries, Belarus demonstrates the highest level of GDP energy intensity reduction over the past 20-25 years. Work also continues to convert existing energy sources that use imported fuels to local energy resources. "Over the course of the five-year period, we will have built about 70 facilities. The remaining ones will be commissioned by

the end of this year. The use of local fuels across the country allows for the replacement of about 3 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually. Looking at the overall national picture, out of more than 10,000 operational energy sources, over 60% have already been switched to local energy resources. In the housing and utilities sector, this figure is even higher, about 73%," the department head said.

Vitaly Kretsky stressed that Belarus has developed comprehensive infrastructure covering the entire cycle, from procurement and transportation to efficient combustion of local fuels. "The country hosts producers of top-tier energy equipment that matches global analogues in efficiency of local fuel combustion.



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Haroon Akhtar Khan met with KPK SMEs cluster.

Privatization Commission Board takes key decisions on privatization of HBFCL, PIACL

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Privatization Commission (PC) Board on Friday made significant decisions regarding the ongoing privatization initiatives of the House Building Finance Company Limited (HBFCL), Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Limited (PIACL) and the management of three international airports located in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Muhammad Ali, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatization, which also recommended a reference price for the privatization of HBFCL, along with the terms of the Sale Purchase Agreement, for submission to the Cabinet Committee on Privatization (CCoP). The company is being

privatized through a negotiated sale to the Pakistan Mortgage Refinance Company Limited (PMRCL), which has been pre-qualified as a bidder. The CCoP and the Federal Cabinet had previously approved proceeding with a negotiated sale to a single pre-qualified bidder in July 2023. PMRCL has submitted its bid, which will be opened after the approval of the reference price by the CCoP and its ratification by the Cabinet.

The Board also approved the inclusion of AKD Group Holdings (Pvt.) Ltd in the consortium led by Arif Habib Corporation Limited (AHCL), upon the consortium's request. This inclusion is permissible under the conditions stipulated in the Statement of Qualifications (SOQ).

With \$13b inflows, remittances grow 9.3pc in 4 months of FY26

KARACHI (APP): The Workers' remittances from overseas to Pakistan recorded over 9 percent growth in the first 4 months of fiscal year 2025-26 with an inflow of \$12.96 billion, of them \$3.42 billion were received during October 2025.

"Cumulatively, with an inflow of US\$ 13.0 billion, workers' remittances increased by 9.3 percent during July-Oct FY26 compared to US\$ 11.9 billion received during the same period last year," the State Bank of Pakistan reported on Friday.

Workers' remittances recorded an inflow of US\$ 3.42 billion during October 2025, showing 11.9 percent growth on yearly basis in comparison of \$3.1 billion inflows of October 2024 while 7.4 per-

cent increase was observed on monthly basis as compared to \$3.2 billion inflows during September 2025.

Remittance inflows during October 2025 were mainly sourced from Saudi Arabia (US\$ 820.9 million), United Arab Emirates (US\$ 697.7 million), United Kingdom (US\$ 487.7 million), United States of America (US\$ 290.0 million), and other GCC countries (\$342.2 million).

The contribution of expatriates in remittances from European Union countries during October 2025 recorded as \$457.4 million including \$153.5 million from Italy, \$72.4 million from Spain, \$70.8 million from Germany, \$50 million from France and \$47.4 million from Greece.

PM thanks expatriates as remittances surpass \$3.4bln

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed gratitude to the overseas Pakistanis as the foreign remittances surpassed \$3.4 billion, marking an 11.9 percent increase in October.

The prime minister, in a statement, said that a consistent rise in remittances reflected the trust expatriates had in the government's policies.

"Overseas Pakistanis are our invaluable assets, serving the nation and country by sending their hard-earned money," he remarked.

Responding to a Calling Attention Notice, he said that due to security challenges and difficult terrain in some tribal regions, progress has been slower than expected. However, the government remains committed to completing all pending projects at the earliest.

Mian Bugti said the several projects initiated from 2013 to 2021 have already been completed, while work on older schemes, where citizens have already deposited connection fee is being prioritized.

KARACHI: Vice Chairman Balochistan Board of Investment Bilal Khan Kakar in a group photo with Atif Akram Sheikh, Mian Zahid Hussain and others on the eve of FPCCI meeting.

SECP organizes fire safety and emergency evacuation training

ISLAMABAD (APP): To strengthen employees' awareness and preparedness for fire safety, first aid and emergency response, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) organized a comprehensive training session titled "Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation" in collaboration with Rescue 1122.

The training aimed to equip designated Fire Marshals and focal persons with essential firefighting and emergency management skills, while also enhancing general staff understanding of fire safety protocols, said a press release issued here Friday.

The session covered a wide range of life-saving topics, including the chemistry of fire, the fire triangle and tetrahedron, how fire spreads, its stages and classifications.

Weekly inflation down by 0.59 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), decreased by 0.59 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on November 6, 2025, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review was recorded at 333.55 points, down from 335.53 points last week. On a year-on-year basis, the SPI increased by 4.18 percent.

The weekly SPI with base year 2015-16=100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group (up to Rs17,732) decreased by 1.04 percent, falling to 327.73 points from 331.18 points last week.

The SPI for consumption groups of Rs17,733-22,888; Rs22,889-29,517;

Rs29,518-44,175; and above Rs44,175 also fell by 0.93 percent, 0.74 percent, 0.66 percent, and 0.44 percent, respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 18 (35.29%) items increased, 12 (23.53%) items decreased, and 21 (41.18%) items remained unchanged.

The major commodities registering an increase during the week included eggs (2.40%), bananas (2.32%), firewood (1.61%), diesel (1.12%), beef (0.93%), tea prepared (0.92%), petrol (0.91%), bread (0.55%), wheat flour (0.34%), powdered milk (0.31%), and cooking oil 5-litre tin (0.21%).

Items showing a decline in prices included tomatoes (37.93%), onions (4.88%), garlic (3.23%), pulse gram (1.58%), chicken (0.68%), sugar (0.64%), gur (0.60%), pulse masoor (0.55%), and LPG (0.15%).



Senator Nasir Mahmood, Chairman Senate standing committee on housing and works presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House Islamabad.

Mediators propose deal to get Hamas fighters out of Rafah

Monitoring Desk

CAIRO: Hamas fighters holed up in the Israeli-held Rafah area of Gaza would surrender their arms in exchange for passage to other areas of the enclave under a proposal to resolve an issue seen as a risk to the month-old truce, according to sources familiar with the talks.

Since the US-brokered ceasefire took effect in Gaza on Oct 10, the Rafah area has been the scene of two attacks on Israeli forces. Hamas has denied responsibility.

Egyptian mediators have proposed that, in exchange for safe passage,

fighters still in Rafah surrender their arms to Egypt and give "details of tunnels" there so they can be destroyed, an Egyptian security official said.

Israel and Hamas have yet to accept mediators' proposals, the sources said. They confirmed that talks on the issue were underway.

The Israeli prime minister's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the accounts; Hazem Qassem, a Hamas spokesperson in Gaza, declined to comment.

The attacks in Rafah left three Israeli soldiers dead. Subsequent Israeli

strikes killed an unspecified number of Palestinians.

The sources said the Hamas fighters in Rafah, which the group's armed wing has said have been out of contact since March, might be unaware that a ceasefire was in place.

The ceasefire is the first part of President Donald Trump's plan to end the Gaza conflict.

Hamas has released the last 20 living Israeli prisoners seized in the Oct 7, 2023, raid in exchange for nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners; Israeli troops have withdrawn from western areas of Gaza, where Hamas remains in control.



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appears on screens as he speaks at the opening of the Belem Climate Summit plenary session, as part of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30), in Belem, Brazil.

Russia says it wants the US to clarify its nuclear testing intentions after Trump remarks

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russia said on Friday that it wanted the United States to clarify recent remarks by US President Donald Trump about the possible resumption of nuclear testing, given that such a step would trigger serious responses from other countries.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova made the comments at a news briefing in Moscow.

Trump last week ordered the US military to immediately restart the pro-

cess for testing nuclear weapons after a halt of 33 years. But it was not immediately clear whether Trump was referring to nuclear-explosive testing, which would be carried out by the National Nuclear Security Administration, or flight testing of nuclear-capable missiles.

Given the lack of clarity around US plans, President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday instructed top officials to prepare proposals for Russia to carry out its own potential nuclear test in response to any US test.

Deadly Typhoon Kalmaegi ravages Vietnam, Philippines

VIETNAM (AFP/APP): Typhoon Kalmaegi churned across Vietnam Friday, claiming five more lives after its devastating passage through the Philippines where the death toll rose to 188.

Kalmaegi unleashed record rainfall and flooding in the central Philippines this week—sweeping away cars, trucks and shipping containers before lashing Vietnam.

"The roof of my house was just blown away," said Nguyen Van Tam, a 42-year-old fisher-

man in Vietnam's Gia Lai province where the storm made landfall late Thursday.

"We were all safe, (but) the typhoon was really terrible, so many trees fallen," he said, adding that his boat had survived intact. Vietnamese authorities were still assessing the damage on Friday, but the environment ministry reported five dead, and 57 houses collapsed in Gia Lai and neighbouring Dak Lak.

Nearly 3,000 more had their roofs blown off or were damaged, it said, while 11 boats or ships sank.



People charge their phones and electronic devices following power outages caused by Typhoon Kalmaegi in Phu My, Gia Lai Province, Vietnam.

UN alarmed by rising hunger crisis in eastern DR Congo

GENEVA (AFP/APP): The number of people facing emergency levels of hunger in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has nearly doubled since last year, the United Nations said Friday.

The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) said a "deepening hunger crisis" was unfolding in the region, but warned it was only able to reach a fraction of those in need due to acute funding shortages and access difficulties.

"One in three people in DRC's eastern provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, and Tanganyika are facing crisis levels of hunger or worse. That's over 10

million people," said Cynthia Jones, the WFP's DR Congo country director.

"Of that, an alarming three million people are in emergency levels of hunger," she told a media briefing in Geneva.

UAE envoy says aid to Gaza will be scaled up, Cyprus is key route

Monitoring Desk

LIMASSOL: The United Arab Emirates is preparing to increase aid deliveries into Gaza, an envoy said on Friday, saying a sea corridor from Cyprus was essential alongside land and air access.

Minister of State Lana Nusseibeh said a maritime route channelling pre-screened aid from the East Mediterranean island was a vital lifeline to the people of Gaza. The UAE has partnered with Cyprus in supplying large quantities of aid to the Palestinian enclave, devastated by a two-year war. "Maintaining multiple entry points into Gaza remains incredibly important," Nusseibeh said after an inspection of aid accumulating at the port of Limassol in Cyprus.

"As this plan moves forward, access to Gaza by land, air and sea is going to remain critical," she told reporters.

Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas agreed a month ago to a first phase of a plan presented by US President Donald Trump. It paused a devastating two-year war in Gaza triggered by a cross-border attack by Hamas militants on October 7, 2023, and secured a deal to release Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners.

Mexican president files complaint after assault

Monitoring Desk

MEXICO CITY: Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said on Wednesday she had filed a complaint against a man who harassed her and tried to kiss her as she walked between meetings in the capital, a day after a video of the incident went viral. "If this happens to the president, where does that leave all the young women in our country," said Sheinbaum, Mexico's first woman president. "No man has the right to abuse women's personal space." Video of the incident quickly ricocheted across the internet before being taken down by some accounts, underscoring for many in Mexico the insecurity women face in a country steeped in machismo and gender-based violence.



Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov, Tajik President Emomali Rahmon, Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Turkmenistan's President Serdar Berdimuhamedov and other leaders of the C5+1 Central Asian countries attend a dinner with U.S. President Donald Trump in the East Room of the White House in Washington, DC.

Trump says Kazakhstan to join Abraham Accords

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Thursday that Kazakhstan will join the Abraham Accords to have normalised relations between Israel and Muslim-majority nations.

The announcement came after Trump said he had held a call with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

"We will soon announce a signing ceremony to make it official, and there are many more countries trying to join this club of STRENGTH," Trump

wrote on Truth Social.

The Kazakh government said in a statement that the matter was in the final stage of negotiations.

"Our anticipated accession to the Abraham Accords represents a natural and logical continuation of Kazakhstan's foreign policy course grounded in dialogue, mutual respect, and regional stability," it added. Kazakhstan already has full diplomatic relations and economic ties with Israel, meaning the move would be largely symbolic, something Secretary of State Marco Rubio pushed back against on Thursday.

"It's an enhanced relationship beyond just diplomatic relations," he said. "It is ... with all the other countries that are part of the accord. You're now creating a partnership that brings special and unique economic development on all sorts of issues that they can work on together."

Trump met with Tokayev alongside four other Central Asian leaders from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan at the White House on Thursday as the US seeks to gain influence in a region long dominated by Russia and increasingly courted by China.

Turkiye preparing law to let PKK fighters return under peace plan

Monitoring Desk

ISTANBUL: Turkiye is preparing a law to let thousands of Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) fighters and civilians return home from hideouts in northern Iraq under negotiations to end generations of war.

A senior Middle East official and a Kurdish political party source in Turkiye said the proposed law would protect those returning home but stop short of offering a general amnesty for crimes committed by former militants. Some militant leaders could be sent to third countries

under the plans.

Bringing PKK guerrillas and their families home from their bases in mountainous northern Iraq is seen as one of the final hurdles in a peace process launched a year ago to end a war that has killed 40,000 people. While officials have spoken publicly about reconciliation efforts in general terms, the sources disclosed details that have not previously been reported, including proposals for returns to take place in separate waves of civilians and fighters, and for commanders to be sent to third countries.



Palestinian people walk past piles of garbage and destroyed buildings in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip.

Opium cultivation down 20pc in Afghanistan, UN says

Monitoring Desk

KABUL: Opium cultivation in Afghanistan dropped by 20 per cent in 2025, the UNODC said.

The United Nations said on Thursday, while warning of a simultaneous surge in synthetic drug production and trafficking.

The Taliban authorities banned opium poppy cultivation nationwide in 2022, the year after they returned to power in Kabul.

The area dedicated to poppy farming fell from 12,800 hectares (around 31,600 acres) in 2024 to 10,200 hectares in 2025, a new report released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said.

Opium cultivation in 2022 covered around 232,000 hectares, according to the UNODC. Output of opium, the core ingredient in heroin, was estimated at 296 tons in 2025, a 32pc drop compared to the previous year.

Farmers' income from opium sales fell by nearly half, from \$260 million in 2024 to \$134 million this year. Prices of dry opium

remain five times higher than the pre-ban average despite a decline in 2025, the UNODC said.

The agency also warned of a sharp rise in synthetic drug activity, particularly methamphetamine.

"Synthetic drugs appear to have become the new business model for organised crime groups due to the relative ease of production, the greater difficulty in detection and relative resilience to climate changes," it said. "After the ban, many farmers shifted to growing cereals and other crops."

Worsening weather conditions, such as droughts or low rainfall, however, resulted in over 40pc of farmland laying barren," the agency said. The 20pc reduction in the area under cultivation follows a 19pc rebound in 2024.

Those fluctuations are a mere fraction of the massive drop in 2023 that followed the Taliban's announcement in 2022 that it was outlawing narcotics production.

Nearly 100 people abducted or disappeared in Syria since January, says UN

Monitoring Desk

GENEVA: Nearly 100 people have been recorded as abducted or disappeared in Syria since the start of the year, with reports of new enforced disappearances continuing, the UN human rights office said on Friday.

"Eleven months since the fall of the former government in Syria, we continue to receive worrying reports about dozens of abductions and enforced disappearances," spokesperson for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Thameen Al-Keetan told reporters in Geneva.

The OHCHR has documented at least 97 people who have been abducted or disappeared since January this year, and said it was difficult to ascertain an accurate figure.

The latest number is in addition to the more than 100,000 people who went missing under ousted President Bashar Assad, Al-Keetan said.

Assad was toppled by Islamist rebels Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham last year in a rapid 11-day offensive that ended a 13-year civil war.

Britain removes sanctions on Syria's president, EU to follow

Monitoring Desk

LONDON: Britain removed sanctions on Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa on Friday, a day after the United Nations Security Council did the same ahead of his meeting with US President Donald Trump next week, with the European Union confirming it would follow suit.

Britain said in a notice on the government's website that it was also lifting sanctions on Syria's interior minister Anas Khattab.

Both men had formerly been subject to financial sanctions targeted at Daesh and Al-Qaeda.

A European Union spokesperson said on Friday the UN decision would be reflected in EU measures.

Britain lifted some sanctions on Syria in April, while the bloc lifted its economic sanctions in May, but restrictions related to arms and security remain in place.

Blast injures 54 near school in Indonesian capital: police

JAKARTA (AFP/APP): A blast injured dozens of people near a school in Indonesia's capital on Friday, a senior police official said without disclosing the cause of the explosion.

Jakarta police chief Asep Edi Suheri said there was an explosion "in the vicinity" of a high school in the sprawling city.

"The initial data we have received indicates that there are approximately 54 individuals affected," Asep told reporters in comments broadcast by Kompas TV.

"Some have minor injuries, some moderate, and some have already been discharged."

Authorities had cordoned off the area and "were processing the crime scene", Asep said, including a bomb squad from Jakarta police as they tried to determine the cause of the blast.

Asep said authorities had also set up posts in two hospitals to assist relatives in finding injured victims.

"We are still investigating, as this incident just occurred," Asep said.



Indonesian military personnel guard as residents gather near the area after an explosion occurred at a school complex in Jakarta, Indonesia.

European military trainers should be part of Ukraine security guarantees, EU general says

Monitoring Desk

BRUSSELS: The European Union should move military trainers into Ukraine after the war there ends to strengthen Ukrainian forces as part of Western security guarantees, the EU's top military adviser told Reuters.

General Sean Clancy, chair of the EU's military committee, said the United States would remain important for Europe's security even as the EU gears up to be ready to defend itself by 2030.

NATO will continue to provide "hard power" to defend Europe but the transatlantic relationship will be rebalanced with Europeans becoming more self-reliant, said Clancy, who is Irish.

The EU's defense push has been driven by

Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine and US President Donald Trump's demands for Europeans to take more responsibility for their own security.

With the war in Ukraine showing no sign of ending, Western officials have been developing post-war plans to bolster Kyiv's forces and deter Russia from attacking its neighbor again.

Clancy said it would be "optimal" to move part of the EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) into the country after the war. The mission has already trained more than 80,000 soldiers outside Ukraine. Clancy said strong Ukrainian forces would serve as a security guarantee for both Ukraine and Europe.

North Korea fires unidentified ballistic missile: Seoul military

Monitoring Desk

SEOUL: North Korea fired a ballistic missile Friday, Seoul's military said, around a week after US President Donald Trump approved South Korea's plan to build a nuclear-powered submarine.

Analysts have said Seoul's plan to construct one of the atomic-driven vessels would likely draw an aggressive response from Pyongyang.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said North Korea fired an unidentified ballistic missile toward the East Sea, referring to the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan.

The missile landed in the sea outside Japan's eco-

logic waters and no damage or injuries had been reported, said Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

But the Kremlin defended North Korea's latest launch, saying Pyongyang—a key ally for Russia during its Ukraine campaign—had the "legitimate right" to do so.

"We are respectful of the legitimate right of our friends in the DPRK (North Korea) to ensure their security and take measures for it," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Washington's security ally Tokyo, meanwhile, said North Korea's ballistic missile launches have been "absolutely unforgivable."

No end to Sudan fighting despite RSF paramilitaries backing truce plan

Monitoring Desk

PORT SUDAN: An end to fighting in Sudan still seems far off despite the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, fighting the army for more than two years, endorsing a truce proposal.

The government, backed by the army, has yet to respond to US-led international mediators, and explosions rocked the army-controlled capital Khartoum on Friday.

Experts express doubt about whether the RSF is truly ready to implement a truce, and warn it is in fact preparing an offensive to capture city of el-Obeid in the south.

But the conflict may nevertheless be at a turning

point. Fighting has raged since April 2023, pitting the forces of army chief Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan against those of his former deputy, RSF commander Mohammed Hamdan Daglo.

Now, the United States, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt are backing a proposed ceasefire.

Here is what we know after two years and almost seven months of a war that has killed tens of thousands, displaced nearly 12 million and triggered a hunger crisis.

Less than two weeks ago the RSF captured El-Fasher, the army's last major stronghold in western Darfur.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for Issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Nasreen Akhtar with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Muhammad Sharif citizen number 3130114803391 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. nasreen akhtar(spouse) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KHAN PUR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for Issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Javed Mash with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased asif javed sothra citizen number 544002522313 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. magdalin javed(mother) 2. javed mash(father) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA QUETTA-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for Issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Shahnaz begum with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Murtaz Ahmad citizen number 5150471378752 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. akendar sileon 2. Anna(daughter) 3. abdul aziz(son) 4. Bachava(son) 5. Zainab bibi(daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA LASBELA-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for Issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Shahnaz begum with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Murtaz Ahmad citizen number 53104222351937 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. azhar abbas(son) 2. nadeem abbas(son) 3. shahnaz begum(spouse) 4. nasreen(daughter) 5. rung elah(son) 6. Zainab(daughter) 7. muhammad ramzan(son) 8. jahangeer khan(son) 9. ram jan(daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA JARANWALA-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for Issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Taj Bibi with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ghous Baksh citizen number 5410215038094 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. faziia sultan(daughter) 2. jahanzaib khane(son) 3. Zeenat(daughter) 4. saqiba sultan(daughter) 5. irshad hussain(son) 6. muhammad ramzan(son) 7. jahangeer khan(son) 8. jahangeer khan(son) 9. ram jan(daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA NISHER-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for Issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Taj Bibi with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ghous Baksh citizen number 5130133699311 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. aaseed ahmed(son) 2. naim ulah(son) 3. jahanzaib(son) 4. Taj Bibi(spouse) 5. bi bi humama(daughter) 6. azeema(daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA WASHUK-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for Issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by muhammad raheem with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased muhammad raheem citizen number 5440179436295 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. muhammad raheem (father) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA QUETTA-SFU

Pakistan keen to foster economic, trade cooperation with Iran: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday emphasized that Pakistan was eager to foster cooperation with Iran in the fields of mutual interest including economic development and bilateral trade.

He was talking to Speaker of Iranian Parliament Dr. Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf who called on him along with delegation at the PM House.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif warmly welcomed the delegation and recalled the cordial bilateral ties with the brotherly Muslim country of Iran. He reiterated firm commitment of both countries for peaceful means of dialogue and diplomacy for resolution of all outstanding disputes around the world. He also extended utmost reverence to His Eminence, Supreme Leader of Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Masoud Pzeshkian.

The prime minister stated that both countries condemned state sponsored terrorism and have always supported each other in the wake of unilateral aggression against their sovereign states.

He added that both countries had unfortunately been victim of terrorism and thus firmly share the resolve of global peace, prosperity and positive cooperation in the region. "Pakistan and Iran are determined to work in cohesion and cooperation for unity of Muslim Ummah."

Speaker of Iranian Parliament Dr. Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf expressed his gratitude to the prime minister, the government and people of Pakistan for their valued and well-placed support in the recent Iran-Israel conflict.

He stated that the support shown by Pakistan in the 12-day war is deeply appreciated and cherished by the people of Iran. He stated Iran and

Pakistan firmly believe in the unity of Muslim Ummah and in the message of global peace.

While expressing special gratitude to the Speaker National Assembly Ayaz Sadiq, the Iranian speaker cherished the positive and robust cooperation between the parliaments of both countries.

He also expressed Iran's commitment to further enhance bilateral cooperation with Pakistan in the fields of economic development and trade. The Iranian speaker conveyed message of warmth and reverence from Iranian President Masoud Pzeshkian for Prime Minister and people of Pakistan. He also expressed gratitude for a warm hospitality extended to him during his visit to Pakistan.

Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, and Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, Syed Tariq Fatemi also attended the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired an inter-ministerial meeting to finalize Pakistan's agenda for the upcoming 8th Session of the Pakistan-Oman Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC), being held in Islamabad next week.

Tareen and Asad Qaiser discuss political cooperation and national issues

Call for united efforts to strengthen democracy & address public concerns

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Senior political leader Sajid Tareen and former Speaker of the National Assembly Asad Qaiser held a detailed meeting in Peshawar on Friday to discuss the prevailing political situation in the country, emphasizing the need for democratic unity, transparency, and public-centered governance.

During the meeting, both leaders exchanged views on the overall political environment, economic challenges, and governance issues facing the country. They underscored that Pakistan needs a new phase of political cooperation focused on national stability rather than confrontation.

Sajid Tareen highlighted that political leaders must put aside personal differences and work jointly to strengthen institutions. He noted that national consensus on major policy issues, including economic revival

and governance reforms, was essential to rebuild public trust in the political process. Asad Qaiser agreed that divisive politics has damaged democratic values and called for a "national charter of political conduct" to guide all parties toward mutual respect and cooperation. He reiterated his commitment to parliamentary supremacy and said that political maturity is the only way to bring stability and progress to Pakistan.

Both leaders emphasized that effective governance should prioritize public welfare, job creation, and transparency. They agreed to continue consultations and play their roles in promoting constructive political dialogue across the country. The meeting concluded with a joint understanding that Pakistan's progress depends on collective leadership, democratic patience, and institutional harmony rather than partisan politics.

President expresses sorrow over mosque explosion in Jakarta

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday expressed deep sorrow and concern over the tragic explosion at a school mosque in Indonesia's capital Jakarta during Friday prayers, which left several people injured.

The president conveyed his sympathies to the government and people of Indonesia and prayed for the swift recovery of those injured in the incident.

President Zardari reaffirmed Pakistan's solidarity with Indonesia in the fight against terrorism and extremism, noting that Pakistan has itself suffered greatly and rendered immense sacrifices in this struggle.

He added that terrorism has also left a deep mark on his own life, having lost close family members to acts of terror. He said such personal loss strengthens his resolve to work for peace and to stand firmly against extremism in all its forms.



Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman addressing "Bano Qabil" ceremony at Kabal Swat.

BFC establishment to provide one-stop services to investors: Bilal Kakar

QUETTA (APP): Vice Chairman of the Balochistan Board of Investment, Bilal Khan Kakar on Friday said that Balochistan, owing to its strategic geographic location, abundant natural resources, and emerging infrastructure, has the full potential to become a gateway for trade and investment in the region.

The establishment of a Business Facilitation Center (BFC) in Quetta will provide investors with all

necessary services from relevant departments under one roof (one-window operation).

Bilal Kakar expressed these views while addressing a meeting of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), chaired by FPCCI President Atif Ikram Sheikh. Prominent businessmen including Aqeel Karim Dhedhi, Mian Zahid Hussain, and Zubair Tufail were also present on the occasion.

Wahiha Qamar meets US Chargé d'Affaires

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chargé d'Affaires of the United States of America to Pakistan, Natalie A. Baker called on by Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Wahiha Qamar at her office on Friday. The U.S. delegation included Minister Counselor, Andrew Halus, Public Affairs Officer, Heidi Smith, and Program Management Specialist, Sabir Sharif. During the meeting, both sides discussed strengthening cooperation in the education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sectors.

Chinese, Pakistani firms ink pact to boost Balochistan's mining sector

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chinese mining company Guangdong Handar and Pakistan's Sanjran Mining Company (SMC) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in Guangzhou, China.

It is aimed at deepening cooperation on mineral extraction and processing in Balochistan, Handar said in an announcement, according to a Gwadar Pro's report.

Under the agreement,

the two companies will establish a joint venture, tentatively named Pak-Handar Mining Services and Management Company, to offer mining services, invest in resource extraction projects, and modernise mineral processing in Pakistan's southwest region, the Chinese company said.

Guangdong Handar will provide technical expertise and management support, while SMC lever-

ages its local network and assets.

The deal was signed in Guangzhou by former Senate chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjran, SMC's chairman, and Liang Fa, rotating general manager of Guangdong Handar.

SMC, headquartered in Balochistan, holds significant copper, coal, marble, and onyx assets and has a track record of local resource development.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the Parliament, the Islamic Consultative Assembly, of Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E Dr. Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf along with delegation calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Talal vows strict action against those spreading false videos targeting Islamabad Police

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Interior Senator Talal Chaudhry on Friday warned that stern action would be taken against individuals involved in making or circulating false and fabricated videos on social media aimed at maligning the Islamabad Police.

Addressing a joint press conference alongside Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, the state minister said that misleading videos were being circulated online, falsely linking Islamabad Police to in-

cidents involving citizens from Azad Kashmir.

"It is being alleged that our Kashmiri brothers and sisters who come to or reside in Islamabad are being mistreated by the police under the pretext of checking. These claims are baseless and malicious," he stated.

Senator Talal Chaudhry said Islamabad Police have always demonstrated professionalism and integrity while carrying out duties that extend beyond maintaining law and order. "As the capital's police, they shoulder additional responsibilities protecting

the lives and property of citizens, ensuring security during international visits, and maintaining order during high-level meetings and conventions," he added.

He emphasized that the Prime Minister and the Interior Minister would not tolerate any misconduct by the police, but also stressed that it was not possible for such incidents to occur without being noticed. "Most of these videos are old, incomplete, and manipulated. They are often overdubbed with fake voices and shared with sensational captions," he said.

Pakistan delegation hands over evidence during talks with Afghan Taliban in Istanbul: FO

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Pakistan delegation engaged in talks with Afghan Taliban had handed over its evidence-based, justified and logical demands to the mediators in Istanbul on Thursday with the singular aim to put an end to cross border terrorism, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said. During his weekly press briefing here on Friday, he told that Pakistani delegation's talks with Afghan Taliban regime commenced in Istanbul with the presence and participation of the mediators.

He said, "The mediators fully endorsed Pakistan's stance on the basis of the evidence provided by our side, as well

as on the basis of the tenets of international law and principles." "The mediators are discussing Pakistan's demands with Afghan Taliban delegation point by point," he said adding "Any other information being circulated on the social media particularly from Afghan handlers, Afghan accounts is either pure speculation or deliberate disinformation. We request that such false information may please be disregarded." To a question about the justified, legal demands of Pakistan put before Afghan Taliban, he mentioned that these demands were in the context of the set of information shared by Pakistan.

Three govt bills smoothly sail through Senate

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as three government bills including the Federal Prosecution Service (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the Capital Development Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and the National School of Public Policy (Amendment) Bill, 2025 on Friday smoothly sailed through Senate.

Minister of State for Law and Justice Aqeel Malik moved all the bills on behalf of the concern ministers in the House.

The House approved all the bills through clause by clause readings.

Meanwhile, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar withdrew the National Accountability (Amendment) Bill, 2023 from Senate.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Principal Aitchison College Lahore Dr. Syed Turab Hussain meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Pak Navy's PNS SAIF conducts joint drill with Maldives Coast Guard

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) SAIF visited the Port of Male as part of its ongoing overseas deployment, where it received a warm welcome from Maldivian authorities.

The visit marked another step in strengthening defence cooperation and maritime relations between Pakistan and the Republic of Maldives.

During the port call,

Mission Commander Commodore Muhammad Zeshan Nabi Sheikh met with key Maldivian military leaders, including Chief of Defence Force Major General Ibrahim Hilmy and Commandant of the Maldives Coast Guard Brigadier General Mohamed Saleem. He also visited the High Commission of Pakistan, meeting High Commissioner Vice Admiral (Retired) Faisal Rasul Lodhi.

Ji chief warns Against new constitutional amendment, calls youth to mobilize for edu. reform

Independent Report
S W A T / M A R D A N : Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan Emir Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman has warned that proposed constitutional changes under the 27th Amendment are aimed at consolidating the influence of the ruling elite at the expense of the public. He urged the opposition not to enter negotiations over the amendment, saying doing so would amount to endorsing policies that undermine judicial independence and public welfare.

Speaking at the launch of the Bano Qabil educational program in Swat — where thousands of students took entry tests for free IT training courses funded by Al-Khidmat Foundation — Rehman said Pakistan's youth had been systematically deprived of educational opportunities.

"For years, the ruling classes have treated education as a privilege instead of a right," he said. "The young people of this country do not need another constitutional drama — they need access to quality learning and a fair chance at a future."



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presides over the high level meeting.

Pakistan, China friendship association gala highlights new phase of strategic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Commerce, Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan, attended the prestigious Sangam Club 2025 Gala, celebrating the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China.

The event, themed "Advancing Iron-Clad Friendship, Sharing Modernization Opportunities, Jointly Building a Brighter Future," was graced by Federal Minister for Investment, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, as the Chief Guest, and Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, diplomats, and business leaders.

In his address, Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan highlighted China's recent 4th Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee, which has paved the way for a new phase of cooperation aligned with its upcoming 15th Five-Year

Plan.

He described this as a pivotal moment for both nations to deepen collaboration in trade, investment, and shared modernization.

He outlined key areas of focus for strengthening partnership between Pakistan and China, including industrial upgrading through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with renewed emphasis on Special Economic Zones (SEZs); promoting agricultural collaboration through contract farming and enhanced market access for Pakistani products; embracing digital and green transitions by combining Pakistan's youthful talent with China's technological innovation; and drawing lessons from China's poverty alleviation and governance model to strengthen Pakistan's social development agenda.

ADB pledges technical support for Balochistan's PPP and PFM reforms; follow-up talks planned



Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: A consultative meeting between an Asian Development Bank (ADB) delegation and a Balochistan team led by the Special Secretary, Finance Department, discussed strengthening the province's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) framework and Public Financial Management (PFM) systems.

The Balochistan delegation presented a detailed walkthrough of existing

PPP structures, board composition and ongoing projects, along with the province's PFM model. ADB officials welcomed the briefing and offered technical assistance and capacity-building support for provincial human resources.

Outcomes and next steps • ADB expressed readiness to support continued PFM reform and to help refine the PPP framework and governance arrangements.

Calls it an attack on national unity Muqam slams KP Chief Minister's "irresponsible & inflammatory" statement

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Federal Minister and Pakistan Muslim League (N) Provincial President for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Ameer Muqam, has strongly condemned the recent statement made by Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sohail Afridi, terming it "deeply irresponsible, inflammatory, and a direct assault on national cohesion."

In a strongly worded reaction, Ameer Muqam said that hate-filled remarks against state institutions are intolerable under any circumstances. "The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa stand shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan's armed forces and security agencies, who have rendered unmatched sacrifices for peace and stability," he stated. He added that the people of the province

deeply respect the eternal sacrifices of the martyrs, whose blood has ensured Pakistan's survival. "The Chief Minister's comments do not reflect the will of the people — they reflect only the extremist mindset of an individual."

Muqam warned that such statements strengthen the enemy's narrative, sow division among citizens, and erode public trust in state institutions. "Spreading hatred in the name of mosques or the sanctity of martyrs is not only disgraceful but utterly condemnable," he said.

He further remarked, "The Chief Minister must remember that his office demands responsibility, maturity, and a commitment to national unity — not confrontation, chaos, or defiance of the very institutions safeguarding the nation."



QUETTA: Tehreek-e-Insaf Provincial President Dawood Shah Kakar, Syed Sadiq Agha, and Nawab Khan Dummer address press conference in Quetta.

Naqvi denounces KP Chief Minister's remarks against security forces

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday strongly condemned what he described as "provocative and inflammatory" remarks made by the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) against Pakistan's security forces, terming them baseless and intolerable.

In a strongly worded statement, Naqvi said that the Chief Minister's comments were "factually incorrect" and amounted to an insult to the brave men and women who have laid down their lives for the country's peace and security. "No patriotic person could utter such words about the gallant officers and soldiers who have sacrificed everything for the nation," he said.

The Interior Minister accused the KP Chief Min-

ister of attempting to "please the eternal enemy" through his remarks, adding that the entire nation and the international community recognize the unparalleled sacrifices of Pakistan's armed forces in restoring peace and stability.

"The Chief Minister of the very province where the highest number of security personnel have embraced martyrdom has crossed all limits of ingratitude," Naqvi stated. He said the comments were especially painful given the region's history of immense sacrifices by law enforcement and military personnel. Naqvi urged the Chief Minister to retract his statement and apologize to the nation, emphasizing that such rhetoric only serves to undermine the morale of those who continue to defend Pakistan.